



Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer
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2015/16 Request for Proposals for Postsecondary Pathway Development Projects

Reference: ONCAT 15/16 RFP - Pathway Development
Submission deadline: January 11, 2016

Overview

ONCAT is seeking proposals for innovative pathway development projects that develop and implement strategies to enhance student mobility, expand opportunities for students to transfer, and increase postsecondary collaboration in order to contribute to the ongoing development of a more seamless postsecondary education system in Ontario. Preference will be given to projects that: 1) create new pathways for Aboriginal students, in particular among colleges, universities and aboriginal institutes; 2) develop new pathways by conducting and applying a learning outcomes analysis; 3) employ new collaborative models or innovative programs for transfer; or 4) expand an existing pathway to include additional institutions.

About ONCAT

Established in 2011, the Ontario Council on Articulation and Transfer (ONCAT) was created to enhance student pathways and reduce barriers for students looking to transfer among Ontario's 45 publicly funded postsecondary institutions. As a member organization, ONCAT works with colleges and universities to develop transfer credit policies and practices to ease student mobility while also respecting institutional responsibility for academic integrity.

The provincial government of Ontario's vision for credit transfer is as follows:

Ontario will have a comprehensive, transparent and consistently applied credit transfer system that will improve student pathways and mobility, support student success and make Ontario a postsecondary education destination of choice. The credit transfer system will assist qualified students to move between postsecondary institutions or programs without repeating prior, relevant learning.

The government believes realizing this vision will make it easier for students to navigate the postsecondary education system, reach their preferred educational destination faster, and enter or re-enter the labour market sooner.

In the short time since ONCAT's inception, we have achieved tangible results – from collecting the first set of data on Ontario credit transfer students, to ensuring the transparency of transfer policies. We have also vastly increased the number of student pathways through supporting more than 123 pathway development projects. Together, these projects cover a broad range of high-demand programs such as business, environmental studies, computer science, and community and social services, in all directions of transfer including diploma-to-degree, diploma-to-diploma, apprenticeship-to-diploma, degree-to-diploma, and degree-to-

degree. We have also funded concurrent research projects that have led to a greater understanding of both the student and the institutional experiences of transfer.

RFP Submission criteria

Proposals should outline a clear plan for developing new credit transfer pathways and identify the specific programs involved. Pathways among unique programs and among institutions with special relationships are encouraged, however, all projects are expected to contribute to the broader analysis and application of credit transfer, and to result in resources for developing a more seamless postsecondary education system in Ontario.

Preference will be given to projects that:

- 1) Create new pathways for Aboriginal students, in particular between colleges or universities and First Nations Technical Institutes;

ONCAT strongly encourages the submission of pathway development proposals of any kind aimed at developing and enhancing postsecondary pathways for Aboriginal students into diplomas, degrees or both at Ontario's colleges and universities.

- 2) Develop new pathways by conducting and applying a learning outcomes analysis;

By allowing for comparison of components of study at the course, year, and program levels, learning outcomes have the potential to transform the pathway development process. ONCAT is interested in projects that will use a learning outcomes approach to analyze curriculum across postsecondary institutions leading to the creation of new pathways in any direction. We will also consider projects that apply a learning outcomes analysis to a previously developed pathway, however, the aim must be for this to result in more credit being awarded to students moving through the pathway.

- 3) Employ new collaborative models or innovative programs for transfer;

A wide range of creative approaches are employed by institutions to facilitate transfer. ONCAT is interested in supporting innovative models for enhancing student mobility, including new or different types of institutional arrangements to support student success and student mobility. We also encourage proposals that seek to build on the work of previous projects by implementing their approach.

- 4) Expand an existing pathway to include additional institutions.

