CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

District Attorney of New York County

CUNY INSTITUTE FOR STATE & LOCAL GOVERNANCE

February 11, 2016

The CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance (ISLG) appreciates your interest in the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative.

This addendum includes answers to questions, submitted via email to ISLG by January 29, 2016.

As a separate addendum, we have prepared a budget template.

ANSWERS TO APPLICANT QUESTIONS
College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative

INSTITUTIONAL ELIGIBILITY

QUESTION: Is this RFP solely for CUNY institutions to respond or can SUNY institutions respond as well? If it is only for CUNY institutions, could SUNY institutions partner with a CUNY institution on the proposal?
ANSWER: Any postsecondary education provider is eligible to submit a proposal for the College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative provided that the provider meets the eligibility criteria listed on p.7 of the RFP. Applicants may be SUNY or CUNY institutions but this is not a requirement.

INMATE ELIGIBILITY / DEFINING COHORTS

We received several questions regarding inmate eligibility and requests to further define the three cohorts. This explanation serves to address those questions.

Programming will be distributed among three cohorts of current DOCCS inmates enrolled in postsecondary education over the next five years. This will include those with *an earliest possible release (including conditional or open release)* in:

- Approximately 2 years (precise window: 1.5-2.5 years)
- 3-4 years (precise window: 2.5-4.5 years)
- Approximately 5 years (precise window: 4.5-5.5 years)

These ranges refer only to the amount of time from the present to an inmate's earliest possible release date. This does *not* refer to the total length of an inmate's sentence, which may be lengthier, but only that their estimated release date falls within one of the specified windows.

QUESTION: How much preference will be given to institutions that maintain the possibility for students to complete degrees or certificates *while still in prison*? Is it required that they do so?
ANSWER: There will be no preference given to institutions that deliver degree and/or certificate programs so long as the program can be completed while still in prison (e.g., all required credits and/or classes can be provided in the prison). We are interested in examining outcomes for a range of postsecondary education programs in prisons. As stated in the RFP, the intention is to fund degree and certificate programs that will enhance post-release employment and recidivism outcomes. Moreover, it will be the role of the coordinating entity to ensure the transfer of credits for students who are released prior to completing their programs.

PROGRAM LOGISTICS

QUESTION: We received a number of questions regarding the program schedule/calendar and hours of availability of each facility. We address these here.
ANSWER: Funded programs will be required to work with the CUNY/SUNY Coordinating Entity and DOCCS to determine the course schedule; timeline for the academic period (e.g., semester, quarter); and use of facilities outside of the agreed-upon course time, all for the specific facility (or facilities) where they will deliver courses.

QUESTION: When would the program start?
ANSWER: We anticipate the contract start date to be in spring 2016. We anticipate that courses will begin in fall 2016.

PROGRAM STAFFING

QUESTION: Is there any requirement for program faculty to be full-time, or can they be adjuncts?
ANSWER: Program faculty are not required to be full-time; they can be adjuncts. However, program faculty should have experience and credentials similar to the academic institution's faculty who do not provide education in the prison context. The evaluation team is most interested in whether the proposed instructors possess the educational background and experience that make them well-suited for delivering the proposed curriculum.

QUESTION: What, if any, training will be provided for staff who will be working within the facilities?
ANSWER: All college personnel entering the DOCCS facilities on an ongoing basis will be required to complete the DOCCS Volunteer Services registration and orientation process.

ADMISSIONS / SELECTION OF STUDENTS

QUESTION: Will selection requirements for participants be provided or will this be left to the discretion of the funded institutions?
ANSWER: Students will be subject to each program's admissions process. The CUNY/SUNY Coordinating Entity (specifically CUNY) will liaise with DOCCS to identify actual students to fill the slots.

QUESTION: Students enrolled full-time are eligible for the full grant amount through CJII. We recommend a definition of full-time enrollment consistent with that for Federal Pell Grants: 12 credits a semester, or 24 credits a year.
ANSWER: For the purposes of this RFP, full-time enrollment is defined as 30 credits per year. As such, CJII will adopt this definition. DANY will fund up to $5,000 per full-time student per year, but applicants may propose smaller course loads that will be funded proportionally. The proposed funding amount per student should be reflected in the budget and corresponding budget narrative that is included in the proposal submission.

