



**2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6**  
**Letter of Interest (LOI) Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, October 13, 2022**

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation **General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 40, 87th Texas Legislature**

This LOI application must be submitted via email to [competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov](mailto:competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov).

The LOI application may be signed with a digital ID or it may be signed by hand. Both forms of signature are acceptable.

TEA must receive the application by **11:59 p.m. CT, October 13, 2022**.

Application stamp-in date and time

Grant period from **February 9, 2023 to April 30, 2025**

Pre-award costs are **not** permitted for this grant.

**Required Attachments**

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
2. Attachment 1: Pathway Selection and Participation

**Amendment Number**

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

**Applicant Information**

Organization  CDN  Campus  ESC  DUNS

Address  City  ZIP  Vendor ID

Primary Contact  Email  Phone

Secondary Contact  Email  Phone

**Certification and Incorporation**

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the LOI application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the LOI application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- LOI application, guidelines, and instructions
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances
- Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name  Title

Email  Phone

Signature  Date

**Shared Services Arrangements**

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are permitted for this grant. Check the box below if applying as a fiscal agent.

- The LEA or ESC submitting this application is the fiscal agent of a planned SSA. All participating agencies will enter into a written  SSA agreement describing the fiscal agent and SSA member responsibilities. All participants understand that the "Shared Services Arrangement Attachment" must be completed and signed by all SSA members and submitted to TEA upon request.

**Statutory/Program Assurances**

The following assurances apply to this program. In order to meet the requirements of the program, the applicant must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

- 1. The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this LOI will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
- 2. The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
- 3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2023-2025 Grow Your Own Grant Program, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023-2025 Grow Your Own, Cycle 6 Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.

**PATHWAY 1:**

- 5. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for Education & Training teachers that receive a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. These participating teachers must commit with the MOU to, at minimum, teach the Education and Training courses and, if applicable, establish and/or grow a chapter of a Career Technical Student Organization (CTSO) as a condition of receiving the stipend.
- 6. The MOUs for Education and Training teachers must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
- 7. If implementing dual credit Education and Training courses, the LEA must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for the partnering IHE by May 31, 2023. This MOU should include, at minimum, content outlined on page 11 of the Program Guidelines.
- 8. The LEA will retain documentation locally of each letter of commitment or MOU and submit to TEA upon request.
- 9. The LEA assures that each high school campus within the participating LEA will implement at least the Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses in the Education and Training course sequence in 2023-2024, and at least both stated courses in 2024-2025, with the teachers receiving the stipend as teachers of record for both courses or either course. \*Please see example on page 9 of the Program Guidelines.
- 10. To receive a stipend for teaching dual credit, the LEA assures the Education and Training teacher holds a master's degree in an education-related field and be the teacher of record for at least one dual credit course section in 2023-2024 and two dual credit course sections in 2024-2025 within the Education and Training course sequence.
- 11. All LEA high schools must establish and/or grow a chapter of a CTSO that supports the Education and Training career cluster through either the Texas Association of Future Educators (TAFE) or Family, Career and Community Leads of America (FCCLA) and participate in at least one competitive event per year.
- 12. The LEA assures that all LEA high schools will participate in an initial TEA-led Teacher Institute in Summer 2023. Education and Training teacher stipend recipients are required to attend the entirety of the Institute. Principals, counselors, and LEA grant managers are only required to attend the first day. Participants who attended any previous Grow Your Own Summer Institute must still attend. IHE/EPP partners and student ambassador attendance is optional but recommended.
- 13. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will pilot the TEA Education and Training curriculum if they are not currently using a high-quality Education and Training curriculum.
- 14. The LEA assures that each Education and Training teacher stipend recipient will receive TEA implementation supports and coaching by participating in online collaborative communities to be scheduled by TEA, not to exceed 6 hours per semester.
- 15. The LEA assures that Education and Training teacher stipend recipients will participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the Education and Training programming.

