THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

Healthcare Access Initiative
Healthcare Occupations Program Grant
Occupational Fields: Nursing, Behavioral Health & Allied Health

Letter of Intent Deadline: Monday, April 25, 2022; 1:00 p.m. CT
Full Proposal Deadline: Monday, August 8, 2022; 1:00 p.m. CT

I. Introduction

The mission of The Rapides Foundation is to improve the health status of Central Louisiana. The Rapides Foundation focuses its work in three strategic areas:

- Healthy People, to improve access to healthcare and promote healthy behaviors;
- Education, to increase the level of educational attainment and achievement as the primary path to improved economic, social and health status; and
- Healthy Communities, to improve economic opportunity and family income, and enhance civic and community opportunities for more effective leaders and organizations.

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), The Rapides Foundation seeks to increase the number of healthcare graduates prepared to the basic level of licensure/certification required by employers for initial hire of high demand healthcare occupations within the Foundation's nine-parish service area (Allen, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Grant, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Vernon and Winn). The funding opportunity will support nonprofit, accredited colleges and universities to add and expand current healthcare program offerings and concentrations to meet the critical workforce needs of local employers. Funds can be used to address shortages in three occupational fields: nursing, behavioral health and allied health.

This is a two-stage application process consisting of a Letter of Intent (LOI) and Full Proposal. Applicants asked to continue to the Full Proposal stage will be provided with specific information to guide that effort.

II. Background

Access to quality healthcare services is important to reduce health disparities and improve health status. Availability of qualified healthcare professionals is often cited as one of the main barriers limiting care. Through our Healthcare Access Initiative, the Foundation seeks to address the supply and demand gap in the healthcare workforce and build the capacity of regional postsecondary institutions to meet healthcare workforce needs.

The Rapides Foundation began an initial analysis of the healthcare workforce landscape in 2016. Based upon the collective quantitative and qualitative data, it was clear that there was an overwhelming need for quality healthcare professionals. The study also highlighted that the current level of graduates from healthcare programs was not meeting the employer demand. To address the supply and demand gap, in 2016 the Foundation developed the Healthcare Occupations Program Grant to increase the number of graduates from healthcare programs of Qualifying Educational Entities. Six grants, totaling more than $2.1 million, were awarded to four local Qualifying Educational Entities.

The Foundation updated its healthcare workforce analysis in 2021. Local graduate data and discussions with local postsecondary partners were paired with workforce data, current job listings, and employer surveys. The update showed that gaps between supply and demand were present for nursing professionals and behavioral health professionals, as well as allied health professionals. Additionally, current workforce projections anticipate that there will be a 10% increase in total healthcare employment over the next 10 years. This growth, combined with the high-turnover nature of healthcare fields and the looming retirement of baby boomers, highlights the need to address current and future gaps in the healthcare workforce. The Foundation is reopening the Healthcare Occupations Program Grant opportunity to address the unmet needs in high-demand healthcare fields with a secondary focus to build the capacity of regional postsecondary institutions to meet healthcare workforce needs.

III. Purpose for Request for Proposals

The purpose of the Healthcare Occupations Program Grant is to expand or develop healthcare programs to increase the number of graduates in three high-demand occupational fields: **nursing** (e.g. nurse practitioners, nurse anesthetists, registered nurses, practical nurses, etc. Nurse assistants fall under the allied health field), **behavioral health** (e.g. licensed clinical social workers, licensed professional counselors, addiction counselors, etc.) and **allied health** (e.g. nurse aides, techs, dental assistants, etc.). All proposals should be based upon proven, evidence-based activities, result in more completers, and demonstrate a significant employer demand for graduates. All projects must be offered on campuses within the Foundation's nine-parish service area.

This grant offering does not accept proposals to supplant or maintain current program activities, or for programs that do not increase the number of licensures/certifications (e.g. ASN to BSN). However, it encourages the following types of projects:

- Projects to expand the number of students admitted into clinical courses.
- Projects to expand student retention efforts.
- Projects to create new programs/concentrations in high-demand healthcare fields.
- Projects to expand availability of clinical rotations.

Note: Grant awards will be based on impact to high-demand healthcare occupations and funding request should be appropriate for the number of additional graduates produced.

