



## General Guidance for Community Colleges on Obtaining Stimulus Funds

**This guide has been created to help community colleges and their partners understand how to position themselves to attain American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds. For support on specific grant development guidance, AACC encourages colleges to utilize the Council for Resource Development (CRD) which is an AACC affiliate council at <http://www.crdnet.org/>.**

### What is the American Association of Community Colleges?

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. The association represents nearly 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and the more than 11 million students they enroll annually. AACC promotes community colleges through five strategic action areas: recognition and advocacy for community colleges; student access, learning and success; community college leadership development; economic and workforce development; and global and intercultural education. Information about AACC and community colleges may be found at [www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu).

The AACC Center for Workforce and Economic Development helps community colleges more effectively collaborate with workforce boards, economic development entities, labor market intermediaries, and other community organizations to improve the prosperity of business, workers, and communities. The Center seeks to identify promising and best practices now evident in a number of community colleges and encourage the wide-spread adoption of these practices throughout the community college network. The Center prides itself on focusing on integrated, interactive and results-driven practices.

### Why are Community Colleges Getting So Much Attention With the Stimulus Work?

#### Facts:

- 57% of jobs openings in the US between 2006-2016 will require some post-secondary education
- Community colleges offer hands-on, real-time, employer customized training and learning opportunities for industry. Community colleges facilitate the reach of agencies and partners into communities.
  - In many communities, community colleges are not only the heart but the physical location of partnerships often having workforce and economic development agencies co-located on their campuses.



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- Community colleges are within geographic and economic reach for learners at any stage and offer personal connections by committed staff to engage and re-engage many of the most disconnected and/or traditional-classroom-wary populations
  - The sites are diverse, inclusive and flexible:
    - Students attend part-time or full-time courses and credit and non-credit classes
    - 36% of the students are minority
    - 39% are first generation to attend college and 17% are single parents.
- Industries needing ongoing recertification and/or re-skilling because of rapidly changing industry demands utilize the colleges. Forefront sectors range from:
  - Health care and homeland security to advanced manufacturing and logistics
    - 59% of new nurses and health-care workers are educated at community colleges
    - 80% of firefighters, law enforcement officers and EMTs are credentialed at community colleges

Community college students constitute 44% of all US undergraduates and are the fastest emerging sector of higher-education. These demographics, combined with the relatively low tuition and wide range of course offerings at community colleges make them attractive partners for workforce development.

For the most current information on community colleges published by AACCC, please visit: <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Documents/fastfacts2009.pdf>. Community colleges will likely want to use these numbers in tandem with their local/statewide statistics for several proposals.

### **The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA)**

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). This historic legislation, designed to improve the nation's economic situation, includes both spending and tax provisions. With a total price tag of \$787 billion, the bill includes numerous programs that will benefit community college students and enable the colleges to expand critical job training programs.



In short, the focus of ARRA is to:

- create and save jobs
- jumpstart the economy and
- build the foundation for long-term economic growth.

Among the many efforts these funds will support, community colleges are strongly positioned to help:

- modernize the nation's infrastructure;
- enhance America's energy independence;
- expand educational opportunities (access and persistence); and
- protect those in the greatest need

For the most current information on this legislation from the community college perspective published by AACC, please visit the Advocacy tab on the homepage or: <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Advocacy/Pages/EconomicStimulus.aspx>

### **Where Can Community Colleges Apply for Funds and Resources?**

Various federal agencies (Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Education (Ed), Department of Labor (DOL), etc.) have begun receiving different amounts of ARRA funds. Each has begun to allocate them to different programmatic initiatives. For example, DOL has funds for YouthBuild and Prisoner Re-Entry. The DOE has funds for Weatherization. There is some flexibility, for example, a federal agency grant designed for American Indian or Native Alaskan population may be customized to serve a youth population in weatherization training.

While these federal partners are on similar timetables, not all of their decisions and their calls (in Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or Solicitations for Grant Applications (SGAs)) will come out at the exact same time. Colleges may be eligible for funding from several federal agencies. Community colleges and their development officers and/or grant writers have numerous federal agency solicitations for grant proposals to consider.