**Statutory/Program Assurances Cont'd**

- 16. LEA grant managers shall support Practicum in Education and Training implementation, including but not limited to student scheduling, identifying field sites and field site teachers, and coordinating student transportation to field sites.
- 17. LEAs shall develop a marketing and recruitment plan to grow enrollment in high school Education and Training courses. Upon request by TEA, all LEA high schools will submit their plan for marketing and student recruitment.
- 18. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA. If requested, LEAs must participate in focus groups and surveys to give input on the Education and Training programming.
- 19. All grant-funded teachers must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

**PATHWAY 2:**

- 20. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU for each candidate that receives a stipend through the Grow Your Own Grant by May 31, 2023. All candidate stipend recipients must commit with a MOU, at minimum, to remain at the LEA for an agreed upon length of time in a full-time teaching role as a condition of receiving the stipend.
- 21. The MOUs for candidates must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 22. LEAs must have a signed letter of commitment or MOU from each accredited EPP (see Eligible Applicants section of the Program Guidelines) that will partner with the LEA to award teacher certifications to all candidates (those earning a bachelor's degree and teacher certification and certification-only candidates) by May 31, 2023.
- 23. The MOUs for EPPs must include, at minimum, content outlined on page 13 of the Program Guidelines.
- 24. The LEA will retain all MOU documentation locally and submit to TEA upon request.
- 25. LEAs must allow reasonable paid release time and schedule flexibility, as determined by the LEA, for candidates to complete their degree and certification course requirements while engaged in the grant program.
- 26. All certification-only candidates within a LEA will be certified by the same partner EPP as a cohort managed collaboratively by the LEA and EPP.
- 27. The LEA assures that candidate stipend recipients participate in surveys and, if requested, focus groups not to exceed 1 hour per semester and administered by TEA to receive input on the grant programming.
- 28. If positions are available that can be appropriately filled in alignment with candidates' certification area(s), LEAs must commit to hiring/retaining candidates upon successful completion of their teacher certification to serve as a teacher of record in the LEA by the start of the 2025-2026 school year.
- 29. LEAs must, upon request, submit reports on progress towards performance measures to TEA.
- 30. The names of all grant-funded teachers and/or candidates must be identified and submitted to TEA by May 31, 2023.

**ALL PATHWAYS:**

- 31. If a teacher or candidate is unable to continue with the grant program, the LEA must file an application amendment and provide TEA with an update of the new amount and type of stipend recipient(s) within 30 days of notification.
- 32. LEAs must file application amendments within seven days of a request from TEA.

**Program Description**

Describe how the Grow Your Own program will be implemented with grant funds and how the grant will address the LEA's teacher pipeline needs.

The network of rural districts represented in this application are part of the Collegiate Edu-Nation (CEN) P-20 System with rural districts across Texas. The P-20 model is designed to prepare students in elementary and middle for academic success leading to dual credit in high school. Students in the P-20 System are targeted to graduate with associate degrees and industry-based certifications prior to high school graduation. Successful models are dependent on strong and well-trained educators leading student-centered instruction in the classrooms of elementary, middle, and high school grades. In order to meet the needs for rural districts across the state, CEN acts as an intermediary with the network rural districts and higher education institutions to develop robust Grow Your Own Educator pathways within the schools and within the rural communities. The P-20 Grow Your Own program will partner with regional community colleges and higher education institutions to offer:

- >>High School Education & Training Programs of Study leading to AAT degrees and certified paraprofessional credentials prior to high school graduation with an aligned 2+2 degree plan with an IHE.
- >>Degree completion for paraprofessionals and long-term substitutes who currently hold an associates degree or 70 hours of college credit.
- >>Alternative certification pathways for current degree holders to attain educator credentials through an alternative certification process.

Grant funds will be used to develop the ETC program of study and support teacher candidates in attainment of their college degrees through stipends to support the increased cost/time of degree attainment.

**Qualifications and Experience for Key Personnel**

Outline the required qualifications and experience for key personnel to be involved in the implementation and delivery of the program. Include each of the following individuals (when applicable) and a description of each role: 1. The LEA's grant manager; 2. LEA leaders involved in program implementation; 3. The campus principals for participating Education and Training high schools; 4. the college/career counselors for participating Education and Training high schools; 5. Education and Training teachers; 6. Education and Training field site teachers for Instructional Practices and/or Practicum courses; 7. Any other personnel responsible for implementing the grant.

Title and Responsibilities of Position

LEA Grant Manager: Grant Manager will coordinate with CEN and the partner districts to track teacher candidates and expenses. The grant manager will work with the fiscal agent district and act as a liaison between the districts and the district business office. This person will be the P-20 Project Manager in the district or direct support to the P-20 Project Manager.

