MENTORLINKS

ADVANCING TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION

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 or hybrid 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 to attend three national project meetings and to conduct college site visits.

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, 2023 and ending November 30, 2025.

- **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 22, 2023.

- **Participate in project meetings** held in conjunction with three annual national ATE Principal Investigators' Conferences currently scheduled to take place in Washington, DC on October 24-27, 2023; October 22-25, 2024; and October 28-31, 2025.

Site visits

- **Conduct one site visit** to the assigned mentee college. Mentor travel expenses will be covered by AACC.

- **Host a site visit by faculty and staff** from the assigned mentee college. MENTORLINKS colleges will cover travel expenses to the Mentor's institution, or an appropriate affiliated institution, through their grants.

- **Work with assigned mentee college** to coordinate either an initial site visit or reverse site visit within the first five months of the grant period.

- **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.

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.

- **Attend the MentorLinks** Mentor Team Training and orientation meeting and subsequent annual team meetings.

- **Participate in three annual MENTORLINKS** project meetings held in conjunction with the national ATE Principal Investigators' Conferences.

- **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.

1. Complete the application package

- **Mentor Application Form Online**
- **Cover Letter** 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**
- **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

Please fill out the application form online and upload your cover letter, resume, and two letters of support in PDF format through the submission link at www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks.

Deadline: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 by 5:00 p.m. local time.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

Deadline: **Tuesday, June 27, 2023 by 5:00 p.m. local time.**

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 22, 2023, and subsequent annual mentor team meetings. Participate in three project meetings held in conjunction with three annual national ATE Principal Investigators' Conferences currently scheduled to take place in Washington, DC on October 24-27, 2023; October 22-25, 2024; and October 28-31, 2025.

Project Duration: October 1, 2023 – November 30, 2025

Submission URL: www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks

Contact: Ellen Hause, Associate Vice President
MENTORLINKS
American Association of Community Colleges
One Dupont Circle, NW Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036-1176
Phone: 202/728-0200, ext. 217
Email: ehause@aacc.nche.edu
www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks

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APPLICATION FORM – MENTORS

Please submit your MentorLinks application online at www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks.
The application fields that you will need to input are provided below for your reference.

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 or No

STEM discipline

Years of experience in discipline

Please complete the application form online and upload your cover letter, resume, and two letters of support in PDF format through the submission link at www.aacc.nche.edu/mentorlinks.

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