

INNOVATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Call for Proposals

V-TOP Institution-led Regional Partners



Issued: 2025

Activity	Key Dates
Call for Proposals Issued	September 03, 2025
Informational Webinar	September 03, 2025
Proposals Due	October 3, 2025, 11:59 PM
Award Announcement	October 17, 2025
Estimated Start Date	November 3, 2025



STATE COUNCIL OF HIGHER
EDUCATION FOR VIRGINIA

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Fast Facts

The purpose of Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP) is to expand paid and credit-bearing student internships and other work-based learning (WBL) opportunities in collaboration with Virginia employers. The program comprises institutional grants and a statewide initiative to facilitate the readiness of students, employers and institutions of higher education to participate in internship and other work-based learning opportunities.

The purpose of the institution-led regional partners is to increase work-based learning experiences across the commonwealth. The institutional partners will serve as an extension of SCHEV and V-TOP's efforts, enabling us to broaden our initiatives from the central office, which operates as the main hub across the Commonwealth of Virginia. The institutional partners will ensure regional practices are aligned with the mission of SCHEV, V-TOP, SCHEV's Council members and the administrators. The institution-led regional partners will aim to achieve shared goals, improve efficiency and leverage collective resources to benefit the entire Commonwealth of Virginia.

Work-based learning is defined as an educational approach that integrates academic instruction with practical work experience. It is designed to provide students with the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world work settings and gain practical skills, knowledge, and experience that are directly relevant to their future careers. WBL can take various forms, including internships, apprenticeships, co-op programs, and other experiential learning opportunities. Work-based learning experiences can be paid or unpaid, with a preference for paid experiences. Exceptions will be made when external accrediting organizations require otherwise.

For more details on definitions of work-based learning and types of work-based learning, from the SB1280 Workgroup, per Code of Virginia § 23.1-906.1: [Report of the SB1280 Workgroup](#)

Although there are many forms of work-based learning, the Innovative Internship Program grant will support the following work-based learning types*:

- Project-based learning
- Micro-internships
- Transformed work-study (internship-like) experiences
- Internships (credit, zero-credit, and non-credit-bearing)

***Types of supported work-based learning may change throughout the grant cycle.**

Grantees will be notified of any changes made.

Proposals Due: October 3, 2025 (no later than 11:59 PM)

Estimated Start Date: November 3, 2025

Innovative Internship Program – Call for Proposals

Length of Award: One year. Renewal possible on a year-to-year basis based on funding, grantee eligibility and grant outcomes.

Who is eligible to apply for the grant: Eligible institutions are the public two-year and four-year institutions and the private four-year V-TAG-participating institutions. However, only one award will be granted to an institution within the GoVA regional model.

Number of Awards: Nine (one institution per region)

Award Amount: Up to \$150,000

For questions about the call for applications contact:

Stacey Garnett, Business Operations Specialist

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia

Background

In 2018, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated funding to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) to stimulate public colleges and universities to develop partnerships to provide innovative paid internship opportunities for their students. In 2019, the effort was expanded and enacted into law as the Innovative Internship Fund and Program (Va. Code § 23.1-903.4).

In 2020, through a partnership with the Virginia Chamber Foundation, the program was rebranded as the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP). The Chamber Foundation also launched a new website and produced the Virginia Employer Readiness Toolkit: A Blueprint to Develop Quality Internship Opportunities for Virginia's Talent Pipeline, available on the Employer tab of the V-TOP website. Since then, the V-TOP team has worked to develop and launch many new resources for our state institutions, students, and employers to create high-quality, paid internship experiences.

The purpose of the program is to expand paid and/or credit-bearing student internships and other work-based learning opportunities in collaboration with Virginia employers. The program comprises institutional grants and a statewide initiative to facilitate the readiness of students, employers, and institutions of higher education to participate in internship and other work-based learning opportunities. The focus of this call for proposals is to support regional efforts in partnership with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and the Virginia Chamber Foundation (VCF) to connect students to employers; assure the readiness of students and institutions; and to increase significantly the number of high-quality paid internships and other work-based learning opportunities.

Statutory Purpose

As the university-led regional partners commence their work, the seven goals the General Assembly set for experiential learning in the Commonwealth should be considered: (i) support state or regional workforce needs; (ii) support initiatives to attract and retain talent in the Commonwealth; (iii) support research and research commercialization in sectors and clusters targeted for development; (iv) support regional economic growth and diversification plans; (v) enhance the job readiness of students; (vi) enhance higher education affordability and timely completion for Virginia students; or (vii) further the objectives of increasing the tech talent pipeline.

Glossary

Work-based learning is defined as an educational approach that integrates academic instruction with practical work experience. It is designed to provide students with the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world work settings and gain practical skills, knowledge, and experience that are directly relevant to their future careers. WBL can take various forms, including internships, apprenticeships, co-op programs, and other experiential learning opportunities. Work-based learning experiences can be paid or unpaid, with a preference for paid experiences. Exceptions will be made when external accrediting organizations require otherwise.

For more details on Virginia’s definition of work-based learning and types of work-based learning, review this report: [Report of the SB1280 Workgroup](#)

Definitions of experiential learning, internship, work-based learning, etc., vary depending on the objectives of the parties involved. The National Association of Colleges and Employers, Jobs for the Future, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Labor, the National Society of Experiential Education, the Cooperative Education and Internship Association, and Virginia Department of Education, Virginia’s four-year public institutions and others all publish definitions and descriptions of these terms.

Examples of definitions are provided below. The primary focus of the institution-led partners should be work-based learning and internships. Grantees should highlight a variety of work-based learning options at all levels of education and at all levels of intensity (exploration, exposure, engagement, experience).

NACE defines **experiential learning** as encompassing “a wide variety of enriching opportunities for students, including service-learning, volunteering, student organization leadership and campus involvement, faculty-led research and projects, experiential study-abroad, student employment/work-study, cooperative education,

and internships.” The nature of experiential learning can be co-curricular or extracurricular and can take place on campus or off campus.

Co-curricular experiential learning includes opportunities that contribute to gaining skills and abilities that are part of the core competencies, and/or outcomes established by the institution and its governing bodies. Co-curricular experiences are based on learning that is planned, and which is expressed in learning outcomes. Examples of on-campus co-curricular activities include in-class project-based learning when the problem to be solved is defined by faculty or students, capstone projects, research experiences in faculty labs, etc. Examples of off-campus experiential learning are included under work-based learning, below.