CEN GYO Coordinator: CEN will provide a network coordinator to assist in the data tracking/coordination of candidates. The GYO Coordinator works with the IHE partners & supports districts in designing the ETC POS. CEN GYO Coordinator will support the districts in the implementation of the programs. The CEN GYO will either act as the site coordinator or will support the district coordinator.

Campus Principals: In the P-20 Model, each campus level is critical for strong programs of study. Elementary principals are responsible for coordinating awareness activities aligned to the ETC POS, middle levels principals are charged with designing exploration activities, & high school principals will be responsible for ensuring deep experiences with dual credit, internships, and CTSO options.

High School Counselor: In a rural district the counselor is typically a single counselor and will need to be experienced in degree planning for students and support the transition of the students from 9-12 (AAT) to Years 13 & 14 (4-year degree). Each CEN network school is designated a P-TECH and the counselor will need to be versed in supporting students through years 13 & 14.

ETC Teachers: The selection of the high school ETC teacher is most critical with this role being the passionate person that will encourage and inspire students to pursue careers in education. The ETC teacher must be willing to design classes that are student-centered, create and manage internship experiences, and support and advise in either FCCLA or TAFE CTSOs.

Site Coordinator (as needed based on IHE expectation) & 13 & 14 Coordinator: These may be two separate positions in the district, both supported by the CEN GYO Coordinator. The site coordinator will supervise the teacher candidates, provide some instruction, & manage all observations/in-district coaching. The 13/14 Coordinator supports students in the transition from traditional HS to college.

## Goals and Objectives

Describe the major goals/objectives of the proposed Grow Your Own program. Describe the talent management strategy, (including the LEA's approach to recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified teachers) related to those goals/objectives.

The goals and objectives of the Rural GYO program are:

>>Design viable ETC pathways in each of the P-20 Network districts as a requirement of the model implementation including a strong ETC teacher (preference given to minority teacher with strong EC-6 experience in a P-20 Model), an affiliated TAFE (preferred) or FCCLA CTSO, a program of study that launches in 8th or 9th grade including Instructional Practices and ETC Practicum aligned to AAT degree crosswalk.

>>Recruit future teachers through the establishment of a well-promoted Rural GYO program that is an integral part of the P-20 districts and the CEN network with a long-term view to address the rural teacher shortage. Streamline the launch of the Rural GYO program with continuation and expansion of the network-wide program through AmeriCorps.

>>Through strong regional partnerships with IHE institutions and customized teacher academy programs within each participating district, develop teachers with strong experience in use of HQIM and RBIS in the classroom and alignment with the P-20 model elements (AVID, PBL, and High-Cognition Common Instructional Framework).

As part of the planning process of P-20 implementation, each district designs a recruiting plan with interview processes and protocols however, the best way to address longterm rural staffing needs is to grow your own teachers in rural districts.

## Progress Monitoring and Evaluation Measures

Describe how the performance measures identified for this program are consistent with the purpose of the program and related to teacher pipeline needs. Include the tools and processes used to measure performance and the extent to which the major goals and objectives of the grant are met.

The performance measures for the grant period are:

### Teacher Candidates

>>By January 2023 screening tools and an interview protocol will be developed to screen potential teacher candidates. Once the grant is officially awarded, the number of candidates will be determined for each district. Priority points will be given for high needs areas and bilingual candidates.

>>By February 2023, candidates will be selected and MOUs signed. Transcripts will be verified and applications for IHE partners will be completed and submitted.

>>By May 2023, all candidates will be enrolled in courses for the summer 2023.

>>By May 2023, site coordinators will be selected with training programs as needed set for the summer semester.

>>With each semester, the SC/CEN GYO Coordinator will track degree plan progression, testing needs, etc to ensure candidates are on-track. Interventions will be planned for early support if teacher candidates are off-track.

### ETC Programs of Study

>>By January 2023, recruiting plans for the 7th and 8th grade classes are designed and implemented increasing student awareness of POS options in high school.

>>By February 2023, high school students interested in ETC opportunities will be identified. Parents and interested students will be contacted to inform them of options for GYO in the district.

>>By February 2023, the ETC teacher will be identified with preference given to minority teachers with PK-6 certification and strong data-supported teaching record (T-TESS ratings, student, academic growth, teacher leadership role, designation in TIA).

>>By August 2023, the ETC program of study will launch with crosswalked degree plans with the districts' community college partner (signed MOU with IHE partner submitted with P-TECH designation).

>>By CTSO Affiliation Date, rosters will be submitted and chapter will be affiliated.

