

**FTS-HHS-OS**

**Moderator: Chitra Mohla  
January 15, 2010  
3:00 pm EST**

Coordinator: Welcome everyone and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen only mode.

This call is also being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time.

I would now like to turn the meeting over to Mr. Charles - Dr. Charles Friedman. Go ahead sir. You may begin.

Charles Friedman: Thank you very much. Good afternoon everyone. Thanks for joining us. I am joined here at ONC by three of my colleagues, Robert Vinson who will be making some of the presentation this afternoon, and also by Mat Kendall and Chitra Mohla also with the ONC staff.

I am going to begin with a very abbreviated slide presentation. Our assumption is that at this relatively advanced date in relation to the due date of the applications, our time together is best spent addressing your questions and providing our answers.

We are going to begin with a brief slide presentation touching on a few very important points. I will present first in reference to - the first few of the slides and then Robert will complete the slide presentation.

So this is the technical assistance call for the program Consortia to Educate Health Information Technology Professionals and Healthcare. As I said, it is the second call on this topic and we will be pleased to - with reference to Slide 3, accept your questions during the session electronically. You can submit them electronically if you are logged in using the Questions tab at the top of the screen.

We can only accept electronically submitted questions today on the call. We cannot accept questions by telephone. However, if you have questions that you would like to submit to us either after this session or during the session if you are only connected to us by phone, you can do so at [HITEducation@hhs.gov](mailto:HITEducation@hhs.gov). That is [HITEducation@hhs.gov](mailto:HITEducation@hhs.gov). And we will get back to you with responses to these questions as quickly as possible.

That concludes Slide 3. Let's move onto Slide 4. This slide says a few more words about this call. The agenda for this call has been primarily developed based on questions that have been received from perspective applicants on or before January 15 which is today.

The purpose of the call is to provide guidance for completing the full application in response to the community college Consortia FOA. The applications as I will say again in a moment, for this program are due January 22.

A transcript of this call and a copy of the slides to which I am speaking now will be available on the ONC Web site. And as I said, you can send follow up questions to [hiteducation@hhs.gov](mailto:hiteducation@hhs.gov).

Moving onto Slide 5, we present here a calendar of key steps in the process relating to this program. The funding opportunity announcement was released on November 25 of 2009. Optional letters of intent were due on January 6, 2010. I would emphasize that these letters of intent were optional.

This means if you did not submit a letter of intent, you are still eligible to submit an application. Applications are due on January 22 at 11:59 pm Eastern Standard Time and these applications must be submitted electronically to [grants.gov](http://grants.gov).

There will be an objective review of all of the applications that are submitted and we expect to execute cooperative agreements with those who are selected to receive awards under this program in March of this year.

Moving onto Slide 6, just a few application specifics. The CFDA number for this competition is 93.721 and the funding opportunity number is EP-HIT-10-001. We do want to emphasize that the page limit in your applications for those components of your application which are part of the project narrative is 25 pages.

The FOA clearly indicates which components of your application are part of the project narrative and therefore count against this 25 page limit.

Chitra Mohla: Just double space.

Charles Friedman: We would also emphasize for you that this 20 - that these 25 pages are double spaced, so please submit your 25 page project narrative double spaced. I would also add that letters of commitment, letters of support, resumes of key personnel and the abstract and some other aspects of the application are not counted as part of the project narrative.

And repeating, relevant documents, all relevant documents must be uploaded electronically into grants.gov by 11:59 pm, January 22. There can be no exceptions to that.

Okay. Now I would like to turn the presentation over to my colleague, Robert Vinson, and he will continue with the slide presentation and then we will move into answering your questions.

Robert Vinson: Okay. Again I am Robert Vinson and I am a Grants Management Officer with ONC. I wanted to talk primarily about the mechanism that you will be submitting or using. These are cooperative agreements and the distinction between these and regular grant mechanisms are that there will be substantial government involvement.

We established partnership between ONC and consortia in order to meet shared goals and objectives. Either party may request, modify or amend the cooperative agreement or work plan.