Extracurricular experiential learning includes opportunities to engage with the institution and that connect students to others within the community in meaningful ways. Extracurricular experiences may teach students something, but their primary role is to foster a sense of engagement and connection. Examples include leadership in student clubs, participation in student government, role as a resident advisor, study abroad, traditional federal work-study, etc.

Virginia four-year institutions: A workgroup convened by SCHEV with Virginia four-year public institutions developed the following definitions that are written in the Code of Virginia § 23.1-906.1 - SB1280:

Work-Based Learning (WBL) is an educational approach that integrates academic instruction with practical work experience. It is designed to provide students with the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-world work settings and gain practical skills, knowledge, and experience that are directly relevant to their future careers. WBL can take various forms, including internships, apprenticeships, co-op programs, and other experiential learning opportunities. Work-based learning experiences can be paid or unpaid, with a preference for paid experiences. Exceptions will be made when external accrediting organizations require otherwise. For more details

Jobs for the Future: Jobs for the Future defines **work-based learning** as an opportunity to complete meaningful job tasks in a workplace that develop readiness for work, knowledge and skills that support entry or advancement in a particular career field. Work-based learning supports a continuum of lifelong learning and skill development for a range of workers and learners—K-12 students, young adults, college students, adult jobseekers, and incumbent workers. Some work-based experiential learning is co-curricular in nature, such as credit-bearing internships and co-ops or project-based learning where the problem to be solved is defined by an industry partner.

In addition to the three levels of work-based experiential learning described below, Jobs for the Future also suggests a foundational level of awareness to prepare students for experiential learning:

- **Career Awareness:** Builds awareness of various career opportunities within the field. It provides a foundation for work-based learning and prepares students to reflect on their interests and strengths. The connection between classroom learning and real-world work activities helps students to make informed decisions about their career choices. Examples include: Career days, career expos, career research, career advising, interest inventories, and industry speakers.
- **Career Exploration:** Offers structured learning opportunities for short periods, supporting students in gaining introductory knowledge and interaction with an industry and its associated occupations. Examples include job shadowing, company tours, mentoring, simulations, and externships.
- **Career Preparation:** Provides extended opportunities for participants to increase their knowledge of an identified field of interest and gain employability skills and some entry-level technical knowledge or skills. Examples include: service learning, apprenticeship readiness, pre-apprenticeships, cooperative education, and internships.
- **Career Experience:** Engages individuals as paid workers to gain specific skills, in conjunction with related classroom or lab instruction, in a particular industry or occupation. Examples include: Registered apprenticeships, transitional jobs, and on-the-job training programs.

The **Virginia Department of Education** defines three levels of work-based experiential learning:

- **Career Awareness:** Prepare students for WBL experiences; designed to increase student awareness of personal interests and talents along with the education and training needed to pursue a career goal; students gain an initial understanding of work, various industries, and different career pathways.
- **Career Exploration:** Encourage students to develop personal career interests, a better understanding of pathways to a chosen career, and the workplace readiness skills needed to make informed decisions regarding secondary and postsecondary education and training; experiences are typically of shorter duration.

- **Career Preparation:** Deepen student knowledge and develop skills necessary for success in employment and postsecondary education; recommended for students who have a clear goal of entering the workforce directly after high school or of enrolling in a closely related postsecondary training program: give students extensive practice in applying fundamental technical and practical knowledge and skills; experiences take place over a longer timeframe and involve more responsibilities.

Institution-Led Regional Partners Initiative

Institutions applying to serve as regional leads under the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia's Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP) must demonstrate the capacity, commitment, and strategic vision to expand access to work-based learning opportunities and foster meaningful partnerships that align with V-TOP's statewide goals.

Institutions are expected to demonstrate a strong dedication to collaborating with SCHEV and V-TOP. Additionally, they must be flexible as state priorities evolve and work collaboratively with SCHEV and V-TOP to ensure that their programs and activities have a measurable positive impact on students, institutions, and employers throughout the Commonwealth.

Coordinated and Framework Approach

Coordinated Regional Engagement

Institution-Led Regional Partners are required to collaborate closely with institutions to promote and integrate resources within the region that align with V-TOP's enhanced work-based learning initiatives. These efforts include project-based activities, micro-internships, internship-like work-study activities, and career readiness resources. As part of V-TOP's statutory purpose, grantees will support V-TOP in promoting career readiness modules to students, faculty, and staff, as well as other resources such as professional development scholarships and mentorship training.

Institution-Led Regional Partners will direct **employers** to the **Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) Intermediary** for internship experiences and matching grants programs. These coordinated efforts ensure effective and non-duplicative strategies for expanding internships and work-based learning (See Figure 1).

