

# MENTORLINKS

ADVANCING TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS: MENTORS

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is pleased to announce a call for applications for the MENTORLINKS program, developed with the support of the National Science Foundation. This program is designed for two-year colleges looking for outside expertise to improve the undergraduate education and preparation of technicians in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Fields include advanced manufacturing technologies, agricultural and environmental technologies, bio and chemical technologies, engineering technologies, information and security technologies, and micro and nanotechnologies.

AACC invites applications from two-year college experts who are interested in serving as mentors to work with a college whose faculty and administration want to develop or strengthen a certificate or degree program for technicians in a STEM field. MENTORLINKS colleges will be selected in a separate request for proposal process and assigned to a mentor. Up to ten institutions will be selected as MENTORLINKS colleges and up to ten individual mentors will be named to the MENTORLINKS Mentor Team for a two-year grant period.

Each mentor will work with one college, selected through a competitive review process, based on its proposal for program improvement and its commitment to working in a mentoring relationship. Areas in which mentor assistance may be requested include: designing a new program/curricula; implementing changes in

an ongoing program to make it more responsive to industry/employer needs; developing or redesigning curricula or materials such as for a virtual learning environment; creating or improving training programs for faculty and staff; recruiting and supporting students; engaging local industry/employers to encourage internships or other field experiences for students or faculty; and evaluating results. MENTORLINKS colleges will receive financial assistance in the form of grants, but primary emphasis is on networking, opportunities for technical assistance, and professional development. Mentors will receive an honorarium for their time, and travel support—as needed if events are to be held in-person—to attend a mentor training and orientation meeting (to be held virtually in 2021), three national project meetings (the 2021 project meeting to be held virtually), and to conduct college site visits as permissible.



## MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

AACC welcomes applications for the MENTORLINKS Mentor Team from community college employees or individuals closely aligned with community colleges such as retired professionals, consultants, industry advisory board members, and others with relevant skills and experiences. Individuals interested in applying for the Mentor Team must meet the following criteria:

- **Expertise in program development** and/or planning and implementing a major program change in a STEM technician field at a community college;
- **Minimum of five years' experience** in a STEM discipline;
- **Experience in mentoring** or providing technical assistance to individuals or small groups;
- **Demonstrated knowledge** of the objectives of the National Science Foundation's Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program; with direct ATE grant leadership experience preferred.

### Mentoring

- **Provide leadership**, technical assistance, and guidance on promising practices to a community college assigned by AACC for the two-year grant period beginning October 1, 2021 and ending November 30, 2023.
- **Work collaboratively** with the assigned college, MENTORLINKS Mentor Team, AACC, NSF, and other MENTORLINKS colleges for the duration of the mentoring relationship.
- **Attend a half-day**, virtual MENTORLINKS Mentor Team training and orientation meeting on Friday, September 17, 2021.
- **Participate in a virtual project meeting** with the full MENTORLINKS cohort on October 14-15, 2021, followed by participation in a virtual track of the 2021 ATE Principal Investigators' Conference on October 20-22.
- **Participate in two additional project meetings** held in conjunction with two annual national ATE Principal Investigators' Conferences currently scheduled to take place in Washington, DC on October 25-28, 2022 and October 24-27, 2023.

### Site visits

- **Conduct one site visit** to the assigned mentee college as permissible during the grant period. Mentor travel expenses will be covered by AACC.
- **Host a site visit by faculty and staff** from the assigned mentee college during the grant period as permissible. MENTORLINKS colleges will cover travel expenses to the Mentor's institution, or an appropriate affiliated institution, through their grants.
- **Coordinate the scheduling** of site visits and reverse site visits with AACC staff.
- **Consult with the assigned mentee college** to determine other appropriate venues for professional development activities, such as a second site visit, visit to another college, or attendance at relevant conferences and/or workshops either virtual or in-person as permissible.