Over the past five years, ONCAT has funded pathway development in a wide range of programs by project teams from across the province. ONCAT is interested in projects that capitalize on this work so that additional institutions can participate in pathways that have already been created, and the pathways are brought to scale. Please refer to the list of ONCAT pathway development projects at:

<http://www.oncat.ca/pathwaydevelopmentprojects>

Given that these pathways build on previous analyses, successful proposals will be granted a maximum project budget of \$25,000 per additional participating institution.

All proposals should include:

- A rationale for the proposed pathway(s), including evidence of student demand (i.e. program enrolments, current transfer patterns, application trends) and, where possible, estimated numbers of students who would use the pathway(s);
- Indication of any potential on-line components or new programs that are intended to result from the project; and,
- A strategy and timeline for the implementation of the pathway, including final approvals from all participating institutions and posting the pathway on ONTransfer.ca.

NOTE: We appreciate that, due to their nature, pathway development proposals may sometimes involve or result in new program development, including programs that require Ministry approval. Please be aware that ONCAT project awards are not connected to any program approvals processes, and successful proposals should not be understood as having been endorsed by the Ministry. As such, we encourage proponents to discuss any potential new programs with the Ministry prior to submitting a project proposal.

RFP Budgets and Timelines

Proposal budgets must adhere to the guidelines indicated on the ONCAT RFP Budget Form (see below). To allow for the widest possible range of proposals, except where otherwise indicated no maximum funding limit is set; however, requested amounts may require additional rationale before approval. Activities and/or personnel that are currently funded through the Credit Transfer Institutional Grant (CTIG) are not eligible for ONCAT funding.

Where possible, projects should be scheduled for completion, including submission of a final report to ONCAT, by March 15, 2017. Projects that propose to extend beyond this timeline should provide a clear rationale for requiring additional time.

Deliverables

Proponents should be prepared to submit the following to ONCAT as part of their project deliverables:

- An Interim Report midway through the project
- A final report detailing the complete development of the transfer pathway(s), including:
 - An executive summary;
 - A description of the pathway(s), including how much credit will be granted to students and how it will be applied;
 - A detailed curriculum/learning outcomes analysis, including an explanation of the development of any new curriculum, that can act as a resource for the system;
 - Details of expected implementation dates, including a list of completed and pending approvals, as applicable, and the date that the pathway will be posted on ONTransfer.ca;
 - A report on “best practices” and “lessons learned” from this approach to the development of transfer agreements, in order that future proponents can build on the project experiences; and,
 - A detailed financial statement.

Proposal submission process

Submission deadline: January 11, 2016

Submissions should include the following components:

- 1) [ONCAT RFP Submission form](#) (as an MSWord document)
- 2) [ONCAT RFP Budget form](#) (as an MSExcel document)
- 3) [ONCAT RFP Signature form](#) (as a pdf or scanned image)
- 4) CVs of project team members (no preferred format)

Please submit the above documents by email to: policyandprograms@oncat.ca. Hard copies are not required.

Proposal evaluation process

Your proposal will be peer-reviewed by an expert panel, including VPAs from ONCAT member institutions, past project leads and key members of the postsecondary community. In general, proposals will be evaluated according to their:

- Clarity and comprehensiveness;
- Demonstrated alignment with the goals and criteria of the RFP;
- Achievability/applicability of milestones, timelines and budgets in the context of previous projects; and
- Contributions to the development of Ontario's postsecondary education system.

After the initial review, we may follow-up with proponents to address panel questions. Your prompt response is appreciated to expedite the review process. Once any questions are addressed and a decision has been made, you will be notified via email. Please note that submissions may be approved in principle pending a final budget/administrative review. We aim to arrive at final decisions on most proposals by March 1, 2016.

Successful proponents

Successful proponents will be expected to enter into a formal agreement with ONCAT, which will outline the terms and conditions of funding, specifying the project goals, timelines and expected outcomes.

Contact

If you have questions about this RFP or require additional details, please contact Arlene Williams, Policy and Programs Director, ONCAT at 416-640-6951 ext. 306 or awilliams@oncat.ca.