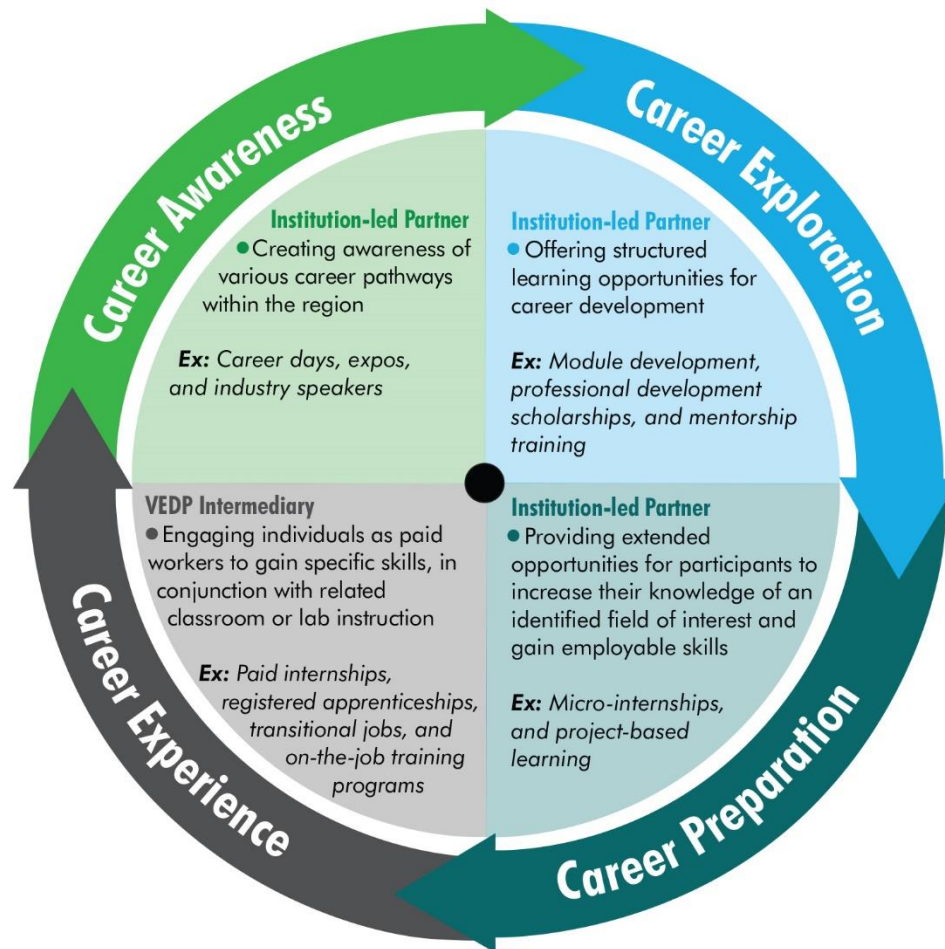


Figure 1: Coordinated Institution-led Partnerships + Employer Engagement Strategy

Institution-Led Regional Partners & VEDP Intermediaries

Grantees will provide recommendations or coordination support for the development of a shared regional strategy that aligns post-secondary career readiness education and employer engagement goals with the VEDP intermediary.

Regional convenings

Grantees will facilitate the planning and documentation of multi-stakeholder meetings to share best practices and promote collaboration with institutions and key stakeholders within the region.

Shared reporting metrics

Grantees will advise on standard metrics and reporting templates to be used by both SCHEV/V-TOP and VEDP to track engagement and outcomes.

Internship and work-based learning showcases

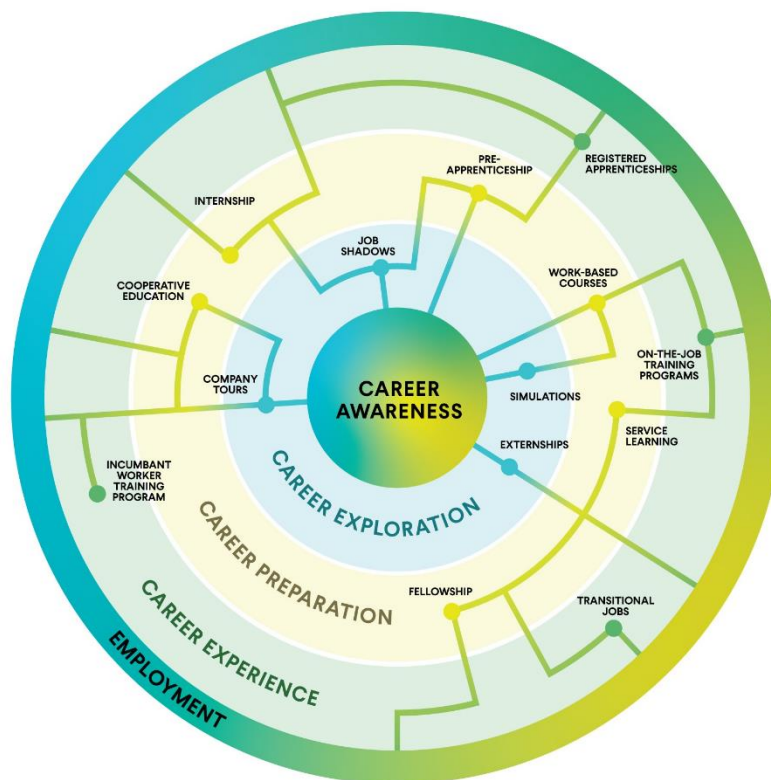
Grantees will help curate content and plan logistics for events or campaigns that

showcase successful internships and work-based learning experiences.

Framework Approach

V-TOP will use [Jobs for the Future](#) (JFF) as the framework to align education and workforce priorities across the nine regions. By organizing activities into four categories—Career Awareness, Career Exploration, Career Preparation, and Career Experience—regional V-TOP Institution-led Partners and VEDP intermediaries can ensure a coordinated and intentional approach. This approach will focus on building student readiness, connecting students to employers, and fostering high-quality work-based learning opportunities. The V-TOP Institution-led approach will take the lead in Career Awareness, Career Exploration, and Career Preparation, while VEDP will directly facilitate the Career Experience activities.

The Work-Based Learning Journey



Career Awareness

Defined as: Creating awareness of various career opportunities within the field. It provides a foundation for work-based learning and prepares students to reflect on their

interests and strengths. The connection between classroom learning and real-world work activities helps students to make informed decisions about their career choices. Examples include: Career days, career expos, career research, career advising, interest inventories, and industry speakers.

V-TOP Institution-led Partners' role in supporting regional career awareness:

Institution-led partners will develop a strategy to spearhead initiatives that help to increase student awareness of various career pathways available in the region. By collaborating with other institutions, these university partners will help organize career days, inform employers about regional expos for their participation, and arrange for industry speakers or summits at the institutional and regional levels. These activities will assist students in identifying their interests, evaluating their strengths, and making informed decisions about their careers, thereby laying a strong foundation for future work-based learning opportunities.

Career Exploration

Defined as: Offering structured learning opportunities for short periods, supporting students in gaining introductory knowledge and interaction with an industry and its associated occupations. Examples include job shadowing, company tours, mentoring, simulations, and externships.

V-TOP Institution-led Partners' role in supporting regional career exploration:

Enhancing Readiness: Promoting and Integrating V-TOP Resources & Programs in Institutions

Grantees must act as facilitators of the V-TOP resources. They must provide a strategy on how to promote and implement existing resources, which include student, employer, and institutional modules; mentorship training, professional development scholarships, and work-based learning activities. The purpose is to enhance awareness of and encourage the use of tools that support internship readiness, foster employer engagement with institutions, and increase awareness of regional and statewide industries. Additionally, efforts must ensure equitable access to work-based learning experiences for all students and institutions within the region.

Regional Institutional and Student Engagement

V-TOP Institution-led Partners must actively engage both institutions and students in the region through regular communication, outreach, and programming. This includes coordinating engagement with career services and academic units, facilitating student access to work-based learning opportunities,

and supporting institutions that may lack established infrastructure or capacity to expose students to early-stage career readiness.

V-TOP Institution-led Partners must coordinate regional activities in partnership with institutions (e.g., workshops, regional industry tours, readiness events, and job shadowing) to create exposure and connections between students and Virginia Employers.

