



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FY 2021

Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program (WELSP)

**IN SUPPORT OF
MARYLAND GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS
FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS (GEAR UP)**

Electronic and Paper Submission Due Date:
Friday, November 13, 2020
4:00 PM

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PROGRAM TIMETABLE

October 21, 2020	Workforce Employability & Leadership Skills Program RFP Issued
October 26, 2020	Technical Assistance RSVP Deadline
October 27, 2020	Technical Assistance Webinar
November 13, 2020	Proposals due to MHEC by 4:00 p.m.
November 23, 2020	Notice of Grant Awards
November 23, 2020	Project Start Date
March 15, 2021	Phase I Time & Effort Report Due
April 15, 2021	Interim Report Due
June 15, 2021	Phase II Time & Effort Report Due
September 15, 2021	Project End Date
October 15, 2021	Phase III Time & Effort Report Due
December 3, 2021	Final Report Due

This RFP and relevant forms are available at:
http://www.mhec.state.md.us/institutions_training/Pages/GEARUP.aspx

GAINING EARLY AWARENESS AND READINESS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS (GEAR UP)

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a U.S. Department of Education federally funded college access program. GEAR UP was authorized by Title IV of the 1998 Amendments to the Higher Education Act of 1965. The purpose of GEAR UP is to increase the number of low-income and first-generation students who are prepared to enroll in and succeed in college.

The higher education act legislation enables GEAR UP programs to provide:

- Academic support, mentoring, outreach, and supportive services to secondary GEAR UP cohort students to reduce the rise of students dropping out of school or the need for remedial education at the postsecondary level; and
- Provide information to students and their families about the advantage of postsecondary education and information about college financing options.

GEAR UP provides six or seven-year grants to states and partnerships to provide college access services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students.

GEAR UP Maryland

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) partnered with the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) to apply for the GEAR UP grant. The U.S. Department of Education awarded MSDE a \$13.2 million GEAR UP grant in September 2014. The Maryland GEAR UP grant is a six-year grant, 2014 through 2020.

Maryland's GEAR UP objectives are as follows:

1. Improve GEAR UP students' performance in mathematics and English Language Arts to facilitate high school graduation and college matriculation.
2. GEAR UP cohort students will indicate a greater awareness of college admissions requirements and opportunities.
3. GEAR UP parents/guardians will be able to demonstrate knowledge of requirements for high school graduation, postsecondary options, and acquiring financial aid for their student(s)
4. Students will be able to demonstrate a greater understanding of the opportunities available for financial assistance for college attendance.

Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program Summary

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:	The Maryland Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program (WELSP) centers on career exploration and educational planning that promotes self-efficacy, connects youth to professional sectors, and offers the opportunity to build transferrable skills required to secure and sustain employment. WELSP has a strong focus of outlining the benefits of postsecondary education, and is designed to train students to understand their core values, sharpen their soft skills, set obtainable goals, and hone their interests through career and job exploration.
GRANT OBJECTIVES:	MHEC's Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program supports Maryland's GEAR UP goals and objectives to increase the number of economically disadvantaged students who intend to pursue postsecondary education. The objectives are listed below: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Improve GEAR UP students' performance in Mathematics and English/Language Arts (ELA) to facilitate high school graduation and college matriculation outcomes.2. GEAR UP cohort students will indicate a greater awareness of college admissions requirements and opportunities.3. GEAR UP parents/guardians will be able to demonstrate knowledge of requirements for high school graduation, postsecondary options, and acquiring financial aid for their students.4. Students will be able to demonstrate a greater understanding of the opportunities available for financial assistance for college attendance.
ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:	An accredited public or not for profit independent two- or four-year Institution of Higher Education (IHE) in partnership with Local Education Agency (LEA).
SERVICE REGIONS:	Maryland GEAR UP school districts: Baltimore City, Dorchester, and Wicomico counties.
PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:	November 23, 2020 to September 15, 2021. Quarterly In-Kind Time and Effort reports will be required of the grantee.
AWARD AMOUNT:	Up to \$90,000 may be requested per institution. Five or more awards are anticipated. Grantees are required to provide a match contribution equal to at least 1/4 or 25% of the total direct funds requested from MHEC to support the WELSP. This non-federal match may be met with cash and/or in-kind contributions.
COOPERATIVE PLANNING:	Proposals must show evidence of collaborative planning between the primary IHE and the LEA.

REQUIRED FUNDED ACTIVITIES

TWO OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ARE REQUIRED. EACH ACTIVITY MUST USE THE STUDENT SERVICES DEFINITIONS OUTLINED BELOW, AND BE FULLY DETAILED IN THE PLAN OF OPERATION:

(A)	IN-SCHOOL/VIRTUAL SOFT SKILLS WORKSHOPS Soft skills are a combination of communication skills, social skills, and work ethic practices that enable students to navigate their environment and work well with others to meet a common goal. Soft skills include analytical thinking, verbal and written communication, and are vital to building relationships and creating opportunities for advancement. Below are examples of approved soft skill workshops: 1. COMMUNICATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Professional and technical writing, memos, and reports;• Blogging and social media;• Public speaking and customer service interactions and role plays (face-to-face or on the phone); and• Text messaging in the professional environment. 2. COLLABORATION AND TEAMWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working as an individual and as a member of the team;• Knowing how to define a role as part of the team;• Understanding different cultural values, work styles, and communication preferences; and• Identifying the strengths of the team members, and knowing how to apply teamwork to a range of situations. 3. SELF-MANAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing time and priorities- setting timelines, coordinating tasks for self and others;• Taking the initiative to make decisions, translating ideas into action, and generating solutions;• Asking for new responsibilities and assignments at work; and• Adapting to new situations, and identifying independence goals.
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(B) IN-SCHOOL/VIRTUAL LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS

Soft skills are a combination of communication skills, social skills, and work ethic practices that enable students to navigate their environment and work well with others to meet a common goal. Soft skills include analytical thinking, verbal and written communication, and are vital to building relationships and creating opportunities for advancement. Below are examples of approved soft skill workshops:

1. CROSS-CULTURAL LEADERSHIP AND DIVERSITY TRAINING

Program details are designed to increase the effectiveness of how we communicate and collaborate in a culturally diverse society. Today's students include populations from African Americans, Asian-Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics. Cultural assumptions, cultural values, prejudice and racism, and diversity inclusion in the context of leadership are to be included in this workshop.

2. CREATIVE INNOVATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Ideation is the creative process of generating, developing and communicating new ideas – they can be ideas for starting a new business, a new product, or new content. Ideation sessions include a myriad of idea generation exercises and involve an organized, methodical process of developing ideas and plans of execution. Project management focuses on meeting project goals and objectives through the application of processes, and obtaining final deliverables within a finite timescale and budget. Workshops may include the following themes:

- Conceptualization;
- Identifying patterns;
- Synthesizing;
- Sound Judgement; and
- Problem Solving;

3. COMMITMENT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND FEEDBACK

Program details are designed to focus on commitment to objectives, following through on goals, taking accountability for successes and failures, and assessing and improving work decisions. Below are topics that may be included within the workshops:

- Motivation and Determination;
- Work Ethic;
- Commitment to Company Objectives;
- Acknowledging Mistakes;
- Troubleshooting and Problem Solving;
- Transparency and Clarity;
- Following Up; and
- Providing Advice and Positive Reinforcement

<p>(C)</p>	<p>CAREER AND JOB EXPLORATION COUNSELING</p> <p>Career Counseling can provide assistance about career choices, career planning, internships, or career interest.</p> <p>Job exploration counseling can include a variety of professional activities that help students navigate their career-related interests. Specific to youth, real-world activities ensure that students recognize the relevance of a high school and postsecondary education to their futures, both in college and/or the workplace. Skills and training to help with career-related issues may include, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring academic and occupational training needed to succeed in the workplace; • Postsecondary opportunities associated with career fields or pathways, review of information regarding in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and nontraditional employment; and • Financial literacy: Loan counseling and return on investment.
<p>(D)</p>	<p>SUMMER PROGRAMS</p> <p>Services that include an experience over one or multiple days during the summer (or other non-school year time, e.g., for year-round schools). Summer programs are meaningful and planned activities and experiences that meet the guidelines of positive academic and socio-emotional youth development. Programs can be residential, local, or statewide and hosted by a college/university/community organization. Summer institutes, workshops, and leadership centered team-building may be included within summer programs. Summer programs may be included in the proposal, with specific attention to the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Discovery and Career Exploration; • STEM Experiential Learning and Application Workshops; and • Branding, Project Leadership, and Entrepreneurship Management;

(E) WORKPLACE READINESS TRAINING AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Workplace readiness and training is about being able to adapt to the workplace culture, and accept new tasks and assignments. Youth employment provides tools for students to fulfill their educational goals and explore various career fields by providing educational support, leadership, development, and work-related training through paid and unpaid experiences. Workplace readiness training and youth employment will provide Maryland GEAR UP students with the opportunity to:

- Gain exposure to various exciting career industries;
- Understand employer expectations, and evaluating and monitoring one's performance;
- Gain meaningful work experiences that support students career interests;
- Learn and develop the skills, attitudes, and commitment necessary to succeed in today's workforce;

PROPOSAL FORMAT

General Format Requirements

All grant proposals must meet the following criteria:

- Typed in 12-point Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman font, single-spaced;
- 8-1/2 by 11-inch pages—**numbered** and with one-inch margins on each side; and
- **The proposal narrative must not exceed fifteen (15) pages.** The page limit excludes the cover sheet, abstract, budget, budget narrative, cooperative planning agreements, résumés, and appendices. Also, the requirement that the pages be numbered applies only to the proposal narrative.

Submission Requirements

- All parts of the proposal must be submitted together using appropriate forms;
- **An unbound original proposal** must be submitted to
Kendall Cook
GEAR UP Grant Coordinator
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 N. Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201
- An electronic copy of the proposal and budget summary in excel format clearly labeled with the project title and institution must be submitted to kendall.cook@maryland.gov.
- A copy of the abstract must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document.