>>Annually, outcome-based Measures under P-TECH (attainment, achievement, access) will be review annually for the POS.

>>Complete all required data submissions as requested by TEA for all ETC students and Teacher Candidates.

**Budget Narrative**

Referencing the applicant's budget workbook and the Application Funding section of the Program Guidelines, outline the proposed budget and amounts for allowable uses of grant program funding. This should also match the Pathway Selection and Participation section of this application.

The planned budget will be used to provide salaries and stipend to the following:

- >> Six ETC teachers providing embedded dual credit programming (one per high school)
- >> Twelve teacher candidates enrolling in IHE program to complete a bachelor's degree
- >> Two teacher candidates enrolling in EPP program to complete teacher certification
- >> 14 supervising teachers for teacher candidates

Additional costs have been allocated to cover aspects of the program to ensure high-quality implementation:

- >> Grant manager stipend/salary supplement
- >> Administrative costs for fiscal agent to oversee data collection and drawdowns
- >> Site Coordinator stipends (6)
- >> Intermediary fee (coordination between IHE, LEAs, and workforce with network GYO coordination)

Supplies and travel costs for each of the LEA programs are allocated as follows:

- >> Student travel for six CTSOs
- >> Supplies for six high school ETC programs committing to dual credit pathways
- >> Travel costs to summer institute

### Sustainability Plan

Describe the sustainability plan for the Grow Your Own Program beyond the timeline of grant funding. The plan should address how a high-quality program will be maintained, including clear action steps beginning in the first year of grant funding and a demonstrated ability to leverage and coordinate resources to increase the LEA's capacity to strengthen the local educator pipeline and make progress on sustainability. This may include the use of other local, state, and/or federal resources. Consider also how the Grow Your Own program may be integrated into, be supported by, and provide support for existing LEA or EPP initiatives and/or priorities.

CEN works with all network districts to designate at a P-TECH school which allows for continued funding through years 14 of a students' educational career. Through the P-TECH structure in the P-20 System, funding streams are present to support students in the attainment of a 4-year degree. Additionally, CEN has applied for and received a national AmeriCorps grant. Currently CEN is piloting the use of AmeriCorps funding to provide a living wage to teacher candidates. For each year of full-time service, an AmeriCorps service member earns an education credit that will cover tuition costs. As a non-profit dedicated to supporting rural school districts, CEN's opportunities with continuation of the AmeriCorps program is great and will allow the network schools to expand the Rural GYO program statewide with minimal investment from the districts.

The AmeriCorps program can support both ETC graduates from within the school districts as well as community members. Additionally, the AmeriCorps program can provide a bridge for individuals living in rural communities who have only partial degrees to attain the needed hours to enter into the district's GYO as well. With online degrees being accessible in rural communities through the CEN model, P-20 districts address the barriers experienced in many rural communities (educational islands) that prevent locals from affording degrees due to travel and living expenses.

CEN continues to seek regional, state, and national philanthropic funds to dedicate to the expansion of the Rural GYO program as well

### Stipend Recipient Recruitment

Describe the plan to recruit Education and Training teachers within Pathway 1 and/or candidates within Pathway 2 who are interested and eligible in participating in the program and receiving stipends. The plan must include strategies to equitably recruit diverse individuals and identify individuals with potential criteria including: **A. Pathway 1:** For Education and Training teachers, a demonstrated track record of success and/or achievement, involvement in student organizations and/or school activities, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable). **B. Pathway 2:** For candidates, a desire and commitment to teach long term in the LEA and/or region, strong evaluation ratings (if applicable), and strong relationships with students (if applicable).

#### Pathway 1 Recruitment Plan:

>>As described in the performance metrics above, the targeted ETC teachers will be identified with preference given to minority teachers with PK-6 certification and strong data-supported teaching record (T-TESS ratings, student, academic growth, teacher leadership role, designation in TIA).

>>A potential pool of ETC teachers who match the desired indicators will be identified by campus and district leaders. Nominated candidates will be approached to determine interest level. All interested candidates will be interviewed by a selection committee with a focus on the candidates' passion for teaching, history of student growth and success, and teacher leadership. Selected candidates will ideally be able to commit to a multi-year process to truly grow the ETC POS.

#### Pathway 2 Recruitment Plan:

>>For students in the ETC program, the 13/14 Coordinator or P-20 Project Director will work with interested students to transition to the years 13 & 14 within the P-TECH model. Students desiring to remain in the rural area, are interested in high needs areas, and are bilingual will be given priority.

