MEMORANDUM

TO: The Illinois Higher Education Community

FROM: Arthur Sutton, Deputy Director for Diversity & Outreach

DATE: March 3, 2021

RE: Request for Proposals (RFP): Fiscal Year 2022 Grants
Illinois Cooperative Work Study Program

Due Date: April 30, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.

In anticipation of receiving funding for the Illinois Cooperative Work Study Grant (ICWS) in Fiscal Year 2022 (FY2022), the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) is seeking applications for the FY2022 ICWS grant program. The ICWS program seeks to address financial inequities that have impeded equitable postsecondary outcomes for all Illinois students. The foremost objective of IBHE and the ICWS grant are to make postsecondary credentials for Illinois students attainable and affordable based on principles of the IBHE’s Strategic Planning.

Eligible Institutions: Applicants eligible to receive grants are approved public and private, associate- and baccalaureate-degree granting Illinois colleges and universities.

Grant Period: The grant period will be July 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022.

Application Deadline: Only one proposal per institution may be submitted for this program. The application materials for FY2022 must be emailed to Outreachgrants@ibhe.org and/or Brook Stewart at stewart@ibhe.org. The complete application must be received by 12:00 p.m. on April 30, 2021.

The application is included in this document and will also be available on the IBHE website at https://www.ibhe.org/icws.html.

Contact Person: For more information on this RFP, contact Outreachgrants@ibhe.org or Brook Stewart at stewart@ibhe.org.
Background and Program Specifications

The Illinois Cooperative Work Study Program was established in 1991 to support student cooperative work study programs. The Board of Higher Education administers the program and makes grants to public and nonpublic institutions of higher education.

Grants will be awarded for proposals submitted based on evaluation criteria included in the administrative rules. Proposals are requested for projects that will:

- benefit students academically and financially,
- reduce reliance on student loans,
- enhance public-private sector partnerships, and
- encourage students to seek permanent employment in Illinois.

Program Objectives

Grants shall be made for projects that support Illinois resident undergraduate students. In addition, the Board shall consider whether the projects:

- expand opportunities for students to pursue internships, clinical placement, cooperative programs with business and industry, and other work opportunities linked to a student’s academic program;
- strengthen cooperation between higher education, business, industry, and government;
- encourage social and community service;
- maximize the use of matching contributions from business and industry, and governmental and social agencies;
- create new opportunities for public/private partnerships;
- integrate other components of student financial aid to reduce reliance on student loans; and
- encourage students to seek permanent employment in Illinois.

Within the project narrative and goals and objectives, institutions must demonstrate how these objectives will be achieved.

Fiscal Information

The Illinois Governor’s FY2022 proposed budget recommended $980,500 for the ICWS grant program. A final allocation for the FY2022 ICWS grant program will not occur until a FY2022 budget is passed by the Illinois General Assembly and signed by the Illinois Governor.

The maximum request amount from each institution is $50,000. Grant funds must be used for student wages and salaries. No grant funds shall be used for administrative costs.
Proposal Format

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please review the attachments carefully. The following may be used as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal.

1. **Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance (Attachment 1):** This form must be completed, dated, signed by the President/CEO of the applicant institution.

2. **Project Synopsis (Attachment 2):** Limit to one page, double-spaced. Briefly describe the goals and objectives of the program. Since this synopsis may be used in public information documents, please refrain from using technical language not readily understood by the general public.

3. **Project Narrative (Attachment 3):** Limit to five double-spaced pages. Please provide a comprehensive description of the goals, objectives, and the activities proposed to accomplish each objective of the project; the participants to be served; timelines; and personnel responsible for completing the activities. Along with the items addressed in the Criteria for Review and Approval, an explanation of each of the following items must be addressed:
   1. How the ICWS program will be coordinated with existing work-study programs at the institution;
   2. How the ICWS program will be coordinated with financial aid programs serving students at the institution;
   3. The institution’s planned procedures for student selection and criteria for program participants;
   4. The anticipated academic benefits resulting from the work experience; i.e., the match between and enhancement of theoretical and applied learning;
   5. The planned relationship between students, faculty and employers, how students will be supervised, how goals are set, student employee evaluations, and expected results; and
   6. How the institution will provide information on the subsequent employment of graduates who participate in the program.