Next slide, indirect costs - applicants should pledge an indirect cost at a rate of 8%. That is a capped amount modified total direct cost exclusive to - exclusive of tuition and fees, expenditures for equipment and sub awards and contracts in excess of \$25,000.

The form that you - that we are requesting that this be done on or submitted with is the FSF 424. It is a standard OMB approved Federal form with established content that we cannot change.

Typically to receive indirect cost from HHS, an applicant must have an established rate with a cognizant Federal agency. The form 424 - lead awardees will need to complete two 424A forms. The first 424A for each of the two budget years and then - oh I am sorry, excuse me, one 424 for each of the two budget years and then one 424 that combines all two years together. Okay?

Mat Kendall: I would just like to jump in here. The slide said four. It should say two. We will make amends but just emphasize it is a two year program.

Charles Friedman: Two year program, correct.

Robert Vinson: Also contractors and other costs should be contained in the 424A budget. Applicants must clearly explain any assumptions used to complete the 424A form in the budget narrative. Okay.

It was mentioned earlier, and I will not - you can begin submitting applications using grants.gov. The size limit for the entire application including all attachments is 250 megabytes. To conserve space, use PDFs instead of PowerPoints, pictures and Visio documents.

Applicants will need to have a Dun & Bradstreet or D&B file, a DUN number which is the Data Universal Numbering System and register with the Central Contractor Registry, that is CCR.

It takes - ***this is very important*** - it takes a minimal of five days to register in the CCR and to obtain a DUNS number it does take a few days to actually obtain the number. So you do not want to wait till the last minute to start getting these documents, so start the registry.

Grants.gov contact center phone number is 1-800-518-4726 and the hours of operation of Monday through Friday, 7 am to 9 pm Eastern Standard Time.

So, Slide 11 is a list of our resources for assistance with grants.gov. Email is support@grant.gov or again you may call 1-800-518-4726. With general program questions email hiteeducation, I am sorry, HITEducation@hhs.gov.

Please be advised that ONC cannot provide guidance specific to individual applicants. Check the ONC Web site for updates and frequently asked questions and if you do not know that Web site, it is <http://healthit@hhs.gov/communitycollege>, all one word.

We are going to take some questions now and again all the questions must be submitted electronically. And we have a list of questions that were submitted prior to today's date and as of today.

I will start with the questions primarily because they are of a budget nature. And some of it - I will try not to repeat the same response to various questions. So several questions here concerning indirect cost and several are concerning the 8% rate that the awards are tapped at.

The first question that we have - do we have permission to claim uncovered indirect costs as part of our in kind contributions to the project? Stated another way, if we request 8% indirect costs from the grant but we have an allowable

indirect cost rate of 50% SNA, can we - can the difference be claimed and in kind contribution - can it be claimed as an in kind contribution?

Okay. This is somewhat of a tricky question in that these awards are capped at 8%. So for the 3016 awards, that is going to be the maximum amount. If these awards did not have a cap rate of 8% and the indirects were whatever your institution has or has approved, then that answer would be yes, but it must be claimed in advance on your budget pages along with your indirect costs.

Okay?

Next question is, is the following description correct? Since all public, state and local community colleges are state and local government agencies, the explanation of Line 6J on Page 40 of the ARRA HHS HIT Consortia ROA allows each state and local college in a consortium to request a percent and direct cost without the need to provide a current indirect cost rate agreement with the proposal.

Okay. On Line 22 of the FSF 424, the answer - to answer provide a fixed rate of 8% as per the ROA Page 22 applied to the base of whatever dollar amount or total indirect cost rate of whatever dollar amount.

Okay. This is - I know this is long winded, but I am just reading what we have here. Line 23 of the FSF 424 should read something like no indirect cost agreement provided as Page 22 of the ROA allows state and local government agencies to apply for indirect costs whether they have a current indirect cost rate or not.

Okay. I believe what they are asking- what the question is here is that if an institution or if a - I am sorry - if a college or state or local gov - state and local college do not have an indirect cost rate agreement, are they still

eligible? Okay. They still have - or could they - are they still entitled to that 80%?

