



Ohio Financial Literacy Education Grant Program FY 2016

Program and Application Guide March 2015

Ohio Department of Commerce
An Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider

Introduction

The Ohio Department of Commerce (the “Department”) is one of the state’s chief regulatory agencies. It comprises seven divisions which enforce a variety of regulations. The Department’s primary mission focuses on balancing consumer protection with the needs of the industries and small business persons it regulates. The Department is self-supporting as its revenues are generated by fees paid by the industries and licensees being regulated.

In 2008 the Financial Literacy Education Fund was created to support various adult financial literacy education programs developed and implemented to benefit Ohioans. The authority for this fund is established in Ohio Revised Code section 121.085 and Ohio Administrative Code section 1301-1-02. The monies in this fund are used to provide competitive grant awards to entities offering financial literacy programs in Ohio.

Purpose: The Purpose of the Financial Literacy Education Fund is to provide adult financial literacy education programs to Ohioans. The monies in the fund will be used to provide financial support in areas of need and address gaps in financial education delivery.

Beneficiaries: The Financial Literacy Education Fund will support programs which enhance adult financial literacy in Ohio. These programs may be available and open to individuals of all ages. Grant recipients will identify populations that could benefit from financial education but lack access to such programs.

Available Funds: The Department will award up to \$75,000 in grants to eligible programs in fiscal year 2016.

Criteria: Grant proposals must focus on efficient delivery of financial education to adults. Successful applicants will demonstrate the need for financial education in their community and justify their reasons for focusing on their chosen populations and subject matter. Applicants must explain how they intend to market their programs in order to reach their target populations. One half of grant programs must be offered by or at community colleges or state institutions.

In order to track how effectively grant funds are being utilized, grantees will be required to submit reports on a quarterly basis. In addition, grantees will also be required to submit a final report to the Department no later than three months after the end of their program describing how the grant monies were spent, the number of Ohioans served, curriculum used and lessons learned. A reporting template will be provided prior to the start of the program to help grantees track their performance.

Application Information

Applicants must clearly define the expected program output, goals, and measurements. Applications should be no more than six pages in length, not including attachments. Programs must be completed in 12 months or less. Applications should include the following information:

Organization Name and Address

Program Name

Grant Amount Requested

Organizational Background: In one page or less, share the strengths and expertise that your organization has and a track record of success to demonstrate your ability to implement your program.

Executive Summary: In two pages or less, summarize your proposed program. This must include, but is not limited to, proposed program materials, method of presentation, expected duration of the presentation or program, and how the program relates to financial literacy. You should also include information regarding how many people you plan to serve, if it is a new or expanded program, your program delivery channels, what your expected outcome is and how you will measure success. The program must be designed to ensure that students actively participate in the instructional process while completing the program by utilizing techniques that require substantial student interaction with the instructor, other students, written course materials or a computer program.

Program Time Line: In one page or less, describe your work plan and timeline, including key milestones and deliverables. Describe how much time will be required for preparation and how much time will be in active implementation. Include how you plan to market the program and what materials will be used for marketing purposes.

Program Budget: In one page or less, describe how you will use grant funds to implement your program. Please include a description of how you would use grant funds in an amount less than requested.

Sustainability and Scalability: In two to three paragraphs, explain the business model behind your program. Explain how the program will continue after the grant period. In an additional paragraph, explain how your program might be scaled to serve more Ohioans.

Program Success: In two to three paragraphs explain how you will evaluate your success. Include what key quantifiable and qualitative numbers and information you will use to demonstrate success. Please include the method of verification of attendance and the method used to ensure students master the material, such as a quiz.

Resumes for Course Instructors: Applicants must provide names, addresses, and resumes for course instructors or job descriptions for instructors that would be hired or paid using grant monies.

Secretary of State Filings: Applicants must also provide evidence of all necessary filings with the Ohio Secretary of State and their Federal Tax Payer ID and DUNS number.

Audited Financial Statement: Applicants must include an audited financial statement with the applications. If more than ninety days have passed since the date of the most recent audited financial statement, the applicant shall provide an unaudited financial statement dated within sixty days of application to supplement its most recent audited financial statement.