Career Preparation:

Defined as: Providing extended opportunities for participants to increase their knowledge of an identified field of interest and gain employability skills and some entry-level technical knowledge or skills. Examples include: service learning, apprenticeship readiness, pre-apprenticeships, cooperative education, micro-internships, and project-based learning.

V-TOP Institution-led Partners' role in supporting career preparation:

Institution-led Partners must collaborate with the V-TOP central office to support institutions in implementing project-based learning, micro-internships, and short-term activities that provide real-world experiences while building career readiness skills for students.

Career Experience

Defined as: Engaging individuals as paid workers to gain specific skills, in conjunction with related classroom or lab instruction, in a particular industry or occupation. Examples include: Paid internships, registered apprenticeships, transitional jobs, and on-the-job training programs.

Institution-led Partners **must inform and direct appropriate employers** to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to support activities in this area.

In addition to the coordinated and framework approach, funded institutions will be responsible for the following:

Key Personnel Requirements

Grantees must select or recruit essential personnel to fulfill the grant's requirements.

Effort & Commitment

- All personnel designated as essential to the execution of this grant must commit 100 percent (100%) of their effort to this project. Dual appointments, partial allocations of time, or commitments labeled as "0%" or "as needed" are strictly prohibited.

Minimum Qualifications

- The individual selected for this role must have prior experience in career services within a higher education setting, workforce development or training, or

corporate/ human resources. Additionally, the candidate must demonstrate strong planning, coordinating, public speaking, and written communication skills.

Recruitment & SCHEV/V-TOP Participation:

- The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and the Virginia Talent + Opportunity Partnership (V-TOP) shall participate in the recruitment of key personnel to lead the institution-led partnership. This participation will include reviewing and approving the position description, as well as direct involvement on the interview panel.

Defining a Regional Vision and Strategy

Grantees must define their region's unique workforce and education landscape and develop a targeted strategy that reflects the region's specific needs. This effort includes identifying regional goals, aligning with V-TOP's mission, and clearly articulating how proposed activities will address identified gaps or opportunities. The strategy should be measurable and adaptable as needs evolve.

Participate in Statewide Industry-Specific Research

Grantees are expected to participate in V-TOP and VEDP-led assessments actively focused on understanding regional talent pipelines, industry demands, and workforce alignment. This participation involves collecting and sharing relevant data, supporting recruitment of survey participants, engaging stakeholders in the research process, and applying the findings to inform programmatic decisions and employer engagement strategies.

Institutional Site and Employer Site Visits

Grantees must coordinate regular site visits to colleges/universities and employers within their region. These visits should strengthen relationships, assess the quality and accessibility of work-based learning activities, and identify areas for collaboration and growth. Findings from site visits should inform the ongoing strategy and be shared with V-TOP staff as part of the grant reporting process.

Coordinate and Convene Stakeholder Groups

Lead institutions must establish and regularly convene a regional stakeholder group that includes higher education institutions, employers, workforce and economic development organizations, and relevant community partners. These groups should guide strategy, share best practices, and provide feedback on regional internship and

work-based learning initiatives. Stakeholder engagement should be inclusive, goal-oriented, and sustained throughout the grant period.

Required members:

- VEDP Intermediary
- Community colleges
- Public and private institutions of higher education
- Higher education centers located in and/or serving the region
- Chambers of commerce
- Economic development partnerships (regional)
- One or more employer representatives
- One or more students (within the region) from a two- or four-year institution of higher education (public or private) [The student must be currently enrolled at a VA public or private V-TAG institution].
- Other members are optional based on collaborative need

*Key personnel leading the Institution-led Partnership must consult with SCHEV/V-TOP regarding the stakeholder members.

If awarded, a grantee must solidify their stakeholder group within the first 30 days. To maintain compliance, the host institution must conduct regional stakeholder group meetings at least once per quarter.

Program Metrics

To demonstrate progress and achievement on the tasks outlined in “Institution-Led Regional Partners Initiative,” lead institutions are expected to set objectives and outcomes that support and reflect their strategic approach.

Institution-Led Regional Partners should propose objectives and outcomes based on their proposed work plans that align with the two V-TOP statewide goals stated below. All objectives and outcomes must have targets that are proposed by the region and finalized in consultation with SCHEV/V-TOP.

Regional outcomes will align with V-TOP's statutory purpose and goals, focusing on the core mission along with the Jobs for the Future Framework.

Goal 1: Expand work-based learning opportunities in collaboration with Virginia institutions

Institution-led partners will work together with regional institutions to enhance access to high-quality Work-Based Learning (WBL) opportunities at all stages of career

development: Career Awareness, Career Exploration, Career Preparation, and Career Experience. By collaborating with employers and educational institutions, they will help to strengthen the pathway from classroom learning to career readiness. This effort will be achieved by aligning efforts, sharing best practices, and bringing together relevant stakeholder groups. Metrics for participation and engagement will be developed in coordination with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) and the university partners.

Goal 2: Facilitate the readiness of students, employers, and institutions to participate in work-based learning

Institution-led partners will lead readiness efforts to equip students, employers, and institutions to fully engage in Career Awareness, Career Exploration, Career Preparation, and Career Experience activities. Initiatives will involve targeted outreach, engagement with institutions, mentorship training, professional development opportunities, and efforts to build capacity. Readiness and engagement metrics will be established collaboratively with SCHEV and institution-led partners to ensure alignment with statewide goals.

Regional Implementation Plan

Award recipients must submit a regional implementation plan within 60 days of their award and consult with central V-TOP for final approval. This plan should include clearly defined numeric targets for all objectives and outcomes, which should be established locally. The targets must be realistic and aligned with the state's annual goals and benchmarks.

In addition to meeting the goals, objectives, and outcomes, regions will be expected to engage in the activities below:

V-TOP Specific Events

- Attend onboarding regional training and annual refresher training (as applicable).
 - Principal Investigators will be required to attend training and meetings as needed.
- Attend and participate in V-TOP Monthly Regional Meetings
- Schedule and attend bi-weekly one-on-ones with the Associate for Innovative Work-Based Learning

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- Attend in-person Regional Coordinator Events and Trainings
- Attend the VACE Conference each April
- Attend at least one professional development conference or webinar

Virginia Intern Day Events

- Promote Virginia Intern Student Ambassador Program
- Promote Virginia Intern Day in your region
- Plan and host a Virginia Intern Day event for Interns, Supervisors, and Employers to attend.