The grant proposal must include the following, though no points are awarded for these:

- **PROPOSAL COVER SHEET** (use the form in Appendix A)
- **ABSTRACT** (use form in Appendix A; 250 words or less to describe project services)
- **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Cover Page (use the form in **Appendix A**)
- B. Abstract (use form in **Appendix A**)
- C. Table of Contents
- D. Proposal Content

I. Needs Assessment (10 points)

- Summarize the demographics (e.g. number of students in the cohort, FARM rate, etc.) of the GEAR UP site.
- Describe the academic and social needs of the GEAR UP students with specific focus on the need for workforce and employability skills education.
- Describe how the baseline data was established for the project objectives and outcomes. How did you determine the best starting point for your program?
- Characteristics/Description: Describe the characteristics of the youth population to be served.
- **Recruitment and Intake:** How will the students be identified for and enrolled in the Workforce and Employability Skills Program? How will you meet the student's immediate needs?
- **Briefly define the proposed activities for GEAR UP students. Be sure to use the terms listed on page 7 and 8.**

II. Project Objectives and Outcomes (15 points)

- **List project objectives.** Refer to the State's GEAR UP goals. (see page 5-6)
 - **The project objectives and expected outcomes should be described as what you plan to accomplish by the end of the grant period. Specific objectives and outcomes should be presented and directly tied to each proposed activity.**

NOTE: Project objectives should be program specific and listed in "SMART" format.

- (e.g., the project expects **95%** of the **12th grade students** to participate in a workplace readiness and youth employment program by the **end of the school year**).
- Project Development and Structure: Provide a brief overview of how the Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program will operate.
 - What funded activities will your project include? Please list all required activities.
 - How will your program appropriate collaborate with and provide service to the local high school site?

III. Management Plan

(15 points)

- The management plan supports the implementation of the project. Direct service activities are part of the plan of operation not the management plan.
- The management plan will:
 - Include a **work plan** that lists major management actions for the project. Project duties should link to the budget and plan of operation;
 - Include, in chronological order, all major management activities;
 - Indicate what each key staff member's responsibilities are on the **Key Personnel & Advisory Committee Forms (Appendix A)**; assign responsibilities for major management actions to key personnel (attach résumés in an appendix);
 - Provide a clear organizational structure, a timeline, and milestones for accomplishing the management actions;
 - Demonstrate that the project director and other key staff have sufficient time to conduct the grant project;
 - Demonstrate the adequacy of the project team to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget; and
 - Describe each partner's role in the project.

IV. Plan of Operation

(25 points)

- This section must describe the activities that will achieve the project objectives and outcomes.
- The plan of operation will:
 - Be a detailed plan that **describes where and how each activity will be implemented, and key personnel responsible for each activity**;
 - Explain how the services to be provided are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients of the services and the project objectives';
 - Include specific information on how, when, where, and by whom the students, teachers, or parents will be recruited for each activity. Recruitment and retention are essential elements of project success and must be planned carefully and implemented rigorously. Brochures and fliers alone have not proven to be an effective recruitment method;
 - Provide detailed information about what students or parents will be required to do during each activity (e.g., When will it take place? How long will it last? Etc.);
 - **Estimate the number of participants for each activity and the number of participants served**;
 - **Indicate the number of contact hours per participant; and**
 - Include a timeline for the implementation of all activities.
 - **NOTE:** Use Plan of Operation sample table.

V. Project Evaluation

(20 points)

- The project evaluation is an integral part of the project's design and implementation and must be established and administered on a planned schedule. The evaluation should be based on the project objectives and outcomes, and indicate project success by quantitative or qualitative data as recorded by pre- and post- assessments.
- The evaluation plan should be aligned and based on the project objectives and outcomes.
- The evaluation plan should be a systematic means for monitoring (formative) and evaluating (summative) the program objectives and outcomes throughout the grant period.
- The evaluation should be a tool for making mid-grant programmatic changes. The proposal should describe a plan for collecting data throughout the project to be used for project improvement. Include formative assessments of project outcomes to determine if the project is moving toward success.
- The evaluation plan should describe what data will be collected, how frequently, by whom, and whether a quantitative and/or qualitative method of analysis will be employed to review project objectives and outcomes.
- **Evaluation results aligned to objectives and outcomes must be included with the interim and final reports.**
 - **Phase one** of the evaluation plan must be submitted with the interim report and include the activities that occurred during the reporting period, the intended objectives and outcomes for these activities as originally identified in the proposal, and if they were met. If the objectives and outcomes were not met, the evaluation report should discuss why and what modifications to the program will be made.
 - **Phase two** of the evaluation plan must be submitted with the final report and should include a comprehensive evaluation of the entire project. It should include the activities conducted, the corresponding objectives and outcomes, and discuss how they measured against the proposed objectives and outcomes. Provide information pertaining to the sustainability of this project in the future without grant funds.

VI. Budget and Cost Effectiveness

(15 points)

- **Grantees are required to provide a 25% in-kind match for funds requested. The required match must be included with the budget summary.**
- The budget summary must be completed on the Excel chart provided. There should be a clear link of all costs to the project activities detailed in the Plan of Operation section.