PRISIONER DATA

QUESTION: What percentage of prisoners hold a high school diploma or GED? Would you have this data by prison location?
ANSWER: At least 8,038 prisoners released in 2014 held a high school diploma or GED. We do not have these data by prison location.

QUESTION: Do you have data on how many prisoners complete 30 credits in a year?
ANSWER: We do not have data on the number of prisoners that complete 30 credits in a given year. However, between September 2013 and August 2014, 59 inmates completed an Associate's degree and 21 completed a Bachelor's degree.

QUESTION: Do you have data on 4-year and 6-year graduation rates for prisoners?
ANSWER: We do not have data on four and six-year graduation rates for prisoners.

PROGRAM BUDGET

QUESTION: How many awards will be granted under this RFP?
ANSWER: There is no set number of awards to be granted under the College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative. DANY will commit $5 million over five years across multiple awards. Award decisions will be made based on factors outlined under Part VI, "Proposal Evaluation and Contract Award" on p.11 of the RFP.

QUESTION: Please provide a list of acceptable budget items and/or a sample budget. (Appendix B in the package is blank)
ANSWER: Appendix B: Budget/Fee Schedule is intentionally blank because this is part of Appendix 3: Contract Template, which is intended to serve as an example of the terms and conditions of any contract executed under CJII. Specific contracting details will be worked out between the Research Foundation and the selected applicant during the contracting period.

See the addendum 2 budget template for an example of budget categories.

QUESTION: Are indirect costs allowable? If so, at what rate?
ANSWER: Yes. Indirect costs are allowable. There is no specific allowable rate. The applicant must provide justification for the rate requested and consider that contract awards will be made to the applicants whose proposals are determined to be the most advantageous by the evaluation team, taking into consideration the price and such other factors and criteria as are set forth in the RFP (see "evaluation criteria"). Awards will be made to the best technically rated proposals that offers a price that is determined to be both fair and reasonable.

QUESTION: Please confirm that the grant amount, per recipient, will be $5 million over 5 years.
ANSWER: DANY is committing $5 million dollars over five years to fund college in prison programs at multiple sites in New York State and to prepare students for successful reentry. The $5 million will be divided across multiple awards.

QUESTION: Can budget expenses include salaries for faculty and management staff, as well as equipment?
ANSWER: Salaries for faculty and management staff are allowable budget items. Equipment is unallowable. Applicants are required to supply all instructional materials, including computers, books, and supplies. See the addendum 2 budget template.

QUESTION: The RFP states that awards will be made to the best technically rated proposal that offers a price that is determined to be both fair and reasonable. Does that mean that institutions of higher education are expected to provide services above and beyond classroom instruction as defined in the RFP, even with awards capped at $5,000?
ANSWER: Yes. DANY will award a maximum of $5,000 per student (enrolled in a full-time course load of 30 credits, i.e., 8-10 classes per year), and smaller course loads will be funded proportionately. In addition to delivering education programs, funded institutions must provide ongoing performance data to ISLG and a third-party evaluator. Grantees are also required to work with the CUNY/SUNY Coordinating Entity to develop reentry support plans and provide transfer and enrollment support for participating students.

QUESTION: Is this a fixed price agreement (i.e. you provide 30 hours' worth of coursework you get $5000) or is it a grant where dollar allocations are tied to specific budget lines and thus restricted for use by the grant budget (p.10 mentions a budget narrative with a 1:1 match included in the spending plan and p. 11 talks about "reasonable price" for what is delivered…)?
ANSWER: Payment will be made under the contract on a performance basis for services satisfactorily provided, in accordance with the approved budget. Specific deliverables and/or milestones will be negotiated and finalized once applicants are selected.

We received multiple questions regarding proportional funding of course loads that are not full-time. We address those questions here.
Using $5000 as a maximum, applicants are encouraged to propose: 1) the amount needed to fund a student taking a full-time (30 credit) course load for one year and 2) the proportional cost needed to fund a student who is enrolled part-time for one year.

