NEW JERSEY OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF
HIGHER EDUCATION

**Notice of Grant Opportunity for Fiscal Year 2024:
Some College, No Degree Institutional Grants**

Application Deadline: 5pm on Tuesday, October 31, 2023

In order to meet projected workforce needs, New Jersey remains committed to having 65% of working-age residents earn a high-quality degree or credential by 2025. OSHE aims to help institutions develop improved pathways and expand opportunities for the 750,000+ residents with some college credits, but no degree. Building on year one of the SCND initiative, these efforts will continue to focus on re-engaging and assisting students in returning to earn both their degree and a boost in the current job market. The SCND program can potentially transform individual lives and the State's economy.

In recognition of the time and resources necessary to successfully serve this population, OSHE announces a grant opportunity for New Jersey public institutions of higher education and independent-public mission institutions of higher education that receive State operating aid. Eligible institutions must be committed to re-engaging students who may have some credit, and no degree (SCND) to re-enroll and complete.

Purpose of Grants:
The grant aims for institutions to build capacity, address institutional barriers to re-enrolling and completing, foster innovative ways to serve SCND students, and enhance the Statewide SCND initiative. This specific population of students requires multi-pronged and interdisciplinary approaches to directly support the unique and varied needs in re-engaging and persisting in higher education.[1]

The FY24 SCND Grant Program consists of two key components: (1) student-focused incentives, and (2) institution-focused funding.

Student-Focused Incentive Funding
Institutions are required to designate at least one-quarter of the grant funding to be allocated to students for direct benefits or incentives. Eligible use of funding may include:
- Basic needs supports or unexpected expenses;
- Student incentives for participation, re-enrollment, or persistency;
- Application fee waivers;

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[1] https://www.nga.org/publications/state-strategies-to-re-engage-students-with-some-college-and-no-degree/

- Credit for prior learning assessment vouchers.

Funding may not be used for direct financial aid applied to a student's direct costs of Tuition or Fees.

Institution-Focused Funding
Institutions should consider comprehensive and evidence-based best practices and multi-faceted supports when developing an application. The funding must be used to further the State's FY2024 goals to help re-engage SCND students and support these students through completion. Institutions should consider evidence-based best practices in serving this population.

Eligible uses of funding may include:
- Creating communications and marketing materials geared toward SCND individuals/stop outs;
- Establishing a customized website for this student population;
- Developing a centralized one-stop/hub to address the needs of this specific population;
- Hosting special events, such as a SCND orientation or information sessions;
- Extending hours for key student support programs;
- Reviewing and updating programs to be more schedule friendly;
- Paying staff working with this population, beyond their normal hours;
- Providing improved career services and specialized career advising; and
- Reviewing and adapting policies to be more inclusive of adult learners.

Distribution Methodology:
The FY2024 SCND grant opportunity is open to New Jersey public institutions of higher education and independent-public mission institutions of higher education that receive State operating aid. The State has made $4,250,000 available for the FY24 SCND grant program.

Institutions may apply for a SCND Grant up to the thresholds below based on Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) size category classifications:

IPEDS Size Category	Maximum Grant Award
Small (4,999 or fewer)	$100,000
Medium (5,000 –9,999)	$150,000
Large (10,000 or greater)	$200,000

As an example, an institution designated 'small' may apply for a total award of $100,000. Within their budget, at least $25,000 must go to student-focused incentives, while the remaining $75,000 may go to institution-focused initiatives.

Institutions will be required to expend their funds by June 30, 2024. Please consider this date in determining an adequate award amount that can be utilized in its entirety by the established deadline. The final amount awarded will vary based on the number and quality of applications. Institutions may be asked to revise their budgets and projects based on the final amount awarded.

This is a competitive grant award and final decisions will be made based on considerations to ensure sector and geographic diversity.