IV. Eligibility Requirements

The grant applicant must meet all of the following requirements:

- Classified as a Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code or a government entity.
- Cannot be a private foundation under Section 509(a).
- Be accredited by either The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) or Accrediting Commission of the Council on Occupational Education (COE).

The grant applicant must meet one of the following requirements:

- Public four-year university with a campus located within the Foundation's nine-parish service area.
- Private four-year university with a campus located within the Foundation's nine-parish service area.
- Public two-year college with a campus located within the Foundation's nine-parish service area.

Note: Grantees may partner with other educational institutions to provide capacity and accreditation for programs. All funded projects must be offered in The Rapides Foundation's nine-parish service area.

V. Funding Guidelines and Grant Term

LOIs will be considered at the May 2022 Board meeting and grants will be awarded at the September 2022 Board meeting. The Foundation reserves the right to grant less than the total amount requested. The grant term will be up to 43 months, beginning November 1, 2022, and ending June 1, 2026. All funded projects can include a planning and start-up period starting November 1, 2022 and ending no later than May 31, 2023. The Foundation will consider multiple applications per organization for this opportunity. Organizations should not combine projects to address multiple occupational fields in one proposal. Separate proposals should be submitted for each project. Grant funding must align with project needs and must be used to create or expand programs to increase graduates. Funds may be used for faculty and staff costs; operating costs directly associated with the new or expanded program; accreditation costs; stipends for existing faculty taking on additional responsibilities (e.g. irregular clinical or instruction hours); training equipment; stipends for students (must include a two-year employment requirement within the Foundation's service area). *Marketing expenses should be very minimal. Any renovation, construction and equipment cost must be explicitly linked to enhanced programmatic implementation and development, and, combined, are limited to 15% of the total request.* Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to secure matching funds and/or in-kind support. Proposals with matching funds will enhance competitiveness.

Grant funds may **not** be used for:
- Supplanting existing resources.
- Lobbying or political programs or events.
- Activities, projects, or programs exclusively benefitting members of sectarian or religious organizations.
- Biomedical, clinical or educational research.
- Direct support to individuals or endowments.
- Funding that supplants existing sources of support.
- Individuals, including patient assistance funds.
- Social events or similar fundraising efforts or telethons.
- Projects outside of the Foundation's service area.
- Direct funding for medical or social services already funded through existing third-party reimbursement sources.
- Operating expenses not used for significantly expanding the services of ongoing organizations.
- Vans or other vehicles.
- Building purchase, renovation or construction not explicitly linked to enhanced programmatic implementation or development.
- Equipment purchase not explicitly linked to enhanced programmatic implementation or development.

VI. Timeline for Submission

Grant Cycle

Letter of Intent Due	April 25, 2022
LOI Notification of Selection	May 20, 2022
Full Proposal Due	August 8, 2022
Notification of Selection	October 3, 2022
Planning/Start-Up Period (Optional)	November 1, 2022 - May 31, 2023
Full Grant Implementation (No later than)	June 1, 2023

Pre-submission Consultation
Prospective applicants are encouraged to schedule a call or a meeting with Foundation Staff to discuss alignment and feasibility of their Letter of Intent or Full Proposal before submission. For applications involving

nursing programs, please contact Matt LaBorde, Program Officer, at matt@rapidesfoundation.org or 318.443.3394 to request a meeting. For proposals involving **allied health** or **behavioral health** programs, please contact Kiydra Harris, Program Officer, at kiydra@rapidesfoundation.org or 318.443.3394 to request a meeting. Please schedule the meeting at least three weeks before the submission deadline.

Letter of Intent/Full Proposal Deadline
Letters of Intent and Full Proposals are accepted using the Foundation's online application process only. The application is located on the Foundation's website at www.rapidesfoundation.org under the "Grants" tab. Online deadline submission is no later than 1:00 p.m. on the dates listed above. In fairness to all applicants, late or incomplete submissions are not considered. Please note, the Letter of Intent and/or Full Proposal must be fully submitted by the deadline; therefore, you must begin uploading documents prior to 1:00 p.m. on the day of the deadline. We suggest you allow a minimum of three hours for the upload process.

VII. Letter of Intent Requirements

All applicants are required to submit a Letter of Intent in 11-point Calibri font with 1.5 line spacing and page numbers at the bottom right corner. Submissions should be limited to **two to four pages**.