*Answer:*

And the answer is no. You must have an indirect cost rate agreement in place or you must have a cost allocation plan with the state which indicates that you have a pool of indirect costs that you normally draw from. So you must have one of those two in place in order to receive the 8%.

If you do not have the - either one, then you are not going to be entitled to the 8%. Okay?

All right. Question three, this is a two part question, the guidelines specified Section B of 424A, do you want the subcontractors to complete all parts of the section or just Section B?

*And the answer is yes to that.* And the second portion to that is under the program income line, should the subcontractors list such things as tuition and fees or is the intent of the grant to waive these expenses by paying direct - directly - directly - direct program expenses instead?

I know our subcontractors are going to ask this question. ***So again the response to this is yes.*** We also the subcontractors should list tuition fees etcetera under the program income line.

Going back to Part A of that question, we recommend that all parts be completed and we would recommend that each subcontract prepare a separate 424A budget justification for each year of the award.

Okay. Question 4 - please clarify the indirect cost rate justification for state agencies utilizing the 8% minimum. If colleges are a state agency, do we need to provide justification?

And again I answered that earlier by state and local governments will not have - do not have an indirect cost rate generally. They have cost allocation plans and must have either/or to be eligible for the 8%.

Question 5 relates to the personnel line of the budget form. Should costs of the instruction be entered on that line? And that is Line 6H. I am sorry, that is personnel line. They want to know if you want to include instruction costs.

And that answer is no, those type of costs should be listed on - ***in the other category which is Line 6H.***

Question 6, I want to confirm the required budget document that the lead institution submit for member of community colleges. Okay. And they are asking Form FSF, SF, excuse me, 424 A for year 1 Form SF 424A for year 2 and form FS 424A for both years one and two and that is correct. You do need to submit those documents for each of those years.

And they are asking, does this mean three separate forms for each community college? Is that correct? And the answer is yes.

Question 7, we have a request to clarify - for clarification on the frequency of the progress reports. We are going to subcontract out the (summative) and reporting piece. And there has been discussion about the required frequency.

On Page 13 of FOA, there is a reference to quarterly reports, but on Page 31 Section K, there is a reference for semi-annual reports. And can you clarify

the frequency of these reports? If possible give anticipated dates for these reports.

Okay. The quarterly reports, that is basically - or let me start with the Page 31, the *semi-annual reports*. Those are the *Recovery Act documents* that we are going to need to have or reports that need to be filed.

The quarterly reports are going to be the reporting (reports) that HHS and ONC are going to want to see on a *quarterly basis*.

And that is all I had as far as budget or specific budget questions. I did have a few do's and don'ts that are in general that I wanted to just make sure that we are all on the same page with.

One of - the first do is to please submit documents and applications prior to the deadline to avoid any electronic issues that may come up. We cannot wait until the 11th hour to try to get your DUNS number or to establish an account with grants.gov. It is just not going to happen if you wait that late. You are going to need several days to get these documents and applications rolling along.

Proposed rational service areas that are feasible, that was something that the colleagues came up with that is - it was seen far too often and it is just making life tough for everybody involved.

And last and not - certainly not least - and this also seems to be very basic or elementary, but please make sure that your contact information is current and correct. I have called numerous grantees and the number is out of service or individuals - the point of contact is no longer working there or whatever the case may be, and the email address is incorrect, whatever, but please make

sure that that contact information is correct so that we can get in touch with you if there are questions.

So - oh I am sorry. One more - how many support letters are optimal i.e. between 18 partners - between our 18 partners we have over 100 support letters. Would you prefer that we limit the number of letters submitted? Can we - what can be included as a letter of support?

I will let Dr. Friedman go ahead and answer that. He is chomping at the bit.

Charles Friedman: So, that is a very good question. We have been asked that about - same question about other programs. So let me say that the purpose of the letter of support is to assist the review by making the case that the applicant can achieve the goals of the program.

