



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Textbook Pilot Project Grant
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
(January 16, 2008)

GENERAL SUBMISSION INFORMATION

E-mail of proposal
by 5:00 p.m., March 7, 2008 to:

Todd Digby
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PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

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General Information

Background

In 2006 the Minnesota Office of Higher Education convened a task force to study and report on the high costs of textbooks. This task force had wide representation from students, faculty, and academic staff at both public and private education institutions in Minnesota as well as from the Association of American Publishers and the used textbook association. The group met from August 2006 until January 2007. In February 2007, a report was delivered that recognized the significant impact that textbook costs have on our students and provided some strategies for reducing these costs to students. This report can be found at <http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/pdf/textbookCostsReport.pdf>

Soon after this report the issue of textbook costs was raised at the Minnesota Legislature. A bill to address these costs was introduced and championed by the associations that represent students of the Minnesota State Colleges & Universities. Eventually this legislation was incorporated into the Higher Education Omnibus Bill in the following language:

This appropriation includes funding to identify and improve on practices for selecting and purchasing textbooks and course materials that are used by students. The board, in collaboration with the Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) and the Minnesota State College Student Association (MSCSA) must develop and implement pilot projects with this appropriation to address the financial burden that textbook prices and requirements place on students. These projects may include textbook rental programs, cooperative purchasing efforts, training, and education and awareness programs for students and faculty on cost considerations and textbook options. The student associations must be fully involved in the development and implementation of any project using this appropriation. The board must report, with input from MSUSA and MSCSA, to the committees of the legislature responsible for higher education finance by February 15, 2009, on the success of the pilot projects. This money is available until June 30, 2009. (Minnesota Session Laws 2007 - Chapter 144)

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is a result of this legislation.

Nature of RFP

With funding from the Office of the Chancellor, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system seeks proposals from system institutions for pilot projects

that address the financial burden that textbook prices and policies place on students. Proposed projects should include input from campus student representatives of the Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) or the Minnesota State College Student Association (MSCSA). Examples of such proposed pilot projects may include textbook rental programs, cooperative purchasing efforts, training, and education and awareness programs for students and faculty on cost considerations and textbook options. Other types of projects that address the goal of improving practices for selection and purchase of textbooks and course materials purchased by students are also welcome.

Amount of Award

- \$500,000 Total amount available.
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General Selection Criteria

RFP General Considerations

- Projects must aim to reduce cost associated with textbooks for students
- Projects must be sustainable after the initial grant money.
- The local student associations must be fully involved in the development and implementation of these projects. Faculty involvement in these projects must go through normal institutional processes for creation, approval and implementation of campus policies.

RFP General Guidelines

- Projects can be proposed up to \$500,000 in initial funding.
- Proposals must indicate funding sources and other explanations of how these initiatives will be sustained after the grant period including projections of costs that students would need to cover. Projects can be institutional, campus wide, or at a department level.
- If successful, the project would serve as a model for other institutions to adopt.

Selection Process and Evaluation

A Textbook Pilot Project Review Task Force has been formed with membership representing students, faculty, staff, and administration from system colleges and universities. This task force will evaluate the received proposals and recommend projects for approval and adoption to the Senior Vice Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Finance. Projects will be evaluated with the overall goals of the project.

- Reducing cost associated with textbooks and other required materials for students
- Fiscal sustainability of project.

- Likelihood of ongoing success and acceptance by students and faculty.
- Ability of the project to adapt to future changes in how textbooks and instructional materials are delivered.

Selection and Implementation Timeline

- Proposal Due Date: March 7, 2008.
 - Task Force Recommendation Date: March 30, 2008.
 - Implementation Date: Summer and/or Fall term, 2008
 - Evaluation Report Due to Task Force: No later than November 1, 2008
 - Task Force Report to MnSCU Board of Trustees and Chancellor: No later than December 15, 2008.
 - Board of Trustees Report to Legislature: Feb. 15, 2009
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PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Section I Cover Sheet

Section II Narrative

- A one-paragraph summary of the proposed project.
- A detailed description of proposed project, including
 - The specific source of student expense that the project seeks to address
 - The specific means by which the project will address that expense source
 - The specific outcomes that are anticipated from this project.
 - The means by which those outcomes will be measured.
 - Follow-up plans for sustaining and continuing this project beyond the grant period.
- A detailed timeline of activities to be undertaken in planning, implementing, evaluating, and reporting on the project.
- Description of the consultation process for this project with students and faculty members at the institution.
- A list of the individuals and groups directly involved in this project and a description of their institutional role and/or qualifications for this project

Section III Budget

- A higher level of detail and accuracy for each category is expected in years one. For ongoing fiscal projects, please be specific enough for the review task force to determine sustainability of the project .
- A detailed operating budget should include:
 - A detailed listing of anticipated expenses for this pilot project
 - The total amount requested from the Office of the Chancellor for this pilot project.
 - Additional revenues in direct funding or indirect costs to be supplied by the college or university, with the funding source indicated
 - Possible sources for continued funding to sustain this project beyond the grant period.

Section IV: Final Report

At the end of the grant period, those participating in the grant shall submit a report to the Task Force with the following information:

- A detailed narrative of how the project was planned and implemented
- A description of the activities undertaken during implementation
- An evaluation of how the plan's goals were met and the project or goals might be improved
- A conclusion that indicates the relative successes and/or weaknesses of the project and plans for future activities, including funding to sustain the ongoing development, revision and implementation of this project.