## Leadership

- **Collaborate with all participants** in the MENTORLINKS program and share experiences and promising practices with the national community college community.
- **Work closely with the MENTORLINKS** Mentor Team to share ideas and project issues and outcomes.
- **Help to increase** the overall exposure to and understanding of the National Science Foundation's ATE program.
- **Conduct presentations** on the MENTORLINKS program at AACC's conferences and events as requested.

## Accountability

- **Participate in all assessment** and reporting activities identified by AACC or its external evaluator.
- **Provide feedback to AACC** and its external evaluator through the MENTORLINKS Mentor Team meetings and other mechanisms.
- **Help mentee colleges establish** project benchmarks and clearly measurable outcomes.
- **Meet AACC reporting deadlines**, including the submission of a site visit, annual, and final report that identifies achieved outcomes.
- **Keep an accurate record** of time spent working on MENTORLINKS related activities and routinely submit to AACC for honorarium payment.
- **Submit travel expense** reports on a timely basis.

## HOW TO APPLY

### 1. Complete the application package

- **Mentor Application Form**
- **Cover Letter** (not more than three pages) that explains:
  - reasons for wishing to become a mentor in the MENTORLINKS program,
  - documents areas of expertise relevant to this project,
  - summarizes strengths and lists previous experience in a mentoring relationship, and
  - describes outcomes expected through MENTORLINKS involvement.
- **Resume** (not more than 2 pages)
- **Two letters of support**, including one from the applicant's college or affiliated college's CEO or academic vice president if presently employed by a community college.

### 2. Submit the application package

The complete application package should be submitted electronically in a *single file in PDF format* labeled "Mentor Last Name\_MentorLinks\_2021" and uploaded through the Call for Mentors submission link at [www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks). The PDF package must include letters of support on letterhead with signatures.

**Deadline: Arrival at AACC by COB local time Thursday, June 24, 2021**

## APPLICATION SUMMARY

**Deadline:** Arrival at AACC by COB local time, **Thursday, June 24, 2021.**

**Eligible Applicants:** Community college employees; individuals closely aligned with community college STEM programs, such as retired professionals, consultants, or industry advisory board members.

**Criteria:** Expertise in program development or enhancement in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics; experience in mentoring; demonstrated knowledge of the objectives of the ATE program, with direct ATE grant leadership preferred.

**Compensation:** Travel expenses and honorarium of up to \$10,000 for the grant period: \$500/day for approximately 20 days of work

**Commitment:** Mentors must work in a collaborative relationship with AACC, the Mentor Team, and the mentee colleges in accordance with the Mentor Responsibilities section of this application. Attend the virtual Mentor training and orientation meeting on September 17, 2021, and subsequent annual mentor team meetings. Participate in a virtual project meeting with the full MENTORLINKS cohort on October 14-15, 2021, followed by participation in a virtual track of the 2021 ATE Principal Investigators' Conference on October 20-22. Participate in two additional project meetings held in conjunction with two annual national ATE Principal Investigators' Conferences currently scheduled to take place in Washington, DC on October 25-28, 2022 and October 24-27, 2023.

**Project Duration:** October 1, 2021 – November 30, 2023

**Submission URL:** [www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks)

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[www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks)

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## APPLICATION FORM – MENTORS

(This form is a fillable PDF, please append this form to your complete application package before submitting.)

Name

Title

Institution

Address

City

State

Zip Code

Phone (     )

Email

If not a community college employee, please list your affiliation with a community college(s) in a STEM field.

Summary of duties in present position (100 words)

Are you currently or have you previously served as an NSF ATE PI or Co-PI?

Yes

No

Discipline:

Years of experience in discipline:

Applicant Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Community College CEO/Academic VP Name/Title \_\_\_\_\_

Community College CEO/Academic VP Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please submit this application form with your cover letter, resume, and two letters of support as a single PDF file through the submission link at [www.aacc.nche.edu/Mentorlinks](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Mentorlinks).

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