- The budget narrative should explain the rationale for each line of the budget summary for all planned grant expenditures. *This narrative must show how the amounts indicated were determined.* Label the budget narrative line items as the budget summary has been labeled.
- The proposal’s budget and cost-effectiveness will be evaluated on the extent to which:
 - The budget is adequate to support the project; it should be clear that all activities are accounted for in the budget;
 - **The costs are reasonable** in relation to the objectives, outcomes, and design;
 - **The costs are reasonable** in relation to the number of students to be served;
 - The budget complies with the guidelines laid out in this RFP;
 - In-kind contributions of 25% are identified and included;
 - There is adequacy of support—including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources—from the lead institution and the other partners identified; and
 - Administrative costs are kept to a minimum.
- **Indirect costs charged to the grant cannot exceed 8%.**
- **THE BUDGET SUMMARY** form should show all planned expenditures for the project (see Budget Summary form in Appendix A):
 - Column 1, “WELSP Funds Requested,” is the amount of the grant being applied for.
 - Column 2, “Matching Funds,” will include both cash and in-kind contributions from the applicant who will serve as the fiscal agent if the grant is awarded. Projects are required to contribute matching funds that equal 25% of the project total, contributions that are provided should be documented. (See also “Grants Management-Records.”) In-kind contributions will assist the State in meeting the required match of federal GEAR UP funds.
 - Column 3, “Other Funds,” shows funds or in-kind contributions committed by cooperating organizations, agencies, institutions, local education agencies (LEAs), or others for this project. If more than one entity is committing funds for this project, indicate the specific breakdown of such funds on a separate page.
 - Column 4, “Totals,” shows the line-by-line sum of columns 1, 2, and 3.
- **THE BUDGET NARRATIVE** must **explain the rationale for each line of the budget summary for grant expenditures and matching funds.** This narrative must show how the amounts indicated were determined. Label the budget narrative line items as the budget summary has been labeled.

These budget guidelines apply (arranged by line item corresponding to the budget summary):

A. Salaries and Wages

Note on Personnel:

Estimates of personnel time should be justified in terms of the tasks to be performed and the instructional contact hours. **Salaries are to be a function of regular appointment (% time commitment) for the academic year or the summer session, if applicable. Salaries cannot be drawn at a higher pay rate than that which the individual normally receives.**

1. Professional Personnel

List individually all key personnel and the requested salary amounts to be funded during the summer and/or academic year by indicating what percent of the individual's annual time will be committed to the project. Actual instructional compensation, if requested, is restricted to one course load equivalent for academic semester courses and/or one summer course equivalent. If effort is committed as an in-kind institutional contribution, the value should be noted in column 2 or column 3. For example, Jill Smith [Co-Project Director] –annual salary is \$45,000 and she will spend 10% of her time on project activities during the program period. Salary in the amount of **\$4,500** will be an **in kind/MATCH contribution**. ($\$45,000/\text{annual salary} \times .10/\text{percent} = \$4,500$)

2. Other Personnel

List individually all support personnel by support category and the requested rate of pay. Support personnel must be clearly justified and may include clerical and graduate or undergraduate assistants. If effort is committed as an in-kind institutional contribution, that should be noted in column 2 or column 3.

B. Fringe Benefits

These are calculated at the costs normally paid by the institution for the salaried members of its faculty and staff who will be involved in the project (according to the percentage of effort in the project). Fringe benefits can be a MATCH. For example, fringe benefits for Jill Smith and Jonathan Daniel will be match and calculated at $(18\% \times \$4,500) + (\$10,800 \times .18) = \text{MATCH } \$2,754$

C. Travel

Enter travel costs if necessary for key personnel to conduct off-campus activities. Mileage allowances may not exceed the State's approved rate for mileage reimbursement at the time of travel. Currently this rate is 54.5 cents per mile. All travel funding must be specifically designated by place and position, approximate date, distance, and method of travel and be approved in the project budget. **No out-of-state travel for conferences is allowed**, excluding travel throughout Maryland and the District of Columbia metro area.

D. Equipment

Purchasing non-instructional equipment is not permitted. Equipment means an article of non-expendable tangible personal property having a useful life of more than 1 (one) year and an acquisition cost per unit that is consistent with institutional policy.

Equipment that is necessary to perform project activities should be leased or rented unless the cost to purchase is less. Leasing costs should be limited to the period of use.

E. Materials and Supplies

Non-expendable supplies, including but not limited to books and materials and computer software necessary for the effective implementation of the funded activity, may be purchased only if they are necessary and appropriate to the project activities. Items purchased are considered property of the School or WESP students, and must remain at the school upon completion of grant activities.

F. Consultant and Contractual Services

Use of program consultants must be justified and reasonable, and their fee should be a reflection of instructional time or time spent delivering other direct services (e.g., presenting at a parent workshop). Travel and per diem expenses for consultants should not exceed the institutional or State rate, or that allowed by federal OMB circulars, whichever is least.

Preparation time for consultants will not be paid by the grant. Properly documented contractual agreements for expenditures to consultants or outside agencies for fees, travel, and routine supplies must be filed per institutional policy; and contractual payments cannot exceed institutional salary levels for similar work. Documentation for consultant services performed should be filed showing:

- a. Consultant's name, dates, hours, and amount charged to grant;
- b. Names of grant participants to whom services were provided; and
- c. Results or subject matter of the consultation.

G. Other (specify)

- a. Subsistence is prohibited by federal standards. Since the students qualify for FARMS, ask districts if food programs can be extended to afterschool programs (if meals provided: State regulations apply and require that an agenda and an attendance list be supplied);
- b. Rental of space, if necessary; and
- c. Any other costs not included above that are necessary to implement the project. Note that expenses for souvenir items are not allowed.