Outcome Reporting Guidelines

Grantees must participate in an interim progress session led by V-TOP (central) and complete a six-month abbreviated progress report. Additionally, regional grantees are required to submit an outcomes report that details their progress towards the goals and objectives outlined in their implementation plan. This report should include both quantitative and qualitative data, with metrics aligned to the performance measures established in collaboration with SCHEV/V-TOP.

Reports are due 30 days after the period of performance ends. To ensure consistency in reporting, grantees must follow the template provided by V-TOP; however, they may also include supporting information.

Description of Funding Opportunity

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are any public or private two – or four-year institutions of higher education who participate in the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant (TAG) program.

Limited Submission

Each eligible applicant may submit a proposal. Each institution may only be involved in one proposal.

Award Type and Amount

Funds will be awarded in the form of a grant, with a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the fiscal agent (see Appendix).

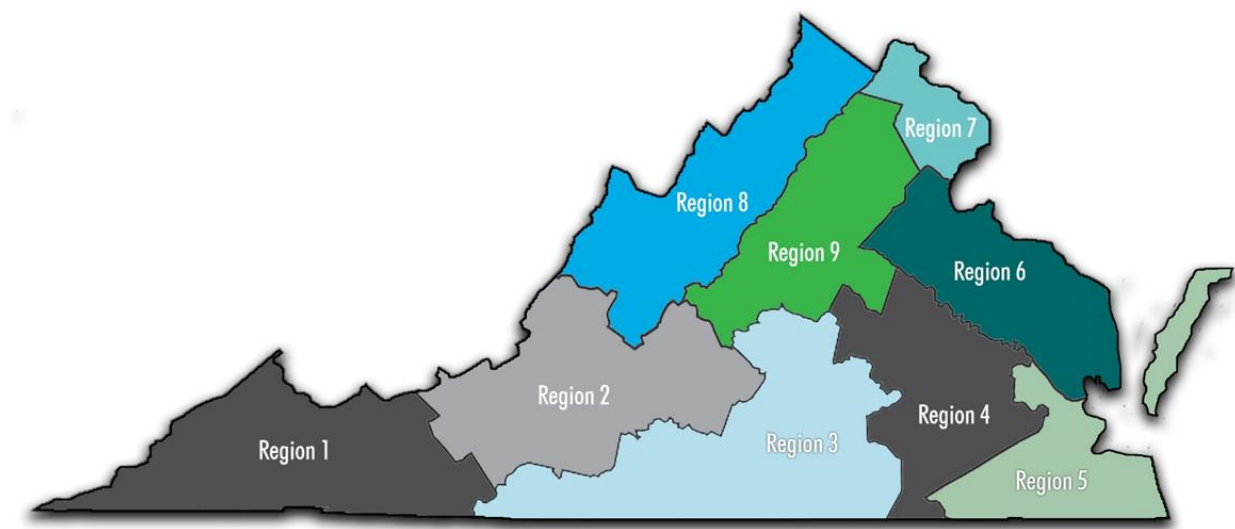
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Award amount: up to \$150,000 per year

There is no minimum amount for requests. Applicants may request any amount up to but not to exceed the \$150,000 maximum.

Grantees are expected to track and report expenditures that support the project and are funded by other means.

SCHEV expects to make nine grant awards on October 17, 2025; one to each of the regions outlined below:



Region 1	Region 2
Bland County, Bristol, Buchanan County, Carroll County, Dickenson County, Galax, Grayson County, Lee County, Norton, Russell County, Scott County, Smyth County, Tazewell County, Washington County, Wise County, Wythe County	Alleghany County, Amherst County, Appomattox County, Bedford County, Botetourt County, Campbell County, Covington, Craig County, Floyd County, Franklin County, Giles County, Lynchburg, Montgomery County, Pulaski County, Radford, Roanoke, Roanoke County, Salem
Institutions: Bluefield University, Emory & Henry College, Mountain Empire Community College, Southwest Virginia Community College, University of Virginia's College at Wise, Virginia Highlands Community College, Wytheville Community College	Institutions: Central Virginia Community College, Ferrum College, Hollins University, Liberty University, Mountain Gateway

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	Community College, New River Community College, Radford University, Randolph College, Roanoke College, Sweet Briar College, University of Lynchburg, Virginia Tech, Virginia Western Community College
<p>Region 3</p> <p>Amelia County, Brunswick County, Buckingham County, Charlotte County, Cumberland County, Danville, Halifax County, Henry County, Lunenburg County, Martinsville, Mecklenburg County, Nottoway County, Patrick County, Pittsylvania County, Prince Edward County</p> <p>Institutions: Averett University, Danville Community College, Hampden-Sydney College, Longwood University, Patrick & Henry Community College, Southside Virginia Community College</p>	<p>Region 4</p> <p>Charles City County, Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights, Dinwiddie County, Emporia, Goochland County, Greensville County, Hanover County, Henrico County, Hopewell, New Kent County, Petersburg, Powhatan County, Prince George County, Richmond, Surry County, Sussex County</p> <p>Institutions: Brightpoint Community College, J Sargeant Reynolds Community College, Randolph-Macon College, University of Richmond, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia State University, Virginia Union University, Richard Bland College</p>
<p>Region 5</p> <p>Accomack County, Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Isle of Wight County, James City County, Newport News, Norfolk, Northampton County, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Southampton County, Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg, York County</p> <p>Institutions: Christopher Newport University, Eastern Shore Community College, Hampton University, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, Paul D Camp Community College, Tidewater Community College, Virginia Peninsula Community College, Virginia Wesleyan University, William & Mary</p>	<p>Region 6</p> <p>Caroline County, Essex County, Fredericksburg, Gloucester County, King and Queen County, King George County, King William County, Lancaster County, Mathews County, Middlesex County, Northumberland County, Richmond County, Spotsylvania County, Stafford County, Westmoreland County</p> <p>Institutions: University of Mary Washington, Rappahannock Community College</p>
<p>Region 7</p> <p>Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax, Fairfax</p>	<p>Region 8</p> <p>Augusta County, Bath County, Buena Vista,</p>

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<p>County, Falls Church, Loudoun County, Manassas, Manassas Park, Prince William County</p> <p>Institutions: George Mason University, Marymount University, Northern Virginia Community College</p>	<p>Clarke County, Frederick County, Harrisonburg, Highland County, Lexington, Page County, Rockbridge County, Rockingham County, Shenandoah County, Staunton, Warren County, Waynesboro, Winchester</p> <p>Institutions: Blue Ridge Community College, Bridgewater College, Eastern Mennonite University, James Madison University, Laurel Ridge Community College, Mary Baldwin University, Shenandoah University, Southern Virginia University, Virginia Military Institute, Washington and Lee University</p>
<p>Region 9</p> <p>Albemarle County, Charlottesville, Culpeper County, Fauquier County, Fluvanna County, Greene County, Louisa County, Madison County, Nelson County, Orange County, Rappahannock County</p> <p>Institutions: Germanna Community College, Piedmont Virginia Community College, University of Virginia</p>	

Period of Performance

Grant periods are 12 months. Renewals are possible on a year-to-year basis based on funding availability, continued institutional eligibility, and demonstration of outcomes in alignment with state-level goals and funding availability.