Signature of an Authorized Representative of the Applicant: Applications must include the following attestation and be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.

(Insert Applicant representative's name) hereby attests that all information provided in this application and all attachments affixed thereto have been prepared by me, or upon my direction and supervision, and that these documents constitute a complete, truthful, and correct statement of all information requested by the Director of Commerce.

Application Submission: All application material must be submitted by the close of business March 31, 2015. Applications should be sent to Jeannie Foley. Applications can be emailed to Jeannie.Foley@com.ohio.gov or mailed to 77 South High Street, 21st Floor, Columbus Ohio, 43215.

Questions: Questions regarding the application process can be directed to Ms. Foley via email, at Jeannie.Foley@com.ohio.gov. Responses will be posted with a copy of the question on the Ohio Division of Financial Institution's webpage. All Questions asked before March 25, 2015 will be answered. Questions submitted after March 25, 2015 will not be answered, unless the Department determines it to be in the best interests of the state to waive this timeliness requirement.

The Department may reject any application if it fails to meet the deadline for submission.

Evaluation and Award Process

The Department will review all timely submitted applications for their completeness. Applications received after March 31, 2015 will not be accepted. The Department normally rejects incomplete applications, though it may waive any defects or allow an applicant to submit a correction, if the Department believes doing so would not result in an unfair advantage for the applicant.

A representative of the Department will review the applications to ensure the applicant has the organizational capacity to complete the work it proposes to accomplish and is able comply with all of the grant requirements. Applications that do not demonstrate the requisite organizational capacity will be eliminated from further consideration. The Department may seek additional information regarding an applicant's organizational capacity, if it will not cause any material unfairness to other applicants.

Before the applications are provided to the Evaluation Panel, the Department's representative will redact the name and other identifying information in each application so that the evaluation process is blind to the identity of the applicant and based solely on the announced criteria.

All eligible applications will be reviewed by an Evaluation Panel comprised of employees from multiple divisions within the Department. Each member of the panel will independently review the applications before the panel meets to score the applications. The panel will arrive at a consensus score for each of the following criteria: statement of need, program design, budget, goals, sustainability and scalability.

During the evaluation process, in the Department's sole discretion, it may request clarification or allow any applicant the opportunity to correct a mistake or defect in its application, if doing so would not result in an unfair advantage for the applicant, and it is in the Department's interest. The Department may reject any clarification that is non-responsive or broader in scope than what it requested. If the applicant fails to respond to the request for clarification, the Department may request a corrected clarification, consider the application without the clarification, or disqualify the application.

The Department may reject an application if it fails to meet the stated deadline for clarification in the Department's request.

Corrections and clarifications must be completed off State premises. Once a consensus score has been reached for applications, the Evaluation Panel will make recommendations to the Director of Commerce regarding grant awards. In addition to identifying what programs to award, the evaluation panel will also make recommendations as to the funding level for applications. Grant awards may or may not fully fund the request.

Awards will be announced by letter to the successful applicants. The Department expects to make awards by April 30, 2015. Some applications may not be successful. For those applicants that are not successful, the Department will advise the applicant by letter, briefly describing the reasoning, as is articulated by the Evaluation Panel.

All Proposals and other material submitted will become the property of the State and may be returned only at the Department's option. Applicants should not include any confidential information in an application, clarification, or correction. All Proposals will be open to the public after the Department has awarded the grants.

Post Award Process and Reporting

Once selected, an awardee will be assigned to a grants administration specialist within the Department. The specialist will work with grantees in order to ensure appropriate documentation is received and contracts are signed in order to receive the grant funds.

Grantees will submit quarterly performance reports within thirty days of each quarter end. These reports must include a list of programs offered with program descriptions. Reports should also identify instructors for the programs along with resumes, number of participating students with attendance sheets and a current accounting of grant resources used.

Grantees will also be required to submit a final report to the Director of Commerce no later than ninety days after the end of their program with a full accounting of how the grant monies were spent, the total number of Ohioans served, challenges faced and lessons learned in implementing the program that could be addressed to improve similar programs in the future.

A quarterly and final reporting template will be provided prior to the start of the grant term to help grantees evaluate and track performance.