H. Total Direct Costs

Enter sum of Items A, B, C, D, E, F, and G.

I. Indirect Costs

Up to eight (8%) percent of funds requested (Column 1, Item H, total direct costs) from the grant program monies to cover the direct cost of the project may be claimed for indirect costs recovery. The rate requested must be the percentage permitted by its restricted indirect cost rate agreement, or 8%, whichever is less.

J. Total

Enter sum of Item H and I. Observe that the Total (Item J) in Column 1 for "WELSP Funds Requested" is the amount of the grant being applied for. Be sure to reconcile the total in each line and each column.

K. Project Match Requirement

Grantees are required to provide matching contribution equal to at least 1/4 or 25% of the total direct funds requested from MHEC to support the WELSP. For example, a request for \$100,000 should be supported by \$25,000 in-kind or matching funds bringing the total investment in the project to \$125,000. This non-federal match may be met with cash and/or in-kind contributions. Documentation of matching contributions must contain adequate source documentation for the claimed cost share, provide clear valuation of in-kind matching, and provide support of cost sharing. In-kind contributions must be valued in accordance with relevant Office of Management and Budget (OMB) circulars and the Education Department of General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR). In-kind valuation of contributions of facilities and equipment must be done using depreciation rather than fair market value.

FUNDED GRANT POLICIES

1. FISCAL PROCEDURES

All funds under this program must be assigned to a specific account. For this grant cycle, grant awards will be disbursed in two payments:

- The first payment will be 50% of the total grant award. This payment will be made shortly after the award notification.
- The second payment will be the remaining 50% of the total grant award. This payment will be made after the project's interim report has been received and approved.

NOTE: Expenditure in excess of approved budget amounts will be the responsibility of the recipient institution.

2. POST-AWARD CHANGES

The grant recipient shall obtain prior written approval for any change to the scope of the approved project. To request changes, a Project Amendment Request must be submitted to MHEC's Office of Outreach and Grants Management. The request must include an explanation of the specific programmatic changes and revised budget, as applicable. If project activity dates have changed significantly since the application submission, you must submit a revised calendar of activity dates.

The grant recipient must also obtain prior written approval from MHEC's Office of Outreach and Grants Management to:

1. Continue the project during any continuous period of more than three (3) months without the active direction of an approved project director;
2. Replace the project director (or any other persons named and expressly identified as key personnel in the application) or to permit any such person to devote substantially less effort to the project than was anticipated when the grant was awarded;
3. Make changes resulting in additions or deletions of staff and consultants related to or resulting in a need for budget reallocation; and
4. Make budget changes exceeding \$1,000 or 10% in any category, whichever is greater.

3. PROJECT CLOSEOUT, SUSPENSION, TERMINATION

Closeout: Each grant shall closeout promptly as feasible after expiration or termination. During closeout, the following shall be observed:

- The grant recipient shall immediately refund, in accordance with instructions from MHEC, any unobligated balance of cash advanced to the grant recipient; and

- The grant recipient shall submit all financial, performance, evaluation, and other reports required by the terms of the grant by the due dates spelled out in this RFP.
- The closeout of a grant does not affect the retention period for State and grantor rights of access to grant records.

Suspension: When a grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of a grant, MHEC may, upon reasonable notice to the grant recipient, suspend the grant in whole or in part. In addition, if MHEC is unable to connect with the Project Director for more than thirty **(30) calendar days**, MHEC reserves the right to suspend the grant in whole or in part. The notice of suspension will state the reasons for the suspension, any corrective action required of the grant recipient, and the effective date. Suspensions shall remain in effect until the grant recipient has taken action satisfactory to MHEC or given evidence satisfactory to MHEC that such corrective action will be taken or until MHEC terminates the grant.

Termination: MHEC may terminate any grant in whole or in part at any time before the date of expiration, whenever MHEC determines that the grant recipient has materially failed to comply with the terms of the grant. MHEC shall promptly notify the grant recipient in writing of the termination and the reasons for the termination, together with the effective date.

The grant recipient may terminate the grant in whole or in part upon written notification to MHEC, setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial terminations, the portion to be terminated. However, if in the case of a partial termination, MHEC determines that the remaining portion of the grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made; MHEC may terminate the grant.

NOTE: Closeout of a grant does not affect the right of MHEC to disallow costs and recover funds due to a later audit or review, nor does closeout affect the grantee's obligation to return any funds due as a result of later refunds, corrections, or other transactions.

4. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF SUPPORT AND DISCLAIMER

An acknowledgment of the Maryland Higher Education Commission must appear in any publication of materials based on or developed under this project. Materials must also contain the following disclaimer:

“Opinions, findings, and conclusions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Maryland Higher Education Commission, and no official endorsement should be inferred.”

All media announcements and public information pertaining to activities funded by this grant program should acknowledge support of the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

At such time as any article resulting from work under this grant is published in a professional journal or publication, two reprints of the publication should be sent to the Maryland Higher Education Commission Office of Outreach and Grants Management, and clearly labeled with appropriate identifying information.

5. RECORDS

Grantees should keep records indicating how funds are expended, the total cost of project activities, the share of the cost provided from other sources (in-kind or otherwise), and any other relevant records to facilitate an effective audit. Such records should be held for three (3) years after the grant ends. Any unspent grant funds must be returned with the final fiscal report.