### **Which Funding is the Community College Eligible For?**

Each call for proposals/applications will state the eligible primary applicant. In some cases, the funds will go to states. In others, the eligible applicant may be a community college, a community-based organization (CBO) or a Workforce Investment Board (WIB) within a state. In almost all of these calls for proposals/applications will require



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strong and intentional partnerships between education partners (like community colleges) along with stakeholders from the workforce investment system, industry, CBO, and other support services. These partnerships are particularly valued but each agency will have different requirements and parameters of who should be in the partnership.

Community colleges regularly convene and act as a moderator for all those interested in creating a thriving local economy including employers, workforce specialists, economic development agents and their community and education partners. In many cases, the college will be the required primary applicant, however, even when you are unable to lead a proposal, the college can be an ideal partner for a collaborative application.

### What Tools for Community Colleges Are Comprehensive and Easy-to-Navigate?

1. <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Advocacy/Pages/EconomicStimulus.aspx>

AACC's Stimulus page.



- There are two primary sites to direct your staff to in order to get current information directly from the federal agencies.

[www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov) - This site is the largest repository of current and accurate information on stimulus funding, offering samples of best practices, updated news and links to statewide resources on a scroll-over map. Once grants and contracts are awarded, these maps will also provide information about who got funds for what work and how much each applicant received. All stimulus fund opportunities and funds given out are required to be uploaded to this site. This site includes news about ARRA funds from various federal partners (eg HHS) as well as sites like grants.gov which list all federal funding opportunities.

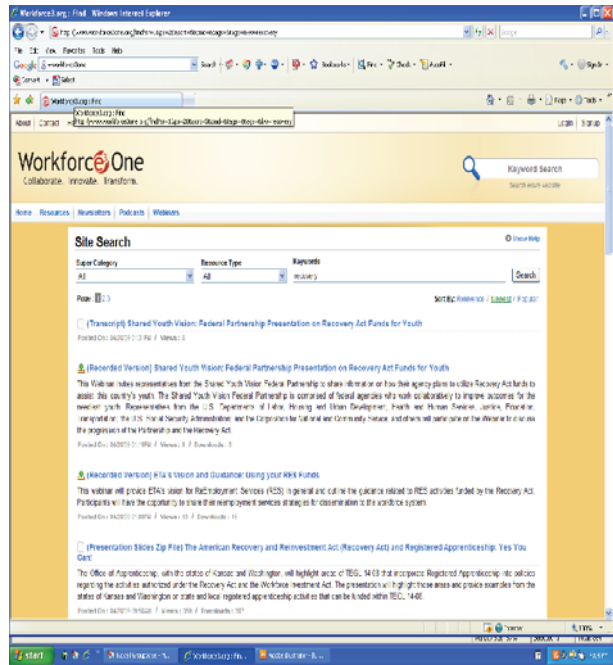


[www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) - Managed by HHS, this site allows individuals to search and apply for federal grants. AACC encourages community colleges to look to opportunities that extend beyond recovery funding for the sustainability of their efforts.

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov homepage with a navigation menu on the left for applicants and grantors, a central banner with the slogan "Find. Apply. Succeed.", and a right sidebar with quick links and newsletters. The main content area includes an important notice and a "What's New This Week at Grants.gov" section.

3. [www.Workforce3one.org](http://www.Workforce3one.org)

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (DOL ETA), this site is an interactive communications and learning platform designed to build the capacity of the Workforce Investment System. If community colleges think of [www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov) as the site on “where” money is allocated and “what categories it will come in,” then [www.workforce3one.org](http://www.workforce3one.org) should be considered the “how to get those funds” site.



The site presents webinars, supporting documents and resources that are specific to each of the populations and areas focused on in the stimulus – dislocated workers, new job creation, youth. Webinars are archived along with the supporting information.

4. [www.americangreenjobs.net](http://www.americangreenjobs.net)

Squarely in the green world, [www.americangreenjobs.net](http://www.americangreenjobs.net) organizes green activities by state. ARRA has a strong theme of environmentally friendly practices and behaviors promoting a cleaner, greener future. This site profiles partners, policies, research, trends and news as a living resource, colleges can use as a means to improve their proposals.