>>For community members with associate degrees/70+ hours, candidates desiring to remain in the rural area, are interested in high needs areas, and are bilingual will be given priority. By using the district communication channels, social media, civic groups, substitute pool, and current paraprofessional pool to cast a wide net of candidates for consideration.

**Stipend Recipient Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)**

Referencing the Program-Specific Assurances in the Program Guidelines, describe the MOUs in which: **A. Pathway 1:** Education and Training teacher stipend recipients agree to meet grant requirements and any other terms set by the LEA; **B. Pathway 1:** IHE that will partner with the LEA(s) to implement dual credit Education and Training courses and commit to supporting the Education and Training teachers and course implementation (if applicable); **C. Pathway 2:** Candidate stipend recipients commit to remain in the LEA for an agreed upon length of time as a condition of receiving the stipend and if a position is available, the LEA commits to hiring/retaining candidates with satisfactory program completion/job performance; **D. Pathway 2:** Accredited EPPs that will partner with the LEA(s) to award teacher certifications to candidates and commit to supporting candidates with completion of their teacher certification and supporting LEA(s) with implementation of the grant program.

The MOUs will meet the program assurances by detailing the following:

**A. Pathway 1:**  
>>Defining the length of agreement for teacher to serve as an Education and Training teacher of record for at least three years.  
>>Total stipend amount that the Education and Training teacher will receive for two years of grant with a retention bonus for years 3 & 4 paid by local funds  
>>Stipend payment schedule starting in Fall 2023 through May 2025 as paid through a monthly stipend in the salary.  
>> ETC teacher will facilitate and/or teach the dual credit Instructional Practices and Practicum courses in the Education and Training course sequence in 2023-2024, and at least both stated courses in 2024-2025, with the teachers receiving the stipend as teachers of record for both courses or either course.  
>>Education and Training teacher must hold a master’s degree in an education-related field and be the teacher of record for at least one dual credit course section in 2023-2024 and two dual credit course sections in 2024-2025 within the Education and Training course sequence.  
>>The ETC teacher will commit to affiliate either a TAFE (preferred) or FCCLA chapter with a submitted roster and dues paid by all members.  
>>The ETC teacher will attend summer institute and agree to use HQIM for ETC courses and engage in all TEA-provided professional development and research processes.

**B. Pathway 1:**  
>>The community college partner will provide a cross-walked program of study that awards dual credit under the AAT degree for the LEAs that includes Instructional Practices and Practicum courses in the Education and Training course sequence in 2023-2024, and at least both stated courses in 2024-2025.  
>>The LEA Project Manager or Counselor will commit to scheduling priority to provide students with ample access to ETC pathways.

**C. Pathway 2:**  
>>Defining the length of agreement for teacher candidate to complete teacher training program and commit to at least five years of service to the district following graduation.  
>>Total stipend amount that the teacher candidates will receive for two years of grant with stipend amount, tuition payment processes and the candidates commitment to program completion.  
>>Stipend payment schedule starting in Fall 2023 through May 2025 as paid through a monthly stipend in the salary along with tuition support processes (and additional fees).  
>>Alternative plans if positions are not available based upon the candidates' completed certifications.  
>>Teacher candidate commits to complete all research processes and training supports as provided by TEA and the LEA.

**D. Pathway 2:**  
>>Defining the length of agreement for teacher candidate to complete teacher training EPP program and commit to at least three years of service to the district following graduation.  
>>Total stipend amount that the teacher candidates will receive for two years of grant with stipend amount, tuition payment processes and the candidates commitment to program completion.  
>>Stipend payment schedule starting in Fall 2023 through May 2025 as paid through a monthly stipend in the salary along with tuition support processes (and additional fees).  
>>Teacher candidate commits to complete all research processes and training supports as provided by TEA and the LEA.



**Appendix I: Amendment Description and Purpose** (leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding)

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the [Administering a Grant](#) page. The following are required to be submitted for an amendment: (1) Page 1 of the application with updated contact information and current authorized official's signature and date, (2) Appendix I with changes identified and described, (3) all updated sections of the application or budget affected by the changes identified below, and, if applicable, (4) Amended Budget Request. Amendment Instructions with more details can be found on the last tab of the budget template.

*You may duplicate this page*

**Amended Section**

**Reason for Amendment**