So the letters of support that are very important for you to include are those which help make that case. It is always good and helpful to the reviewers to include in your application only those materials which are helpful. So we really would encourage you to use some discrimination in letters of support.

We are not going to give you an absolute number, but please focus your letters of support on those letters that help you make your case that you can achieve - that you can execute the program as described and achieve your goals.

Mat Kendall: And just building on that, other parts of our objective review (are) thought to found that the letters of support or letters of commitment that are more detailed and actually enhance the story or importance rather than people saying the same thing over and over again...

Charles Friedman: Right.

Mat Kendall: ...because again that helps tell the story, makes the point more clearly so that the more detail that can be in these letters that is unique that the more helpful it is for the objective reviewers.

Charles Friedman: Did you want to add to that Robert?

Robert Vinson: No. That is exactly the path I was going to go down. I have seen anywhere up to 100 or 125 in number of letters of support. So please make it as pertinent as possible when you include it in the application.

Charles Friedman: So I will take a few questions now...

Robert Vinson: Oh good.

Charles Friedman: ...that have come in. So first of these - in the budget is it appropriate to build a grant for training costs associated with faculty, tuition and/or fees or some combination of these to cover the total cost of training the first 300 students?

Our answer here is just to emphasize that the FOA is extremely precise. I believe it is on Page 20, Chitra?

Chitra Mohla: Twenty-one, yes.

Charles Friedman: Page 21 about what are the expenses and costs that can be charged against the grant. We would encourage you to pay close attention to those and use that to guide you.

Can colleges charge the first 300 students any fees and/or costs associated with training? If so, how do we treat program income against cost?

I believe the best way to answer this is to again with reference to Page 21, say that student financial aid is an appropriate expense against which to charge the grant. A student financial aid, to the extent that an institution chooses to provide it will reduce the amount of the educational cost that is borne by the trainee.

And so we are not being prescriptive here about the amount of financial aid that can be provided. So it is certainly possible that partial aid to some students can be the direction that program - some programs choose to take and in which case the trainees will pay some of the costs and the grant support will pay some of the cost.

*Next question - is there a callback provision meaning reimbursement of funds to the grant if the placement goals are not met?*

The answer is no. There is not a callback provision. But I would also say in response to that question that we fully expect every program that is put into operation as a result of this grant to meet the training goals.

Mat Kendall: And also it is a cooperative agreement so that there will be a significant amount of assistance provided by ONC in this. And if we see questions that arise we will be taking appropriate actions.

Charles Friedman: Thank you Mat. Next question - *is there a preferred way of tracking employment? And if so, what is the system?*

There will be. And we will give the program's guidance a little bit further down the road of how we expect them to track their trainees. But it is premature to give that specific guidance at this time.

Next question - *is there a limit on the number of attachment pages?* The answer here is pretty much the same answer as we gave to the letters of support. No. There is technically no limit to the number of attachment pages. But the reviewers of these applications have - will have a lot to read and it is, we believe, to an applicant's advantage to limit those attachments to those which do help make the case that the program can be implemented as described and that the goals of the program can be met.

So we would encourage you to be parsimonious. We do not weigh these applications when they come in. And...

Mat Kendall: But there is also an electronic size limit at grants.gov that people should keep in mind as well.

Charles Friedman: As well. And I would also say with regard to attachments, that under no circumstances should attachments be used in any way, shape or form as a way to circumvent the page length restriction of the program narrative. So that is a - that is extremely important advice we are giving you. Attachments are not to be used under any circumstances to extend the program narrative.

*Will ONC provide training or other software as part of the curriculum process?*

I am not exactly sure what the intent of that question is, but I will mention that there will be a workshop held in we anticipate August or early September of 2010 - in August, to - as an opportunity to train faculty in the use of the - to introduce faculty to and train them in the use of the materials being developed by the curriculum development centers that will be funded under a separate program.

And the costs for a limited but significant number of faculty or part of the consortium schools will be borne by that curriculum development grant for their faculty to attend the workshop. So in that sense yes we will be providing training.

