Tennessee SySTEM Grant FAQ

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Application Guidance

Do I need to have prior or existing relationships with local postsecondary institutions and employer partners in order to apply?

Yes! Since turning dual enrollment courses into work-based courses takes strong collaboration, having existing partnerships is necessary.

Who will be reviewing this application and what are the criteria for review?

Members of the JFF and TDOE team will be reviewing the application. The application will be graded out of 100 points, with an additional 10 bonus points available. The rubric is included at the end of the RFA.

Does the syllabus I'm submitting in the application need to be the most recent or finalized version for the dual enrollment course?

No! You can submit the syllabus for the dual enrollment course from previous semesters. We know the syllabus will change once you incorporate work-based learning elements to make it a work-based course.

Who should I reach out to with any additional questions related to this application?

Please reach out to Anna O'Connor at aoconnor@jff.org with any additional questions.

Grant Requirements

What data will be collected as part of this grant and who will it be shared with?

Student data collection includes demographics, course enrollment, academic success, and postsecondary enrollment indicators. Additionally, the project evaluator, AIR, will collect qualitative data through stakeholder surveys, focus groups, and interviews. These data will be shared with JFF and reported in aggregate to the US Department of Education.

How many students and what populations of students should I be prioritizing for recruitment?

Grantees should aim to recruit and enroll 60 students, with particular attention to recruiting Black students, Latinx students, students experiencing poverty, and young women of all races, all of whom experience underrepresentation in STEM and Computer Science fields.

Does this course have to be STEM?

Yes. In order to be eligible for grant funding, all courses must be focused on STEM with preference for Computer Science. If the course is in the Computer Science field, your application will be awarded 10 bonus points.

What documentation is required of me related to this grant?

Grantees will be expected to provide the data listed above in addition to a completed course syllabus and a select number of completed worksheets, planning tools, and a sustainability plan to guide coaching conversations.

Funding & Budget

Are there any restrictions for the funding associated with this grant?

The only restrictions are that the funding be used for costs associated with the dual enrollment work-based course and nothing outside of this.

Can I use the grant funds to pay students and/or pay instructors and administrative staff for work associated with the work-based learning component of the course?

Yes! You may also use these funds to pay any costs associated to dual enrollment, including tuition and books.

What milestone or deliverables are associated with the contract for this grant between our school and JFF?

In addition to compliance with the data requests detailed above, contractual deliverables will include participation in technical assistance from JFF and TDOE, participation in site visits and interviews conducted by AIR, a work-based course planning team worksheet, a student

recruitment worksheet, a sustainability plan, and a finalized course schedule and syllabus that reflects a 20% work-based, 80% classroom split.

Course Structure

Can the course be dual credit?

No, the course you are applying for must be dual enrollment.

Do I have to use an existing dual enrollment course or can it be brand new?

You must identify in the application the dual enrollment course(s) you and your team will redesign. The dual enrollment course may be an existing course or may be new to your school year 2022-23 program of study. If you would like to talk this through with us, please contact Anna O'Connor at AOConnor@jff.org.

Can our students enroll in a work-based learning practicum alongside the dual-enrollment course?

All students enrolled in the dual enrollment course must experience work-based learning (via an employer partner) that is *embedded directly into the course.* Per the grant requirements, at least 20% of the course instruction should be led by the employer partner and ideally at the workplace or through a work simulation at the school. The remaining percentage, at most 80%, should be in the traditional classroom. However, this does not prevent students from enrolling in other internships and practicums outside of the course associated with this grant.

Is this course open to all high school grade levels?

While all grade levels are technically eligible to enroll, we will only be collecting data for 11th and 12th graders to count towards grant outcomes and grant funding should only be used for those students.

Can the dual enrollment course include college students?

We recommend a dual enrollment course that is *only offered to high school students.* This will ensure more equitable grading logistics and seamless course design with the work-based learning integration that college students wouldn't necessarily be taking part in.

How many dual enrollment courses do I have to offer?

Grantees are expected to offer at least one course per semester in school years 2023-24 and 2024-25. The same course can be repeated each semester/year or new courses can be created and offered. Grantees are also allowed to offer multiple courses per semester although we do recommend focusing on only one or two during the first year of implementation since this is a new dual enrollment model.

Partnerships

What should be required of an employer partner as part of this course?

The employer partner will work with the high school and postsecondary school to provide feedback on the syllabus, plan the on-site work schedule for students, align what is being taught at the worksite with what is being taught in the classroom, and coordinate grading systems.

Can the employer partner be the high school?

Yes! Students working at the school's IT helpdesk, for example, could constitute a work-based course experience if it is aligning to the content being taught in the classroom.

Can I have more than one employer partner?

Yes, however fewer is easier to coordinate. If you have multiple employer partners, the student should be working with both employers. For example, if you are working with two employer partners, all students should be going to both of their work sites, even if they are only going for half of the semester.

What role does the postsecondary partner play in this course?

The postsecondary partner will work with the high school and employer to make changes to the syllabus, coordinate grading systems, and offer student support resources such as tutoring.

Technical Assistance & Grant Support

What kind of support will I receive as a grantee?

All TN SySTEM grantees will receive consistent technical assistance as part of this grant. Technical assistance will involve 1:1 coaching calls with school sites, open office hours, and peer learning group calls on topics such as student support and recruitment, employer engagement, and more. Additionally, all grantees will be invited to technical assistance site

visits led by TDOE as well as in-person conferences hosted by TDOE for all TN SySTEM grantees.

Will we have opportunities to meet in-person and connect with other school sites?

Yes! In addition to the site visits and annual conferences hosted by TDOE, we welcome school sites to connect with one another as needed or appropriate to support the progress of this work.