Application Instructions: **Due by 5pm on Tuesday, October 31, 2023**
Eligible NJ public institutions of higher education include all public and independent public-mission colleges that receive state operating aid. An institution may submit no more than one complete application. Applications from each institution must include two documents: 1) Grant Narrative; and 2) Budget Justification Template

Grant Narrative:
Use the headings listed below within the application. Institutions must abide by the word limit indicated per section. Any information beyond the word limit will not be reviewed. The grant narrative must include:

- **Contact(s) Information:** Name, title, phone number, and email of the grant manager(s). Include no more than (3) contacts for the submission.
- **Letter of Support from the Institution's President/Chancellor or Designee:** Detail how grant participation will align with institutional strategic priorities and goals.
  o Word limit: 500 words.
- **Statement of Need:** Explain the need for this project and describe the student population that will be served under the project. In recognizing the vast and diverse SCND population, we ask institutions to be as detailed and specific as possible in outlining the specific subset of this population their grant aims to serve.
  o Word limit: 500 words.
- **Project Goals:** List at least 3 goals of the project and describe how they align with the institution's goals to serve the Some College, No Degree student population. Detail how this project proposal will meet the needs identified. Goals should be results-oriented and quantify where possible. Selected institutions will be expected to report on goal progress and outcomes in required reporting.
  o Word limit: 250 words each.
- **Project Activity Plan:** Provide a brief description of your institution's proposed project plan for both the institution and student portion of the grant. Indicate how the institution would successfully implement within the grant cycle, including suggested project activities with clear ties to the budget proposed, parties responsible (person or office) for implementing, and timetable.
  o Word limit: 750 words each.
- **Project Evaluation:** Include how the institution plans to evaluate the impact of the grant with baseline data, appropriate milestones, and measurable impacts related to the Some College, No Degree population. Also, include the number of students impacted by the project (directly and indirectly). Please note, institutions will be expected to report on the number of students and amounts served with the Student Focused Incentive Funding at the conclusion of grant.
  o Word limit: 500 words each.

- **Project Sustainability:** Detail how the institution will sustain the project at the end of the grant cycle and how this project will lead to long-term change at the institution.
  - Word limit: 250 words.

Budget:

The budget portion of the application must be submitted as an Excel spreadsheet utilizing the template provided. A key component of the budget template is the field designated for the "Narrative Budget Description." For each category of budgeted expenses, institutions must provide a "Narrative Description" consisting of a detailed list and justification for, each expense. The funding should be clearly tied to grant deliverables and outcomes and any items charged must be grant-specific. If the "Narrative Budget Description" cannot be provided within the space allowed within the template, institutions may submit a secondary spreadsheet tab with this detail, but all submissions must be in an Excel spreadsheet format.

The budget includes a category for the Student-Focused Incentive Funding which should be allotted at minimum 25% of the total budget and included in the narrative details on how the funding would be utilized.

Please note Facilities and Administrative Costs (F&A/Indirect costs) are not allowable expenses.

In recognition of capacity constraints, institutions may utilize funding for staff time beyond typical duties to further the goals and purpose of this initiative. Funding should not be used for new permanent staff positions.

Funding must abide by State guidelines and be fully expended by June 30, 2024. Note that this project should not supplant another initiative but demonstrate a bold and innovative approach to an identified barrier.

Budgets will be reviewed for reasonable and eligible expenses. Institutions may be asked to revise their budgets and projects based on the final amount awarded.

Link to Budget Template:
https://www.nj.gov/highereducation/documents/excel/SCND_BudgetTemplate_FY24.xlsx

Submission of Application: **Due by 5pm on Tuesday, October 31, 2023**

The above requested information should be submitted as two files (one budget as an Excel spreadsheet and one PDF grant narrative) to Stefani Thachik at Stefani.Thachik@oshe.nj.gov with the subject line "Institution Name_FY24_SCND." OSHE will send an email confirming receipt. Budgets will be reviewed for reasonable and eligible expenses.

Applications are due by **5 p.m., Tuesday, October 31, 2023**.

Questions:
Any additional questions about the FY2024 Some College, No Degree grant opportunity can be directed to Stefani Thachik, OSHE Senior Advisor, Stefani.Thachik@oshe.nj.gov.

Additional Resources:

Consider viewing the NJ OSHE Some College, No Degree statewide convening presentations for additional information about year on of the initiative and best practices from national organizations: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCo2X9Idymp3e2eV0dvzK03Q/videos