Okay. *Is there a specific methodology or calculation we should use for the total number of FTEs?* I am not sure I understand that question. Maybe we will return to it. Robert do you have a sense of that question?

Robert Vinson: No...

((Crosstalk))

Charles Friedman: Okay. *Will there be a penalty for colleges that do not reach the student graduate amount specified although they made a good faith effort?*

That is pretty much the same question as the callback provision. There will be no - we - there will be no penalty per se, but we are going to be working very closely with all of the funded institutions to address - to help them address these goals and do everything we all can to achieve them.

The next question, Mat I am going to refer this one to you.

Mat Kendall: Oh great.

Charles Friedman: Seven.

Mat Kendall: *Number 7 is the percentage of the population in the HHS region, does HHS region refer to one of the five regions in the FOA?*

And what we are meaning here is actually the population in each of those areas. So there are actually multiple HHS regions in - or our five regions.

Chitra Mohla: Right.

Mat Kendall: And what we are referring to here is that the area that we have covered or described in the FOA. That is the population and our, you know, a goal that we really have is we really want to make this as accessible to as many people as possible and that is what we are really trying to drive at with that question.

Charles Friedman: Okay. Next question - *can you please further clarify what you would refer to as financial aid included in the list of items in the lead awardee's budget?*

What I would say here is in general financial aid is that which defers or which - not defers, I am sorry, which reduces the cost to the trainee that would otherwise be incurred as part of the - as part of the training experience for that person in the program.

So it certainly includes tuition. It may include other components. And here we believe the policy that should be in place is the definition of financial aid at each individual institution.

So whatever costs are covered by the institution, in this case by the community college's definition and scope of financial aid is what should be followed here.

Mat can you take Number 10?

Mat Kendall: *Number 10 - is the 150 average students trained per member community college for the two years of the grant and then annually later on or should community colleges train 150 students in each year of the grant?*

I mean I think our goal is that we are looking to get 150 students per community colleges trained on an annual basis going forward. And the ramp up time in this we recognize it is going to take folks to get to that point. But our goal is to really create a sustaining program that in the long run can really kick this (chart)...

((Crosstalk))

Charles Friedman: Yes. Yes. And I want to emphasize that while this is a two-year award that will - that for which support can be used in many ways, the goal is a self-sustaining...

Mat Kendall: Exactly.

Charles Friedman: ...program that will build the training capacity of each community college to produce 150 graduates at least per year.

Mat Kendall: At least. And again, 150 is our minimum criteria. I think, you know, we are trying to get as many people trained in this field because we know how important it is so we want to emphasize that is a minimum.

Charles Friedman: Okay. Next question - *are the member colleges present in commitment letters and the financial officer's endorsed budgets considered executed contracts? Please clarify what needs to be included in the application regarding this.*

And the answer to this question is yes. If a member college's president has signed a letter of commitment and a financial officer or grants officer of the institution, someone official, has endorsed the budget that meets the requirement of the FOA for what we call a contract. We are just satisfied with that.

*Can tuition be considered as a budget contractual line item?*

I think we answered that. It is a form of financial aid.

*Is contracting between member colleges within the same region allowed to fulfill training in all roles?*

So I think that if we understand that question, this goes to the question about all six roles being covered in the consortium as a whole. And yes, all six roles must be covered in the consortium as a whole. It is not required that each member college itself cover all six roles in its training, but the consortium as a whole must cover all six roles.

And I - and to answer that...

Mat Kendall: And that - no - I think Chuck is right on that because we do not expect every institution to have all six trainings, but among the consortium we do.

Charles Friedman: Okay. I think we answered 15?

Mat Kendall: I think that is right.

Charles Friedman: Okay. *How many trainees to you want placed? Is there an expected percentage? Will those trained who were already working in the industry count as placements if they retain their jobs or make lateral moves? How*

*many trainees do you want placed? All of them.*

*Is there an expected percentage? One hundred.*

Obviously these are goals and we understand that these goals will not be completely attained in all cases, but it is a goal the program strives for.