- Records of significant project experience and evaluation results; and
- Records that fully show amount of funds under the grant, how the funds were used, total cost of projects, all costs and contributions provided from other sources, and other records to facilitate an effective audit.

6. SITE VISITS

The Maryland Higher Education Commission requires periodic site visits for grant programs funded through the agency. To fulfill the requirement and learn more about the Workforce and Employability Skills Program, MHEC will conduct at least (1) site visit per grant cycle. However, it is to the discretion of the agency if additional site visits are needed.

7. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A. TIME & EFFORT REPORTS

Submission: Quarterly (See Schedule Below)

Quarterly in-kind and Time & Effort reports are required from all grantees. MHEC must submit documentation of the effort to meet the GEAR UP matching requirement. Matching documentation includes three phases of the Quarterly In-Kind & Time and Effort report, and are due according the schedule below. Any grantee not able to meet these requirements must provide proper justification with the initial proposal submission.

The following due dates are outlined below:

Phase	Time Period	Report Due Date*
Phase I	November 23 rd – February 28 th	March 15, 2021
Phase II	March 1 st – May 31 st	June 15, 2021
Phase III	June 1 st – Sept 15 th	October 15, 2021

B. INTERIM REPORT

Deadline: Due April 15, 2021

- **For the report to be acceptable, it must include:**
 - Phase one of the evaluation plan (see Proposal Narrative, Section 2.5 Project Evaluation for details);
 - Interim updated Enrollment Data and Outcomes Forms;
 - A roster of participants for each activity;
 - An “activity and participant information” chart included on the Interim Report Response Questions;
 - A budget that shows how much of the grant has been expended, matched and how much remains in each line item of the original accepted budget proposal;
 - Responses to the other questions posed on the interim report form; and
 - Evidence that the project is progressing sufficiently to continue.

FINAL REPORT

Deadline: Due December 3, 2021

Final reports should address items on the interim report but for the full term of the grant. Final reports must be submitted to MHEC (90) days upon project closeout. **Failure to submit a final report may make the project director ineligible to apply for future grants.** This report must include the following:

- Final and updated Cohort Baseline Enrollment and Data reports must be included.
- Final reports have a financial report section and a narrative report section (see below for details).
- The final report includes the comprehensive evaluation of the grant. This evaluation will include the evaluation plan components from the accepted proposal. The evaluation should restate the objectives included in the proposal and discuss how the project outcomes compared to those stated in the proposal and the evaluation instrument(s) used.
- **Final reports should include the same type of Participant Roster and Participant Contact Hours requested for the interim report that is**

updated to reflect the information for the full term of the grant (not just the second half of the grant).

A. NARRATIVE REPORTS: Include the results of the evaluation plan outlined in the project proposal and document the project outcomes. These reports will:

- Address the objectives and outcomes of the project, comparing those that were named in the proposal to the actual results and explaining how and to what extent project activities were successful in meeting project objectives and outcomes;
- Include Phase 2 of the evaluation plan (see Proposal Narrative, Section 2.5 Project Evaluation); this will include the results of the evaluation plan described in the proposal—and include the results and report of any evaluator paid by the grant;
- Note where or how the project activities might be improved; and
- Indicate the number of students, teachers, and parents that were served. Include the participant table in the interim report form and for the full grant term.

The narrative report should also include detailed and final participant data, reflecting the total number of participants by position (student, teacher, or parent). Sign-in sheets and attendance records that provide proof of attendance can serve as a place to collect most of this information in preparation for reporting, but reports should summarize the data. Interim reports include project narrative, data, and budget sections that include but are not limited to:

- Responses to questions posed on the interim report form (e.g., progress to date, whether the project on track with original timeline, challenges encountered);
- Evidence that the project is progressing sufficiently to continue (students' progress);
- Project data including the number of students served and outreach activities and services provided; and
- The budget report showing grant expenditures and remaining budget in each line item of the original accepted budget application. Grantees should keep records indicating how funds are expended, the total cost of project activities, the share of the cost provided from other sources, and any other relevant records to facilitate an effective audit. Such records should be held for three (3) years after the grant ends. Any unspent grant funds must be returned with the final fiscal report.

B. THE FINANCIAL REPORT must be signed by a financial officer at the institution serving as the fiscal agent. Grantees should keep records indicating how funds are expended, the total cost of project activities, the share of the cost provided from other sources (in-kind or otherwise), and any other relevant

records to facilitate an effective audit; such records should be held for five (5) years after the grant ends.

NOTE: Any unspent grant funds should be returned with the financial report.

Relevant forms available at:

http://www.mhec.state.md.us/institutions_training/Pages/GEARUP.aspx.

PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

The reviewers will read each application and score each according to the grant selection criteria described. The reviewers make recommendations as to funding and adjustments that the project staff might make to improve either the project to be implemented or the proposal if it is rejected for this round of funding. Reviewer's funding recommendations are forwarded to the Secretary of Higher Education (or designee) for final approval.

FUNDED PROJECT EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

Each application will be evaluated and scored based on the following categories:

Category	Maximum Points
Needs Assessment	10
Project Objectives and Outcomes	15
Management Plan	15
Plan of Operation	25
Project Evaluation	20
Budget and Cost Effectiveness	<u>15</u>
Total	100

NOTICE OF GRANT AWARDS

Funded projects will be announced on **Monday, November 23, 2020** by email to the listed Project Director(s).

