

# Applying for a University-School Partnership Grant

The Research Institute  
at Western Oregon University

tri



Western Oregon  
UNIVERSITY



May 2016



# Funding

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- Funding for Title II-A Improving Teacher Quality grants comes from the US Department of Education as “entitlement” monies based on each state’s population of school-aged children and poverty levels.
- 2.5% of the money the state receives is dedicated to competitive subgrants with partners that include higher education (teacher education and arts & sciences) and eligible high-need school districts.



# Teachers are the Key

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Research confirms that teachers are the single most important factor in raising student achievement. Intensive professional development that targets teachers' core content knowledge and teaching strategies is most effective in increasing student learning.



# USP professional development targets

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- Teachers/principals in 43 qualifying high-need districts throughout Oregon (see list in RFP)
- Teachers/principals in 67 other Oregon high-poverty districts that can be secondary partners
  - These districts have more than 20% school-aged children living in poverty according to U.S. Census figures.
  - BUT, fewer than 2% of teachers in the district are considered non-highly qualified to teach the subjects/levels to which they are assigned.



# Timeline

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- Proposals due June 21, 2016 4:00 pm
- Projects notified July 11-13, 2016
- Projects may begin August 1, 2016
- Final day to spend funds July 31, 2017
- Final report due September 30, 2017

 Universities may submit more than one proposal



# Focus areas were set with staff at the Oregon Department of Education

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- Math
- Science
- Literacy
  - English, reading, language arts
  - Includes literacy work with English language learners



## A key word is “partnership”

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- At least one partner must be an eligible high-need district in Oregon (see list). A partnership with faculty in liberal arts and sciences as well as teacher education is also required.
- A university with a teacher preparation program or the Arts & Sciences division of the university may be the fiscal agent.
- No single partner may be allocated more than 50% of the budget
- Funds must be used to supplement; not supplant



# Research and evaluation

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- Each project must have a sound and “scientifically-based” approach to measuring outcomes
  - Valid
  - Reliable
  - Rigorous
  - Systematic
  - Logical for the approach being used
- Follow-up activities are required





# Evaluating Training Programs

## Kirkpatrick's Four Levels

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1. Evaluating **REACTION** (participant satisfaction – nice to know, but insufficient)
2. Evaluating **LEARNING** (change in teacher knowledge & skills)
3. Evaluating **BEHAVIOR** (change in teaching practice)
4. Evaluating **RESULTS** (change in K-12 student performance)



# General guidelines: Review your proposal with this list

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- Clearly document the content/leadership needs of your partner high-need district(s)
  - Needs assessments, K-12 assessment results
- Document your planning activities with all partners
- If possible, target low-performing schools and schools in underserved geographic areas
- Cite the research for the strategies you are planning to use



# You need at least three partners

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1. Eligible high-need district
2. College/Division of Education
3. College/Division of Arts and Sciences

Other:

- ESDs
- Other high-poverty districts
- Other educational resources, e.g., museums
- Private schools in the eligible high-need district must be invited to participate



# Use proven, long-term strategies for professional development

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- Professional development should be content related and comprehensive – not less than 60 hours over the span of the project
- The project should include pre- and post-intervention results
- Projects should include active learning activities
- Professional development should include follow-up and reinforcement of the strategies



# Capacity

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- Use good business practices by having a sound spending plan that aligns with your scheduled activities
- Set up your procedures to bill TRI at least quarterly
- Track your budgets
  - Don't over-spend
  - Don't under-spend
  - No carry-over is allowed



# Management

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- Build your budget with the 50% rule in mind
  - “use of funds” means who benefits
- Be prepared to respond to reporting requirements in addition to the budget and to submit your evaluation results when scheduled
- TRI will establish quarterly monitoring phone calls. You will provide a detailed list of all professional development activities. TRI has the authority to monitor professional development in person.



# Performance standards, measures and indicators

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- Review the 6 standards and performance measures
- Identify and clearly address how your proposal will implement the standards
  - Use specific examples and indicators
  - Don't just list the standard number!



# Use of funds

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- Budgets should be very detailed and include:
  - Personnel by FTE, salary and fringe benefits
  - Cost of instruction (trainer, materials)
  - Substitutes/Stipends/Tuition (exempt from indirect)
  - In-state travel
  - Materials/supplies
  - Indirect cost @ 10%
  - No out-of-state travel
  - Don't use a "miscellaneous" category
  - US Ed disallows most food/beverages





# Management plan and timelines

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- Set measurable goals and reasonable timelines
- Do not put the majority of activities at either the beginning or end of the project
- Align the activities and budget using the 50% rule
- No cost share is required, but consider opportunities to leverage other funds if available



# Review procedures

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- Every proposal will be scored by at least three reviewers selected from ODE, universities, and other Oregon educational organizations.
- The review team will use only the criteria listed in the RFP.



# Past problem areas

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- Understand the goal. The priority is to work with schools in Oregon's high-need districts. Concentrate on district needs; don't force something you want to "try" into this format if it doesn't meet school needs.
- Work with established partners. These should be strong relationships; preferably with a history and very good evidence of needs assessments.
- Consider impact. How many individuals will benefit from the funds requested?



## Past problem areas (cont.)

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- Select reasonable activities. Plan your proposal to include activities with a budget and timelines that are reasonably accomplishable.
- Use the priorities listed in the RFP. The professional development should clearly lead to improved teaching and learning in the content areas.
- Be specific in the budget. Clearly name personnel with FTE, salary and fringe benefit rates; identify their roles and responsibilities, as well as their qualifications as they fit with the project activities.



## Past problem areas (cont.)

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- Read and submit signed assurances.
- Assure appropriate sign-off. The application must be signed by the university president, provost, or research office head.

### Also~

- The due dates are non-negotiable.
- The proposal + budget narratives are limited to 15 pages; appendices are limited to 5 pages.



# RFP forms & checklist

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- Intent to Apply Form
- Proposal Cover Page
- Proposal Narrative
- Appendices (optional)
- USP Budget Form
- Budget Narrative
- Joint Effort Document
- Partnership Profile Form
- Statement of Assurances



# Good luck

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- Questions? Call Bonnie Morihara at 503-838-8413 or email [moriharb@wou.edu](mailto:moriharb@wou.edu)