The grant period will begin on November 3, 2025.

Application and Submission Information

Proposal Length, Type Face and Size, Spacing

Proposals are limited to ten (10) pages, not including cover sheet, table of contents, list of members/potential members of the collaborative and corresponding levels of support, executive summary, budget and budget narrative.

- Proposals may be single spaced.

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- Font must be either Times New Roman 12 pt. or Arial 11 pt.
- Font for figures, tables, formulas and diagrams may be reduced no smaller than Times New Roman 10 pt. or Arial 9 pt.
- Margins, in all directions, must be at least an inch; margins for illustrations, graphics, diagrams, tables or figures that take up a full page may be reduced no smaller than half an inch.
- Pages should be numbered on the bottom right.
- Inclusion of other information in headers or footers is at the discretion of the applicant.

Contents of Proposal

Cover Sheet

The cover sheet should include the following information:

- Title of proposed project
- Name and contact information for lead organization
- Name and contact information for the fiscal agent (if different from the lead organization); must be a public institution of higher education in Virginia
- Total amount of funds requested
- Printed name, title and signature of authorized signer for lead organization
- Printed name, title and signature of authorized signer for fiscal agent (if different from the lead organization)

Proposal Narrative

Proposal narratives will be assessed using the scoring below (up to 40 points) and the criteria described in “Application Processing, Review Criteria and Award.” In addition, up to 20 impact points may be awarded by the reviewers at their discretion for a possible total of 60 points. Impact points may be awarded based on the reviewers’ recognition of the overall value of the proposed activities to Virginia as well as other factors.

Proposal narratives must include the sections listed below in the same order and with identical headings:

- Table of Contents

- Executive Summary: The summary will be published on the website and used for a press release if the proposal is funded (2 points)
- Members of the Collaborative: Provide (1) the names of each organization that has already committed to participate, along with the name and title of the contact person at that organization; (2) a list of organizations that have been contacted and are considering participation; and (3) a list of any other organizations that could be asked to join the collaborative over the one-year grant period (5 points)
- Project Description (10-page limit):
 - a. Brief History: Provide a brief history of collaborative work-based learning efforts in the region; this should not be a list of efforts offered by individual partnering organizations (3 points; about 1 ½ pages)
 - b. Work Plan: Describe your one-year plan to convene the collaborating organizations and accomplish the tasks listed in the “Institution-Led Regional Partners Initiative” section of this Call for Proposals (25 points; about 5 pages)
 - Metrics: In addition to committing to the metrics outlined in “Metrics,” provide any additional objectives and outcomes that align with the work plan
 - c. Milestones and Timeline: Milestones are the completion of activities listed in the “Institution-Led Regional Partners Initiative” section of this Call for Proposals.

Provide a timeline that also may include progress measures leading to completion of the milestones within the performance period. (3 points; about 1-2 page)
 - d. Conclusion (key reasons why your proposal should be funded; state your case in a few sentences) (2 points; about 1 page)

Budget and Budget Narrative

Please provide a line-item budget either in Excel or Word; consider using standard direct cost budget categories such as salaries/wages, benefits, travel (for staff or other personnel), supplies, etc. Provide a separate line-item budget for any subawardees. Also provide a brief description of the planned expenditures. Grant funds cannot be used for indirect costs (no points; about 2 pages).

Applicants may use the provided budget template; however, proposal reviewers will accept a budget in any format that includes the standard direct cost budget categories and cost breakdowns that are listed in the template. Acceptable formats include those

used by an institution's office of sponsored programs, a budget extracted from an institution's electronic grant administration portal or an Excel spreadsheet created by the applicant.

Proposed costs should align with project implementation and should not serve as a replacement for existing funding.

Examples of Allowable Expenditures:

No more than 10% of the budget should be used for consultant services. No one budget category should consume a significant portion of the overall funds.

- Personnel (grant can fund initial personnel costs, but applicants should consider program sustainability beyond the grant term)
- Travel (e.g., professional development events, etc.)
- Supplies essential for project implementation
- Events

Examples of Non-Allowable Expenditures:

- Indirect Costs
- Entertainment costs (e.g., decorations, alcohol, etc.)

Submission of Applications

Please submit applications via email to Stacey Garnett, Business Operations Specialist, at staceygarnett@schev.edu. Proposals must be received by 11:59 p.m. on October 3, 2025. Please submit proposals in a single pdf file, except detailed budgets may be submitted in Excel.

Application Processing, Review Criteria and Award

Application Processing

Upon receipt via email of an application package, SCHEV staff will respond by return email within two business days to confirm receipt.

Review of applications is a two-step process. First, SCHEV staff will conduct an administrative review to ensure that proposal packets are complete and conform to administrative requirements in this Call for Proposals. Some applicants may receive follow-up questions from SCHEV staff. If issues of compliance are found, SCHEV staff will work with the applicant to resolve the issue(s), if possible.

Conforming applications will move to the second stage where proposals will be

evaluated and ranked by a team of professionals with relevant experience and knowledge.

Review Criteria

The number of points available for each section of the application is listed in “Contents of Proposal.” While some points will be awarded based on compliance with instructions, other points will be awarded based on aspects such as the inclusion of partners relevant to the region, the likelihood that the proposed activities will lead to completion of the milestones, etc.

Award

SCHEV leadership and staff will examine the review team’s assessment of the proposals and make the final decision regarding awards. SCHEV staff may negotiate with applicants prior to making award decisions. SCHEV may consider many factors in making awards, including but not limited to the consensus score awarded by the review team, reviewer comments, the overall quality of the activities proposed, the proposed use of grant funds, geographic distribution of awards, etc.