APPEAL PROCESS

The following procedures have been established regarding appeals of disapproved grant proposals:

- The applicant shall be notified in writing if the proposal is not selected for funding support.
- Upon request of the applicant and within 14 days of notification, the Maryland Higher Education Commission will provide additional information outlining the reasons for disapproval.
- The sole basis for appeal is violation of State statutes or regulations.
- If the applicant wishes to appeal, a request for a hearing must be made within 30 days of the action of the Maryland Higher Education Commission.
- Within 30 days thereafter, the Maryland Higher Education Commission shall hold a hearing.
- No later than 10 days after the hearing, the Maryland Higher Education Commission shall issue its written decision.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Contact the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) Office of Outreach and Grants Management if you have questions about the proposal format or require further assistance. Project directors are also encouraged to contact MHEC whenever they have questions about grant implementation or management:

Kendall Cook
GEAR UP Grant Coordinator
Maryland Higher Education Commission
kendall.cook@maryland.gov
Phone: (410) 767-7269

**Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program
Technical Assistance Webinar
Wednesday, October 27, 2020
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Please RSVP to Kendall Cook at kendall.cook@maryland.gov by October 26, 2020.

APPENDIX A. REPORT TEMPLATES

Cover Sheet
Abstract
Key Personnel Members
Advisory Committee
Budget Summary
Budget Narrative
Assurances
Cooperative Planning Agreement

**MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
WORKFORCE EMPLOYABILITY AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS PROGRAM**

FY 2021 PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Lead Applicant Institution/Organization: _____

Title of Project: _____

Partnership Members: LEA DISTRICT Site: _____

Schools Served: _____

Other partner institutions, organizations, or private companies: _____

Project Director(s): _____ Campus Telephone: _____

FAX Number: _____ E-mail: _____

Campus Mailing Address: _____

Grants Office Contact Name & Title (post award): _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone number: _____

Campus Mailing Address: _____

Finance or Business Office Contact Name & Title: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone number: _____

Campus Mailing Address: _____

Certification by authorizing official (V.P. level or above):

Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____

Abstract

FY 2021 Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program

Lead Institution: _____

Project Title: _____

In 250 words or less, describe (for an educated general audience) your project activities.

(Note that this may be reproduced as is or edited by MHEC staff for inclusion in press releases and other publications describing the grant program.)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Complete the list of the Program Advisory Committee members. Members included maybe from secondary and postsecondary academic faculty, educators; school counselors and admissions officers; members of labor organizations

KEY PERSONNEL (Before typing, duplicate this page for as many entries as needed). Complete the list of the key personnel who are responsible for planning and/or implementing the Workforce and Employability Skills Program (WESP) such as secondary and postsecondary faculty, educators and administrators, school counselors and admissions officers, and others as appropriate. Use this template and insert all information for each entry. Under "Type of Member" please check all boxes that apply, especially for those who also serve on the Advisory Committee. Note: Their names do not have to be repeated on the list of Advisory Committee Members. Please provide resumes for all Key Personnel.

1 st Entry here is the GEAR UP school site Liaison		1 st Entry here is the Postsecondary Liaison	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee	Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee	Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee	Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee	Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee	Type of Member: (Place an "X" in all boxes that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Postsecondary <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Also on Advisory Committee

and the business community, representatives from economic and workforce development; and other stakeholders as deemed appropriate. Include all of the information requested for each entry. Use this template to ensure that all information is provided (Before typing, duplicate this page for as many members as needed).

1st Entry here is the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee			
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	
Name:		Name:	
Title:		Title:	
Affiliation:		Affiliation:	
Role or Expertise:		Role or Expertise	

BUDGET SUMMARY (use this Excel format)

WELSP Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program FY 2021

Higher Education Institution: _____

Project Number: WELSP 21-_____

Project Title: _____

SOURCE OF FUNDS				
	COLUMN 1 *WELSP FUNDS REQUESTED	COLUMN 2 **INSTITUTION 25% Required Match	COLUMN 3 ***OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS In-Kind/Match	COLUMN 4 TOTALS
A. Salaries & Wages				
Professional Personnel	[List each by name followed by title in brackets]			
1				
2				
3				
4				
Other Personnel (list categories & # of each in brackets)				
5. []				
6. []				
7. []				
8. []				
Total Salaries and Wages				
B. Fringe Benefits				
C. Travel				
D. Equipment				
1				
2				
E. Materials and Supplies				
F. Consultant and Contractual Services				
G. Other (specify)				
1				
2				
H. Total Direct Costs (A through G)				
I. Total Indirect Costs (max. 8% of H)				
J. Total (H and I)				

*Include all grant-funded expenses.

**Include any contributions from applicant institution in this column. Include both cash and in-kind contributions, distinguishing in the budget narrative which type of contribution is provided for a given item.

***Include any contributions from other partners in the grant project in this column.

BUDGET NARRATIVE (use this format)

FY 2021 Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program (WELSP)

Applicant Institution & Project Title:

[Provide justification for each line of the budget summary, as outlined in the RFP.]