1. **Grant Application Cover Page – Completed within the Foundation's online grant portal. Applicants will be asked to provide answers for 1. a-f within a form on the Foundation's online grant portal. A separate sheet is not required and this is not included in your page count.**
   a. Applicant organization information (name, address, phone number, email, etc.).
   b. Name, title, phone number and email address of the proposed project coordinator or key contact person from the applicant organization.
   c. Project title.
   d. Requested funding amount. Total project amount including other funding sources.
   e. Intended project period starting no sooner than the dates listed above.
   f. Brief program summary.
2. **Project Description** – provide an overview of the proposed project.
   a. Explain how the project is consistent with the mission of your organization and that of any project partners.
   b. Describe the workforce need that will be addressed by this project or program.
   c. Describe the barriers to be addressed by your proposed project or program. Be specific as to what prevents your organization from having more completers or what is preventing your organization from adding a program. If it is an existing program, tell us if the program meets all accreditation standards.
   d. Describe the project through a summary of the timeline, activities, partners and other factors necessary to consider in assessing the potential for effectively producing more graduates or adding a program.
   e. Describe the proposed results of your project in measurable terms. If applicable, provide a chart detailing graduate, enrollment and qualified applicant counts over the last five years. Be specific as to how many more graduates the project will produce.
   f. Describe how the project can be sustained both financially and organizationally, after the proposed Foundation funding concludes.
3. **Other Supporting Information** (not counted in page count)
   a. A budget worksheet using the form provided. Ensure your budget is appropriate to the size of the impact of the project.
   b. A copy of applicant organization's **501(c)(3) designation letter** from the IRS (not included in page count).

     c.   A copy of applicant organization's most recent **IRS 990** (nonprofit tax return) or most recent **audit** if governmental agency (not included in page count).

Announcements of Letters of Intent accepted by the Foundation's Board of Trustees will be **May 20, 2022.** Those applicants will be invited to submit a Full Proposal according to the submission deadlines in the table above. Full Proposals are accepted through our online application process only.

VIII. Full Proposal Requirements

Only applicants invited to submit a Full Proposal must complete the following information in 11-point Calibri font with 1.5 line spacing and page numbers at the bottom right corner.

1. **Cover Page – completed within the Foundation's online grant portal. Applicants will be asked to provide answers for 1. a-f within a form on the Foundation's online grant portal. A separate sheet is not required and this is not included in your page count.**
   a. Applicant organization information (name, address, phone number, email, etc.).
   b. Name, title, phone number and email address of the proposed project coordinator or key contact person from the applicant organization.
   c. Project title.
   d. Requested funding amount. Total project amount including other funding sources.
   e. Intended project period starting no sooner than the dates listed above.
   f. Brief program summary.

2. **Project Development and Support: (up to 4 pages)**
   a. Describe demand for the occupation(s) being addressed by this project. Include current local, state or national statistics to support your request.
      i. What high-demand occupations can graduates fill?
      ii. What is the current need for those occupations?
      iii. What is the short-term (three to five years) projected need for those occupations?
      iv. What is the long-term (ten years) projected need for those occupations?
      v. What is the average starting wage?
      vi. What barriers do graduates face when seeking employment?

   b. Describe when and how the project was developed; the parties involved in its development and data considered. Be specific about <u>current</u> program capacity.
      i. Why, who, or what prompted your interest in applying for this funding opportunity?
      ii. Are any employers involved in developing the program? If so, what is their involvement?
      (If proposing a new program that is not attached to an existing program, skip to 2.b.ix.)
      iii. Provide a chart detailing graduate, enrollment and qualified applicant counts over the past five years (or since program inception).
      iv. Provide a chart detailing number of FTE, part-time and adjunct faculty over the last five years (or since program inception). Specify if clinical, didactic or both.
      v. If applicable, describe the <u>current</u> program (Number of hours, duration, admission requirements, skills/competencies gained, program accreditation status, cost to student, occupations that graduates can fill).
      vi. Is there a licensure exam for program graduates? If so, what is the pass rate for graduates?
      vii. How is the current program funded?
      viii. Are any additional educational entities involved with the current program?

(All applicants answer the following.)
- ix. Describe any other programs in the region that offer the same or similar programs.
- x. Describe barriers to producing more graduates or starting a new program.
- xi. What strategies will you use to address the barriers?
- xii. What staff supports are currently in place for the proposed project (i.e. full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, program oversight, and support staff)?
- xiii. What space, equipment and curriculum supports are currently in place?
- xiv. What additional resources are needed to achieve the project outcome and why are they a necessity?