Funds will be awarded in the form of a grant, with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the lead institution or fiscal agent (see Appendix). Upon an MOU’s execution, SCHEV will notify the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget to release the approved funds to the grantee for the fiscal year.

Reporting Requirements

Financial Reports

Financial reports are required 30 days after the end of the performance period; a final cumulative report is also required. Grantees will also be asked a series of financial questions on a six-month progress report.

SCHEV will accept reports generated from an institution’s accounting system reporting function.

The reports must include information regarding the total amount awarded, the amount forwarded to the institution at the beginning of the grant period and thereafter, the amount encumbered to date, the amount spent and the amount remaining for each budget category and for the same budget categories for each subaward, if any.

Reports showing the same information for additional related expenses funded by other sources are also required.

Technical Narrative Progress Report & Comprehensive Report

Technical progress reports are due every six months and will be completed via an electronic form. Each region will be required to submit a monthly tracker template each month; this will be provided at the start of the award. Technical reports will include both narrative and quantitative response requirements based on associated metrics.

Also required are the final deliverables described earlier and in the Performance Measures (attachment #3).

A final cumulative report is also required to be submitted 30 days after the end of the grant period.

Award Administration

SCHEV staff seek to build relationships with grantees and foster collaborative approaches to addressing issues and removing impediments. For details regarding post-award revisions that require prior approval, along with other conditions of award, please see Appendix: Terms and Conditions of Award, specifically “Attachment 1.

Special Terms and Conditions.”

Appendix: Assurances and Certifications – Terms and Conditions of Award

Assurances and Certifications

The Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) signing the cover page is assuring and certifying the following:

Certification Regarding Collaborating Entity AOR Approval: The applicant AOR is certifying that the AORs (or equivalent) of all collaborating entities have made the same assurances and certifications and that documentation of such exists.

Certification Regarding State Funds: The AOR is certifying that the organization understands that SCHEV is awarding state funds. The organization will comply with all rules and regulations regarding state funds, including but not limited to the Commonwealth Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual, the Virginia Public Procurement Act (when applicable) and the Library of Virginia's Virginia Public Records Management Manual.

Terms and Conditions

Grantor and grantee agree that this MOU will be performed in accordance with the following:

1. The statement of work and budget for this award are as specified in the grantee's proposal submitted (date; to be filled in only if grant awarded) and incorporated herein by reference. In its performance of the statement of work, grantee shall be an independent entity and not an employee or agent of grantor.
2. Matters concerning the performance of this award should be directed to the appropriate party's contact, as shown in Attachments 3A (Grantee Contacts) & 3B (SCHEV Contacts). [To be completed at time of award]
3. Matters concerning the request or negotiation of any changes in the terms, conditions or amounts cited in this award agreement, and any changes requiring prior approval, should be directed to the appropriate party's Contact, as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B. Any such changes made to this MOU require the written approval of each party's Authorized Official as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B.
4. Incorporated into this MOU by reference are the Call for Proposals, the entirety of the grantee's application packet including the assurances and certifications, the special terms and conditions in Attachment 1 and the general terms and conditions in Attachment 2.

Signature lines will be added at the time of award.

Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions

Applicability

The terms and conditions in the MOU and all attachments apply directly to the grantee and also apply to collaborating entities, subrecipients and contractors. The grantee is accountable for the performance of the project, program or activity; the appropriate expenditure of funds under the award by all parties; and all other obligations of the grantee, as cited in the MOU and all attachments.

Compliance with the Common Rule; Education in the Protection of Human Research Participants; Responsible Conduct of Research

If the grantee's pilot intervention will meet the definition of research with human subjects, the grantee will ensure that subjects are protected from research risks in conformance with the relevant federal policy known as the Common Rule (Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects). All projects involving human subjects must either (1) obtain approval from the organization's Institutional Review Board (IRB) or (2) maintain documentation that the IRB has declared the research exempt from IRB review, in accordance with the applicable subsection, as established in section 101(b) of the Common Rule.

Further, if the pilot intervention involves research with human subjects, all senior/key personnel involved in human-subjects research should have received training in the protection of human subjects and the institution should have a plan to provide appropriate training and oversight in the responsible and ethical conduct of research to undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers who will be involved in conducting the pilot project.

Changes

The changes listed below require the prior approval of the grantor. Requests should be directed to the grantor's Contact, as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B.

- Changes to the scope of the project articulated in the approved proposal.
- Changes to any milestones and/or timelines included in the approved proposal that would jeopardize the completion of activities by the end date of the grant period.
- Changes to key personnel named in the approved proposal.
- Plans for continued progress during extended absence of lead personnel.
- Changes to the budget resulting in a deviation of 20% or more in any budget category; the request must include the current allocation of resources along with specific details and justification for the reallocation.

No-cost extensions require the approval of the grantor. Requests for a no-cost extension should be addressed to and received by the Contact, as shown in Attachments 3A & 3B, not less than sixty (60) days prior to the desired effective date of the requested change.

Disbursement of Funds, Accounting and Audit

Grantor will authorize the State Comptroller and the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget to release the awarded funds to the grantee.

All payments shall be considered provisional and subject to adjustment within the total estimated cost in the event such adjustment is necessary as a result of an adverse audit finding against the grantee.

Award monies not expended by the end of the period of performance must be returned.

The grantee will oversee the expenditure of all grant funds by all parties and ensure that all funds are expended in strict compliance with state rules, regulations and guidelines; the terms and conditions of this MOU; professional accounting standards; and all applicable state laws and requirements.

The grantee will maintain systematic accounting records of all expenditures relating to this award, including the supporting source documentation. Records will be retained by the grantee in accordance with the Library of Virginia Record Retention Policy.

Records will be available for inspection and/or audit by SCHEV, the Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts or other appropriate entity.

Reporting

Report type and due dates are required as detailed in the Call for Proposals.

Termination of Award

SCHEV may terminate this award in the event of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of this MOU, significant lack of progress including failure to achieve milestones on the timeline set forth in the proposal, or other extenuating conditions. In the case of termination, the grantee will return any unexpended and unobligated funds.

Attachment 2: General Terms and Conditions

A. VENDORS MANUAL: N/A

B. **APPLICABLE LAWS AND COURTS:** This contract shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in the courts of the Commonwealth. The agency and the grantee are encouraged to resolve any issues in controversy arising from the award of the contract or any contractual dispute using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) procedures (Code of Virginia, §2.2-4366). ADR procedures are described in Chapter 9 of the Vendors Manual. The grantee shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations.