A. Salaries & Wages

Ex.: *Professional Personnel:*

1. Dr. Jill Smith [Project Director] will spend 10% of her time in project activities during the 2018-19 academic year. Maryland State University requests for this time only the amount it will cost the university to pay an adjunct to replace Dr. Smith in one course. Request = \$5,000

Column 2: The University will contribute the difference between the \$4,500 requested and 10% of Dr. Smith's 10 month salary as in-kind cost share valued at \$7,500. Match = \$2,500

Other Personnel:

1. Administrative Assistant (1): Request = \$12.00/hour x 5 hours/week x 52 weeks = \$3,120

Column 2: Maryland State Univ. will provide release time for a database programmer (1) to help develop and maintain a database for the project: \$27/hr. x 2 hrs./wk. x 26 wks. Match = \$1,404

B. Fringe Benefits

Ex.: 1. Fringe benefits for Dr. Smith and the administrative assistant are calculated at 32%
Request = \$10,620 x .32 = \$3,398.40

C. Travel

Ex.: Travel for WELSP project director to LEA district school site for six lessons for students
Request = \$0.56 **cents** per mile x 6 trips x 60 miles/trip = \$198.00

D. Equipment

Ex.: Desktop computer for students' use in after-school writing lab at GEAR UP school site
Column 3: \$500 assessed value as provided by ABCville Chamber of Commerce (donor)

E. Materials and Supplies

Ex.: Study Company! Math Software for students' use during summer campus-based academic camp and follow-up use (site license will be held by LEA DISTRICT high school)
Request = \$2,100/software package with site license for use on 6-10 CPUs = \$2,100

F. Consultant and Contractual Services

Ex.: Instructional Technology consultant to be hired to assist college faculty with development of integrated PowerPoint presentation, website upload of the presentation, and related classroom materials; one-hour introduction and two follow-up sessions of 3 hours each (see timeline); hourly fee of \$65
Request = 7 hours x \$65/hour = \$455

G. Other

Ex. Snacks for 6 Saturday workshops (50 students, 5 undergraduate assistants, 5 staff)
Request = \$3/participant/day x 6 days x 60 participants = \$1,080

H. Total Direct Costs = [Item H, column 1 ONLY] = \$15,351.40

I. Indirect Costs = 8% x \$15,351.40 = \$1,228.11

J. Total Cost [column 1 total is the grant request]

ASSURANCES

The Applicant hereby affirms and certifies that it will comply with all applicable regulations, policies, guidelines, and requirements of the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and the State of Maryland as they relate to the proposal, acceptance, and use of Workforce Employability and Leadership Skills Program funds in this project. Also, the Applicant affirms and certifies that:

1. It possesses legal authority to apply for the grant; e.g., an official act of the applicant's governing body has been duly adopted or passed, authorizing filing of the proposal, including all understandings and assurances contained therein and directing and authorizing the person identified as the official representative of the proposal and to provide such additional information as may be required.
2. It will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d) prohibiting employment discrimination where discriminatory employment practices will result in unequal treatment of persons who are or should be benefiting from the grant-aided activity.
3. It will comply with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, the Pro-Children Act (prohibiting smoking in the presence of children), and the laws set forth in OMB Standard Form 424B.
4. It will enter into formalized agreement(s) with the local education agency or agencies (LEAS) named in the proposal in the area(s) of proposed service, as well as with other members of the collaborative, where applicable.
5. It will expend funds to supplement new and/or existing programs and not use these funds to supplant non-grant funds.
6. It will participate in any statewide assessment program or other evaluation program as required by the MHEC.
7. It will give the MHEC and/or the Legislative Auditor, through any authorized representative, the right of access to, and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the grant.
8. It will comply with all requirements imposed by the MHEC concerning special requirements of law and other administrative requirements.

Institution

Signature of Authorized Institutional Authority

Name and Title, Printed

Date

COOPERATIVE PLANNING AGREEMENT
Between

_____ and the participating partners
(Name of institution submitting proposal)

in the Workforce and Employability Skills Program (WELSP).

This cooperative planning agreement reflects the commitment of each partner to the grant project, including the specific responsibilities and roles each one bears if the grant is awarded.

The undersigned agree to abide by the conditions of the proposal.

Required Partners for Eligibility:

(1) College or University applicant (proposed project director/coordinator):

This partner will provide ***[summarize the services/activities etc. that the university/college representatives will provide]***:

Name & Title (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(2) Authorized SCHOOL DISTRICT Superintendent/CEO: _____

This partner will provide ***[summarize the responsibilities and duties the LEA SCHOOL DISTRICT will provide to support the WELSP project]***:

Name & Title (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(3) _____ LEA GEAR UP COORDINATOR:

This partner will provide ***[summarize the responsibilities and duties the LEA GEAR UP POINT OF CONTACT will provide to support the WELSP project]***:

Name & Title (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(4) _____ High School Principal:

This partner will provide ***[summarize the support the middle school principal will provide to the WELSP project.]***

Name & Title (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other Partners (name each, summarize each one's role/responsibilities, and obtain the appropriate authorized signature from each entity):

Name & Title (print):

Signature: _____ Date: _____

(These pages may be duplicated or reproduced; all signatures do not have to be on the same page if each partner's role is summarized on the form prior to signature. Additional pages should be added to include additional partners (e.g. high school principals

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