I think the third part of this question is important. Will those trained who were already working in the industry count as placements if they retain their jobs or make lateral moves.

Here is the answer to this nuanced question. Certainly anyone who is not working in one of - in a job that is classified according to one of the six work force categories and moves into such a job will be classified as a placement.

If someone is already working in the field and goes back to their - (it even) - and goes back to their previous job but has responsibilities that are changed in a way that aligns with the training that they received, we will count this as a placement.

But if someone goes back to the same job after the training and does exactly what they were doing before, we will not count that as a placement.

Mat Kendall: That is right.

Charles Friedman: Okay. *There are concerns that employing a faculty person to teach might be considered double dipping since tuition is already being paid by the students for their instruction.*

The FOA is clear on this. We are not paying for routine instruction. That is not an allowable cost. But what is an allowable cost is coverage of faculty salary for preparation of, and gearing up and other activities related to implementation of the program in advance. But routine teaching in the classroom is not an allowable expense.

Do you want to take the next one Mat?

Mat Kendall: Sure thing. *Can a lead applicant front load some of the administrative budget expenses in one year not to exceed \$1 million over two years? In other words, can we spend more grant money - grant dollars than \$500,000?*

And the way we have structured this grant is you - is the cap of \$500,000 grant - per year. So that is the cap on a per year basis. We understand the issue that people might want to front load but that is not allowable on our grant rules because we are clearly illustrating that we expect costs for both years possibly.

Charles Friedman: Right. Right. Okay next question - *can we capture through the grant funds the associated per credit student's fees for the institution, for example student health service fees, technology fees and parking fees?*

The answer is only to the extent that those fees fall under the institution's definition of financial aid. Mat?

Mat Kendall: No.

Charles Friedman: Next one.

Mat Kendall: No.

Charles Friedman: Next one. (Unintelligible). Okay. *We would like to be a partner in a consortia with - related to the community college/career college health information technology granting. And the issue is we are unable to find a clearing health - house to help us to sort of determine where consortias may be developing or to express interest in help in joining.*

And regrettably we really cannot help facilitate this exercise. We can say that there are entities out there that are serving to facilitate those. I think we - colleges could show - reach out to their existing network of folks to work with their educational colleagues and workforce colleagues to find those grants, but unfortunately ONC cannot play this sort of a role in connecting folks.

Charles Friedman: Thank you. Next question - *what if some work extends beyond the time provided? Is there any chance of awarding a subcontract for services to be provided past the official end of the grant?* It is a very good question.

Obviously we would expect that the work of the grant will be completed in the project period of two years. But we also recognize that institutions that make a best effort to do so, sometimes cannot complete all of the work in the required period of time.

And in those circumstances, an institution can request what is called a no cost extension and they will not get any additional money beyond what is budgeted, but they will get the authority to spend the unspent amount of the budget in pursuit of the project goals.

I will say that this is something that must be requested, but it is a customary practice when there is a good reason to grant a no cost extension that it will be granted. So that is nothing - that is not something you should plan on. Do not

send us a 2-1/2 year budget saying that we will request a no cost extension. We want a two year budget but if circumstances conspire to - for you to need to use some of the non-spent budget for an additional part beyond the two years, you can request that.

Robert, do you want to add anything to that?

Robert Vinson: That is correct. And additionally, please do not request a no cost extension just to finish spending money that has not - that you have extra that is left over. You know, that is not a solid reason for a no cost extension.

Charles Friedman: Right. In other words, do not create a new program component. It is not allowable to create a new aspect to your program because you have \$200,000 left over and ask to spend it for that. We will only grant a no cost extension to complete something that you already proposed that is just not completed at that point.

*Okay. Can a consortium have more community college members than the maximum suggested in the FOA as long as it stays within the maximum budget allocated?*

Mat Kendall: And, you know, we are very, very interested in getting, you know, as many folks involved in this as possible. There are rules in terms of how we can allocate the funding and that are specified in the FOA in terms of the number of consortium we can pay for.

Charles Friedman: Yes. One more.