4. **Budget (Attachment 4):** Provide a completed budget request form. Cooperative Work Study funds are to be used only for student salaries and audit expenses related to the grant. Grant funds may not be used for any administrative costs.

5. **Institutional Contributions (Attachment 5):** Indicate the amount your institution contributes with in-kind and institutional contributions to the Illinois Cooperative Work Study program. An in-kind contribution is a non-cash input which can be given a cash value. Examples of in-kind contributions may include program director’s salary and fringe benefits associated with running the program. Contributions directly from the institution used to pay for student salaries, fringe benefits, etc. are considered institutional contributions.

6. **List of Participating Employers (Attachment 6).** Please list all participating employers who have submitted letters of intent to participate in the program. Employers must be external and not associated with the institution receiving the award.

7. **Linkage to Student’s Academic Program Summary (Attachment 7).** Please briefly describe how the work opportunity is linked to a student’s academic program for each employer listed in Attachment 6.
8. **Employer’s letters (Attachment 8).** A letter of intent on the employer’s letterhead that clearly outlines the employer’s commitment must include:

- the number of positions available;
- the length of the internship (weeks, hours, etc.)
- how the work opportunity is linked to an academic program;
- the total wage to be paid to the student; and
- the employer’s share or percentage of the total wage.

A signed contract of intent between the institution and the employer may be substituted for the letter of intent. Employers must submit a new letter of intent each year to participate in the program.

9. **Evaluation Plan (Attachment 9):** Describe an evaluation plan that details how the project’s effectiveness will be assessed in relationship to the stated objectives of the project.

**Items #10 is for informational purposes only and not required as part of the application submission.**

10. **Compiled Statues and Program Rules.** Informational Purposes Only. Not required to be submitted with application.
Criteria for Review and Approval

Proposals will be reviewed and rated by Illinois Board of Higher Education staff. The following criteria will be used to rate the proposals. **(100 total possible points)**

1. **Addresses policy issues related to diverse yet equitable workforce and economic development.** The proposal provides clear evidence of assuring sustainable and equitable workforce and economic development for its diverse populations alongside equally qualified participants by: delineating plans to strengthen cooperation between higher education institutions, K-12 education, business, industry and government; creating new opportunities for public/private partnerships with attention to diverse student groups; and encourages students across all social and economic spectrums to seek permanent employment in Illinois. **(20 points)**

2. **Leveraging Resources.** The proposal provides clear evidence of integrating other components of equitable distribution of student financial assistance comprehensive of racial, ethnic and other diverse criteria together with all equally qualified applicants to reduce students’ reliance on student loans; maximizes the use of matching contributions from business, industry and government; and shows alignment between the Cooperative Work Study Program and other campus work study programs. **(20 points)**

3. **Enhancing Academic, Employment, and Community Relationships.** The proposal provides a practical and sustainable plan for expansion of student internships, across racial and ethnic lines, linked to a student’s academic field, and encourages social and community service. **(15 points)**

4. **Program Articulation Outline.** The proposal clearly articulates the student selection process and identifies its commitment to equitable consideration and distribution of opportunities across racial, ethnic, disability, and other diverse lines. The proposal also outlines expectations and professional relationships between students, faculty and employers; and defines responsibilities for student supervision and evaluation. Employer letters of intent to participate in the program clearly define their understanding and commitment to equitable consideration of applicants to their business including number and length of positions and employer share of wage or salary. **(20 points)**

5. **Program Evaluation.** The proposed evaluation process is designed to assess the effectiveness of the activities in relation to the goals and objectives. It includes clearly stated performance measures and tracking information for follow up of students’ permanent employment in Illinois. Interim evaluation is provided, if applicable. **(10 points)**

6. **Follow-up and Data.** The proposal clearly articulates the institution’s recordkeeping process and information data, including planned follow-up with former students (graduates, stop-outs, etc.) as part of denoting program effectiveness and improvements needed. **(10 points)**

7. **Budget.** The proposed budget is cost-effective and is consistent with the scope of the proposed objectives and activities. It reflects a balanced ratio of cost per student to requested funding. The budget reflects maximized use of matching contributions. **(5 points)**