C. **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION:** By signing this contract, the grantee certifies to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia that they will conform to the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, as well as the Virginia Fair Employment Contracting Act of 1975, as amended, where applicable, the Virginians With Disabilities Act, the Americans With Disabilities Act and §2.2-4311 of the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA). The grantee shall not discriminate against any recipient of goods, services or disbursements made pursuant to the contract on the basis of the recipient's religion, religious belief, refusal to participate in a religious practice, or on the basis of race, age, color, gender or national origin and shall be subject to the same rules as other organizations that contract with public bodies to account for the use of the funds provided; however, if the faith-based organization segregates public funds into separate accounts, only the accounts and programs funded with public funds shall be subject to audit by the public body. (Code of Virginia, §2.2-4343 1.E.).

1. During the performance of this contract, the grantee agrees as follows:

- a. The grantee will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment, except where there is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the grantee. The grantee agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.
- b. The grantee, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the grantee, will state that such grantee is an

equal opportunity employer.

- c. Notices, advertisements and solicitations placed in accordance with federal law, rule or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of meeting these requirements.
 2. The grantee will include the provisions of 1. above in every subcontract or purchase order over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.
- D. **ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING:** By signing this contract with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the grantee certifies that their offer is made without collusion or fraud and that they have not offered or received any kickbacks or inducements from any other contractor, supplier, manufacturer or subcontractor in connection with their offer and that they have not conferred on any public employee having official responsibility for this transaction any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything of more than nominal value, present or promised, unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.
- E. **IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986:** By signing this contract with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, the grantee certifies that the grantee does not, and shall not during the performance of the contract, knowingly employ an unauthorized alien as defined in the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.
- F. **DEBARMENT STATUS:** By signing this contract, grantee shall certify that they are not currently debarred by the Commonwealth of Virginia from contracts for the type of activities covered by the Scope of Work/proposal, nor are they an agent of any person or entity that is currently so debarred. (Not applicable to state agencies)
- G. **ANTITRUST:** By entering into this contract, the grantee conveys, sells, assigns and transfers to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia all rights, title and interest in and to all causes of action it may now have or hereafter acquire under the antitrust laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, relating to the particular goods or services purchased or acquired by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia under said contract. (Not applicable to state agencies)
- H. **MANDATORY USE OF STATE FORM AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

FOR IFBs AND RFPs: NA

I. **CLARIFICATION OF TERMS:** N/A

J. **PAYMENT:** See “Disbursement of Funds, Accounting and Audit” in Attachment 1:

Special Terms and Conditions.

K. **TESTING AND INSPECTION:** The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia reserves the right to conduct any test/inspection it may deem advisable to assure goods and services conform to the specifications in the Scope of Work.

L. **ASSIGNMENT OF CONTRACT:** A contract shall not be assignable by the grantee in whole or in part without the written consent of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

M. **PRECEDENCE OF TERMS:** The following General Terms and Conditions VENDORS MANUAL (NA), APPLICABLE LAWS AND COURTS, ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING, IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTRAL ACT OF 1986, DEBARMENT STATUS, ANTITRUST, MANDATORY USE OF STATE FORM AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS (NA), CLARIFICATION OF TERMS (NA), PAYMENT shall apply in all instances. In the event there is a conflict between any of the other General Terms and Conditions and any Special Terms and Conditions, the Special Terms and Conditions shall apply.

N. **QUALIFICATIONS OF (BIDDERS/OFFERORS):** N/A

O. **TESTING AND INSPECTION:** N/A (duplicate of I. above)

P. **ASSIGNMENT OF CONTRACT:** N/A (duplicate of J. above)

Q. **CHANGES TO THE CONTRACT:** See Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions.

R. **DEFAULT:** See Attachment 1: Special Terms and Conditions.

S. **TAXES:** Sales to the Commonwealth of Virginia are normally exempt from state sales tax. State sales and use tax certificates of exemption, Form ST-12, will be issued upon request.

T. **USE OF BRAND NAMES:** N/A

- U. **TRANSPORTATION AND PACKAGING:** N/A
- V. **INSURANCE:** N/A
- W. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARD:** N/A
- X. **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE:** During the performance of this contract, the grantee and subcontractors agree to provide a drug-free workplace for the grantee's employees. Grantee will inform employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the grantee's workplace.
- Y. **NONDISCRIMINATION OF GRANTEES:** Grantee shall not be discriminated against because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, faith-based organizational status, any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment or because grantee employs ex-offenders unless the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia has made a written determination that employing ex-offenders on the specific contract is not in its best interest. If the award of this contract is made to a faith-based organization and an individual, who applies for or receives goods, services or disbursements provided pursuant to this contract, objects to the religious character of the faith-based organization from which the individual receives or would receive the goods, services or disbursements, the public body shall offer the individual, within a reasonable period of time after the date of his objection, access to equivalent goods, services or disbursements from an alternative provider.
- Z. **eVA BUSINESS-TO-GOVERNMENT VENDOR REGISTRATION, CONTRACTS AND ORDERS:** N/A
- AA. **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:** The parties herein understand and agree that the agency shall be bound hereunder only to the extent of the funds available or which may hereafter become available for the purpose of this agreement.
- BB. **SET-ASIDES:** N/A
- CC. **BID PRICE CURRENCY:** N/A
- DD. **AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN THE COMMONWEALTH:** N/A

Additional Terms and Conditions

A. **RENEWAL OF CONTRACT:** N/A

B. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** N/A

C. **DELIVERY POINT:** N/A

D. **eVA Business-To-Government Contracts and Orders:** N/A

E. **PRIME GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES:** The grantee shall be responsible for completely supervising and directing the work under this contract and all subcontractors that he may utilize, using his best skill and attention.

Subcontractors who perform work under this contract shall be responsible to the prime grantee. The grantee agrees that he is as fully responsible for the acts and omissions of his subcontractors and of persons employed by them as he is for the acts and omissions of his own employees.

F. **PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE PERIOD:** N/A

G. **WARRANTY:** N/A

H. **SUBCONTRACTS:** No portion of the work shall be subcontracted without prior written consent of the purchasing agency. In the event that the grantee desires to subcontract some part of the work specified herein, the grantee shall furnish the purchasing agency the names, qualifications and experience of their proposed subcontractors. The grantee shall, however, remain fully liable and responsible for the work to be done by its subcontractor(s) and shall assure compliance with all requirements of the contract.