

R. Wes Hayes, Jr.
Chairman

Rusty L. Monhollon, Ph.D.
President & Executive Director



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR

Collaborative and Innovative Programs to Address Student Learning Loss Resulting From the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) received from the South Carolina Department of Education a \$5,000,000 grant, part of the Education Stabilization Fund for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funding and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). The CHE requests proposals for collaborative projects or programs between South Carolina public universities and partner school districts that will address student learning loss resulting from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created momentous learning and instructional challenges over the past two years, which has resulted in significant “learning loss” for South Carolina high school students. Consequently, many students were less-than-fully prepared to take on the rigors of postsecondary education. The issue is not the students’ capabilities but that the pandemic disrupted the modes of learning to which most were accustomed. This grant affords an opportunity to address students’ learning loss—both current college students and rising college freshmen—through collaborative and innovative programs.

We welcome proposals from institutions with existing programs that meet the grant parameters and objectives but we are keenly interested in funding new programs that can help provide students with the tools they need for postsecondary success. The CHE is especially interested in projects that incorporate initiatives and strategies proven effective in improving student success in other states or institutions, such as the University of Georgia System’s use of corequisite support in mathematics and English instruction. Such programs will be given priority, as will projects that have the capacity to be a long-term, transformative solution to student learning loss and the improvement of postsecondary student success rates.

The grant covers a three-year period, running through September 2024. The CHE will receive \$2.5 million in the first year, \$1.5 million in the second year, and up to \$1.0 million in the third year. From these funds the CHE expects to fund three to five proposals, with an expected range of \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 total per proposal, spread over three years.



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www.che.sc.gov



Grant funds may be used to pay salaries and benefits (e.g., faculty or staff stipends for program development and instruction); cover the cost of tuition and fees for students over the summer months; purchase equipment, instructional supplies, and materials; pay for convenings and meetings; and hire consultants.

Proposals will be evaluated on student performance in core academic areas and dual credit courses (if applicable), the quality of the engagement with partnering districts, the program's impact on underserved areas of the state, the postsecondary academic success of students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, and the likelihood of sustainability past the end of the grant period. Each project will be evaluated annually by an external evaluator. Participating institutions will be expected to submit appropriate data to the CHE for purposes of program evaluation.

Interested institutions should submit a proposal that includes a project description, the partnering school districts, the project's goals and objectives, strategies employed to achieve the objectives over a three-year period, data measurement sources, projected outcomes and impact of the projects, and a projected budget. Proposals accepted for funding will also submit this information electronically to the South Carolina Department of Education. Questions regarding the grant may be directed to Rusty Monhollon, CHE President and Executive Director, rmonhollon@che.sc.gov or 803-737-5122.

Please submit electronically a complete application to:
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
ATTN: ESSER Grant Proposal
1122 Lady Street, Suite 400
Columbia, South Carolina 29201
commission@che.sc.gov

Complete applications are due no later than January 21, 2022.