3. **Project Description: (up to 5 pages)**
   a. Fully describe your proposed project – limit two pages.
      - i. What program(s) are being added or expanded?
      - ii. What is the purpose of the project?
      - iii. Where will the proposed project be housed?
      - iv. Describe the target population.
      - v. When will the project start and how long will it take students to complete?
      - vi. What are the admissions requirements? If applicable, how do they differ from existing program requirements?
      - vii. How many students can the program accommodate each year (e.g. # additional students, # of students receiving services, # of students accepted into new program)?
      - viii. If applicable, which curriculum will the new program or expanded program offer? Does it differ from existing program?
      - ix. What skills/competencies will students gain?
      - x. Is there a licensure exam for program graduates?
      - xi. What is the program cost to students?
      - xii. Will the program meet all accreditation standards? If a new program is proposed, provide a timeline and associated steps to achieving accreditation.
      - xiii. How will the new activities directly relate to an increased number of graduates into the field?
      - xiv. Who will be the project coordinator? What skills or experience do they bring to this role?
      - xv. Provide a list of committed partners including name, title and organization.

   b. Describe evidence or research which indicates the proposed approach has been effective in comparable settings.
      - i. Provide an overview of the evidence to support the proposed strategies.
      - ii. Describe why you believe these strategies are applicable to your project.
      - iii. Cite reports, publications, past experience or evaluation findings supporting the proposed strategies.

4. **Work Plan: Please use charts, spreadsheets or other depictions.**
   a. Describe the activities and/or tasks to be performed, from implementation to project completion and person responsible for each task.
   b. List resources required to implement the project (staff, materials, equipment, financial, etc.).
   c. Provide a timeline for the project activities, deployment of resources and expected deliverables, milestones and outcomes (detailed for Year 1, high level for subsequent year(s)).

5. **Resource Adequacy: (up to 3 pages)**
   a. If an existing program, list current funding sources for program, including funding and duration of commitments.
   b. List required resources, including funding, which are currently <u>committed</u> to the project and the source and duration of those commitments.
   c. List other funders who have or will be solicited to fund this project, the amounts and current status of the requests.
   d. Describe your organization's plan to sustain the project upon conclusion of Foundation support. Can the program be self-sustaining? If so, what is the anticipated breakeven point?

6. **Applicant Qualifications: (up to 2 pages)**
   a. Describe the institutional commitment of the applicant organization and any project partners.
   b. Describe the skills, expertise and experience your organization and each project partner will contribute.
   c. List the project director and key persons responsible for implementing and supporting the project.

7. **Evaluation Plan: (up to 2 pages)**
   a. Describe the evaluation methods to be used to indicate project is on track.
   b. Describe the evaluation methods to be used to measure the long-term impact.
   c. Name the evaluation resources and persons responsible for implementation.

8. **Budget Spreadsheet and Narrative: Uploaded as separate documents in the grants portal.**
   a. A line item budget for 40 months (October 1, 2022 to February 1, 2023) using the downloadable template. Ensure your budget is appropriate to the size of the impact of the project.
   b. A budget narrative describing what you intend to purchase and how you propose to use the funds in each line item.
   c. A list of in-kind resources and/or support (if any) to be contributed by the applicant and/or partner organizations.

9. **Applicant organization's 501(c)(3) or government entity exemption determination letter.**
10. **Applicant organization's most current 990, annual audit or financial report.**

IX. Additional Considerations

The Foundation reserves the right to:

- Request additional information from any or all applicants.
- Meet with applicants to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to, the application requirements.
- Request modifications to a respondent's application prior to final award to ensure alignment of project elements with the core values, mission, and operating standards of the Foundation.
- Reject any or all applications submitted.

For questions related to <u>nursing</u> proposals please contact:	For questions related to <u>allied or behavioral health</u> proposals please contact:
Matt LaBorde, Program Officer	Kiydra Harris, Program Officer
Matt@rapidesfoundation.org	Kiydra@rapidesfoundation.org
Main line: 318.443.3394	Main line: 318.443.3394
Direct line: 318.767.3003	Direct line: 318.767.3007