Mat Kendall: One more than the total number. That being said, we absolutely are looking to try to get this knowledge out to as many people as possible. And if there are

programs that are not willing to receive funding but want to be associated with this consortium and learn from this and leverage it across their programs that is absolutely something good that would probably help programs on some aspects of the scoring evaluation to - is getting more dollars out there. But we have to follow the guidelines specified in the FOA about...

((Crosstalk))

Charles Friedman: Right. So, so, so to put a finer point on that, the number of member colleges that can be funded cannot exceed one more than the maximum number stated in the FOA for that region. That is the maximum number of colleges that can have an executed sub-award budget.

That said, just to put an edge - a finer edge on what Mat said, bringing in to your consortium additional participating colleges who will not be funded but would like to participate is certainly something that applicants can do.

I would also emphasize that the curriculum materials that are being developed by the national curriculum development centers are going to be available nationally to any institution of higher education that wants to use them. And the use of those materials and the availability of those materials is not restricted to the contractually funded colleges in the consortia. More? (Need) more.

Chitra Mohla: We have lots more questions. *Is the combined capacity form included in the 25 narrative pages?*

Mat Kendall: The answer is no that that is outside - that is one of the defined attachments that we are - it is important for the evaluation but it outside the 25 pages.

Chitra Mohla: Please clarify the number of 424A to submit. I think we addressed that.

Mat Kendall: Right.

Charles Friedman: Yes.

Chitra Mohla: Please confirm the number to be trained. *Two thousand five hundred and fifty Page 9 says. Page 9 says 2550. Page 11 says 150 times number of schools.*

Mat Kendall: And I think the thresholds that we have in the table really are the minimum targets that we are looking for each region. However, if you are adding more regions and it is just illustrated it could be paid or unpaid, we are looking to follow that funding guideline of at least 150 provide students trained per community college.

Chitra Mohla: *Are there requirements for lead awardees about how they distribute resources to consortium members?*

Charles Friedman: No. No. We have not put any - we have not put any constraints on that. We were intentional in designing this program. Within the limits described on Page 21 for describing the purposes for which the funds can be used to allow each member college to request the funds it needs to stand up the program it is going to stand up.

So we have no - we have no subject only to the limitations on Page 21. We have not put any constraints on that whatsoever. I mean, we leave each consortium to work that out.

Chitra Mohla: *Would resources be distributed based on the number of people trained by each member?*

Mat Kendall: I think there is an expectation on our part that there will be a minimum number per community college. But if organizations have other ways of adding onto that, as Chuck said, we are giving maximum flexibility on how the funds are (out).

Chitra Mohla: *How many pages are allowed for letters of commitment?*

Mat Kendall: I think we have touched on that earlier in terms of the process that again we are looking for quality not necessarily quantity, but there is no defined limit.

Chitra Mohla: *Can financial aid to - be to students beyond the first year of the grant - first two (quarters)?*

Man: Yes.

Charles Friedman: Yes. Absolutely. Once again financial aid certainly can be paid to students in the second year of the grant. And what can be viewed - what can be paid as financial aid, as I said earlier, is subject to the member college's definition of financial aid.

But I would add, and maybe this is the intent of the question, financial aid can only be paid to students when they are in the six month training program. So for example, the following would not be allowed.

A student comes into the six month program, completes it, and then matriculates at the same community college for additional courses beyond the six - that is stipulated in the six month certificate training program.

Financial aid under the grant could not be awarded to that same student for that additional training. We will only cover with financial aid under the grant that six month - the cost partial or full of the student's work in that six month program.

Mat Kendall: Okay. *We have also got another question about sort of apportioning the costs across the board.* And I just want to reiterate, you know, if people come up with rational frameworks for doing this that makes sense with their own organization, we are giving you the flexibility to do that. It should make sense, but you have that flexibility.

Chitra Mohla: *Please explain in greater detail the statement on Page 23 regarding the lead awardee receiving funds that exceed the \$500,000 per year if they also conduct academic program development? Our program is a BA and Master's program, not a six month certificate program.*

Charles Friedman: An excellent oh I need to look that up.