QUESTION: Are students fully funded after they are released if they haven't finished their degree yet?
ANSWER: No, students are not funded through CJII after release if they haven't finished their degree. Students will be able to make use of reentry and credit-transfer support provided by the CUNY/SUNY Coordinating Entity. Following release, students would be eligible for funding generally available to students, including federal, state, local, and private sources. (Note, however, that some forms of student financial aid restrict eligibility for some types of ex-offenders, such as for drug-related offenses or sexual offenses.)

QUESTION: Many of the Institutions of Higher Education who receive funding through CJII will also be eligible for Second Chance Pell grants. How will CUNY ISLG minimize the inefficiency and burden on grant recipients that could result from two separate assessments?
ANSWER: In addition to delivering education programs, all grantees funded under this initiative, must provide ongoing performance data to ISLG and a third-party evaluator. Grantees are also required to work with the CUNY/SUNY Coordinating Entity to develop reentry support plans and provide transfer and enrollment support for participating students. Existing program funding, including Second Chance Pell funding, is eligible to be considered for match funding. If applicants have applied for and are selected for the Second Chance Pell Pilot Program, they should articulate the purposes for which CJII and Pell funding each would be used.

MATCH FUNDING

We received several questions regarding the required 1:1 match funding. These are addressed here.
Match funding may be private, public, and/or in-kind. Regarding in-kind, items such as personnel effort and travel are allowable. Matching funds cannot be used for the same students who receive services funded through CJII. For example, if a student is enrolled in two courses during the semester, CJII funding cannot be used to cover one course while the match funding is used to cover the other course. Match funding is intended to support additional students not funded via CJII.

Students served through match funding (e.g., from funds or in-kind personnel effort) should have estimated release dates that fall within one of the three cohorts identified for students educated through CJII funding (i.e., approximately 2 years; 3-4 years; and approximately 5 years). Students educated through the match will be included in the evaluation of this initiative, and the educational standards listed below must apply to courses offered through the match as well as those offered through CJII funding. Students educated outside of the match are not restricted by estimated release date or the educational standards of this initiative.

As stated in the RFP, applicants are required to supply all instructional materials, including computers, books, and supplies. As such, none of these items can be included towards the match. DOCCS will provide a room, electrical supply, blackboards or whiteboards, and security outside of the classroom.

PROGRAM SITES

We have issued an update to the original College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative RFP to include three additional facilities where applicants may propose providing instruction. These include Cayuga, Great Meadow, and Wallkill. Applicants may only submit proposals for NY State DOCCS facilities specifically listed in the revised RFP posted on February 11, 2016 (please see p.8-9 of the RFP for the full list of eligible institutions).

One applicant submitted a question that mistakenly stated that Five Points was not on the list of eligible facilities where programs already exit. We would like to note that this facility was listed in the RFP as an eligible location (p.8).

Regarding inquiries about the eligible facilities, offering programs at maximum versus medium security prisons, and implications for student eligibility: please note that the ranges associated with the three cohorts (i.e., approximately 2 years, 3-4 years, and approximately 5 years) refer to the amount of time from the present to an inmate's earliest estimated release date. This does *not* refer to the total length of an inmate's sentence, which may be lengthier.

EVALUATION

QUESTION: The RFP states that "applicants will be required to participate in an evaluation of their post-secondary educational program with an independent third party evaluator." Will a separate RFP be announced for the evaluation?
ANSWER: Yes, there will be a separate RFP announced for the evaluation of the College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative. To receive emails regarding RFP updates, please sign up on the CJII website: http://cjii.org/contact/. Open funding opportunities will also be posted on the CJII website here: http://cjii.org/category/opportunities/.

PROPOSAL FORMAT & LENGTH REQUIREMENTS

QUESTION: Is the information responding to Section V. C. Organizational Capacity considered part of the 15 pages allowed for the Program Narrative?
ANSWER: Information responding to Section V.C. Organizational Capacity will not be considered part of the 15 page limit. This page limit only pertains to the Program Narrative.

QUESTION: Is the information responding to Section V. D. Program Budget Narrative considered part of the 15 pages allowed for the Program Narrative?
ANSWER: Information responding to Section V. D. Program Budget Narrative will not be considered part of the 15 page limit. This page limit only pertains to the Program Narrative.