CRIMINAL JUSTICE INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

District Attorney of New York County

CUNY INSTITUTE FOR STATE & LOCAL GOVERNANCE

March 4, 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 a second round of questions, submitted via email to ISLG by February 26, 2016.

ANSWERS TO APPLICANT QUESTIONS – ROUND 2
College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative

INSTITUTIONAL ELIGIBILITY

We received several questions regarding institutional and proposed program eligibility. We address these here.

ANSWER: With respect to starting a program at a DOCCS facility where (a) your institution does not have a program and (b) there is an existing program (see p.8 of the Revised RFP): We encourage interested educational institutions to apply regardless of current facility presence, provided that the proposed program meets the eligibility criteria specified in the Revised RFP (p.6-9). Funded programs will be required to work with the CUNY/SUNY Education Coordinator and DOCCS during planning and implementation to ensure coordination of logistics, use of space, etc., between all programs.

Regarding providing access to CJII-funded programs to youth in other institutional placements: Students in CJII-funded college-in-prison programs must be inmates at the particular prison facility where programming is eligible to be delivered (in addition to meeting program-specific admission criteria and obtaining permission to participate from DOCCS). Students must hold a high school diploma or GED.

With respect to the minimum number of courses per year: To be considered for CJII funding, programs must deliver a minimum of four classes per year (with each class worth three to five credits).

INMATE ELIGIBILITY / DEFINING COHORTS

We received multiple questions and requests for clarifications regarding inmate eligibility. We address these here.

ANSWER: As noted in the first round of Q&A (posted on 2/12/16), 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)

To address additional questions in this second round of Q&A, we offer the following clarification. All three cohorts will begin in the first year, with cohort designation determined by earliest possible release date. As students from the first cohort (approximately 2 years to earliest release date) are released from prison and/or complete a program, their program slots will be filled by new students who again, are distributed across all three cohorts depending on their earliest release date. As students from the second cohort (within 3-4 years of earliest release date) are released and/or complete a program, their program slots will be filled by new students who are distributed across the first two cohorts. Thus, there will be rolling eligibility windows rather than a single, firm date in fall 2016 used for identification of eligible students.

The earliest possible release date will remain the measure used to determine the initial cohort, even if the actual release date is subsequently extended and participants no longer fit within the original cohort's release window. Therefore, students already enrolled will not be removed from the program because their release window changes based on parole hearings/decisions, but will instead remain in programming and be treated as part of a cohort most reflecting their overall time before release. This structure will allow for understanding of shorter, medium, and longer-term program participation. It will also facilitate consistent

funding across all five years of the initiative rather than disproportionate funding in early years, since new participants can be distributed across the same cohorts. Finally it will allow for initial program findings within two years of program commencement.

PROGRAM BUDGET

QUESTION: In the addendum for the RFP, instructional materials and equipment will not be funded. Is transportation an allowable budget item?

ANSWER: Yes, transportation is an allowable budget item.

PROGRAM MODEL

QUESTION: We would like to implement a college-in-prison hybrid program of live instructors and educational software on tablets, then study the effectiveness of using peer-to-peer and other low cost counseling and small rewards to incentivize student performance. Is this a potentially proper use of award funds?

ANSWER: Funding for the CJII College-in-Prison Reentry Initiative is limited to college-level instruction delivered in person at select DOCCS facilities. Funding will be based specifically on the number of classes offered and students served. We encourage the use of technology in instruction and it may be used to supplement in-person instruction, provided that it is in accordance with DOCCS policies and procedures.

One goal of this initiative is to standardize instruction offered across participating DOCCS sites. Funded programs will be required to work with the initiative's Education Coordinator, an entity tasked with overseeing and coordinating funded programs, standardizing course requirements, ensuring faculty meet appropriate standards, and facilitating transferability of credits within and across institutions (both during incarceration and after release). Whereas different educational institutions will be responsible for implementing programs in the different prison facilities, the Education Coordinator will ensure uniformity across various aspects of programming. Further, an independent evaluator will be selected via a separate competitive process to examine the effectiveness of this initiative.