Mat Kendall: I think that...

Charles Friedman: We are going to defer that.

Mat Kendall: ...we are going to defer that question in writing in - we will respond in our note - and - sort - oh in our frequently asked questions because it actually relates to some of the other work that we are working on. So Chitra are there other questions?

((Crosstalk))

Mat Kendall: Other questions? We are going to give folks a moment. I see a couple of raised hands on the electronic bulletin board. We are going to give folks a moment to sort of get those.

I would also like to just quickly I would like to clarify a potential question that folks might have on Page 8 about indirect costs, about sub-awards and that, you know, we recognize that in this situation there will be a primary award and then there will be community college sub-awardees. Indirect rates, all the information, indirect costs apply to either of those instances in the same way.

Charles Friedman: Correct.

Mat Kendall: So it is just be consistent that that works with both the primary but also the community colleges across everything.

Charles Friedman: So I can answer that question.

((Crosstalk))

Mat Kendall: Ah, Chuck is now...

Charles Friedman: Now that I have it in front of me.

Mat Kendall: ...comes back to the question we first...

Charles Friedman: So this is in reference to Page 23 and the sentence in the upper (wide) that says the lead awardee may also receive funds that exceed \$500,000 per year if they are also conducting academic program development and training.

So let's take the example, hypothetical, where the lead awardee is itself a community college. If the lead awardee is itself a community college, it can in affect fund itself as a member to develop its own academic program, it's own program directed at the six month training period to prepare trainees for one or more of the six roles.

If that means - if the lead institution chooses in affect to call its own number in that respect, it may budget itself as if it were a - as if it were a member college. The thing to remember here is that that amount is then deducted from the amount that could be forthcoming to the other member colleges. And again, as in so many cases with this program, we leave it to the discretion of the applicant to determine what is the best way to manage that.

But a community college as an applicant calling its own number and funding itself as if it were a member is allowed per that (stent) that is on Page 23.

Mat Kendall: But I think the question was if the lead applicant is a BA or a Master's program, it cannot - those are not eligible so they would...

Charles Friedman: That is true.

Mat Kendall: ...be stuck to the \$500,000

Chitra Mohla: Right.

Mat Kendall: ...annual cap.

Charles Friedman: That is correct.

Mat Kendall: Great. Chitra do we have any other questions coming in across the board?  
(Unintelligible). *There is a question about what faculty roles can be funded.  
And I think we have talked a little bit about this in terms that the faculty role  
of developing curriculum, things along those lines is fair game. But...*

((Crosstalk))

Charles Friedman: The FOA specifically says, Page 21, faculty release time to prepare for  
teaching in these programs is what can be supported.

Mat Kendall: (Grant)? Okay. And there is the second question just really relates to that as  
well. Additional questions?

*There is a question about what - if there is a difference in terms of the budget  
details for the lead applicant or for community colleges - the supporting  
community colleges?*

Our rules are the same. We are requiring the same level of detail for all budget  
submissions. They should all meet the standards established in the FOA. We  
need documentation of everything from everybody that that is along the way.  
But it looks like with that we are - we have no additional questions.

So I would just like to first of all thank my colleagues here especially Chuck  
and Robert for doing a great job of leading the answering of these questions.

I would also like to remind folks that we will still be answering questions that  
are submitted in writing to us at [hiteducation@hhs.gov](mailto:hiteducation@hhs.gov). I would like thank  
Chitra who has done a fabulous job in coordinating these efforts here and  
doing the whole process across the board leading the way.

And just offer to close by saying that we are very excited by the potential applicants we saw in the letters of intent. We are looking forward to the January 22 because we want to see what great applications are going on there. And we are looking forward to working with everybody in the future and implementing what we think will be a great program, exciting program, a needed program across the country.

So with that if there is nothing else I would like to thank you all very much and Operator if you want to just close it down.

Charles Friedman: Thank you.

Robert Vinson: Thank you.

Coordinator: That concludes today's session. Thank you for participating. You may now disconnect.

END