

Regional Future Workforce Program - FAQ

Proponent Information Session - Questions and Answers

1. Question: Can you comment on the skills requirement? In that, you're requesting skills for automotive careers. Can you comment on how this would lead to an automotive career?

Answer: There are many industries that collaborate with the automotive and mobility sector and share many of the same in-demand skill sets (e.g., STEM). The main goal of the RFW program is to increase awareness of (and interest in) career pathways into the automotive and mobility sector among students in Ontario. Knowledge of in-demand skills and skill gaps in the automotive and mobility sector should help drive programming. Please visit OVIN's [Talent & Strategy Roadmap](#) and [Skills & Career Navigator](#) for more sector-specific information on current and emerging skill needs.

2. Question: Do you have an idea of elements that are required for top funding? Specific outcomes: number of participants, subject matter, etc.?

Answer: We are trying to get as many people involved across the province while ensuring that students are being engaged and impact is demonstrated. Be sure to meet the criteria (e.g., multiple regions, multiple audience segments, ensuring EDI objectives are met, etc.) and to focus on demonstrating and measuring program impact.

3. Question: We don't have much experience with creating material, is there a matchmaking service available for something like this? Lots of information and people but not as much experience delivering content to kids.

Answer: Feel free to express your interest among those also attending the proponent session. If there are further inquiries, you can visit the OCI website and connect with a Business Development and Commercialization contact in your region to see if they can connect you with other relevant stakeholders: <https://www.oc-innovation.ca/about/business-development-and-commercialization-contacts/>

4. Question: We have a program (auto sector related) and are wondering if this RFW program is geared towards projects that are already established? Is this type of program ideal or are you looking for something that is more in the initial stages?

Answer: Question to be taken away.

Final Answer: Ideally programs should be unique, innovative, and not reiterating something that already exists. If the applicant is replicating something, you must demonstrate that you are improving or adding to what already exists.

5. Question: For sustainability, are you looking at it in terms of continued funding (using funds for a following continued year)?

Answer: We encourage applicants to think through how the content and other inputs developed for the program could be carried through to subsequent years and students. The sustainability plan should help us understand whether the program's objectives are sustainable, and whether the program could be scalable in the future.

6. Question: Are you looking for post-secondary or are grad students also eligible?

Answer: All post-secondary students are eligible.

7. Question: Explain matching contribution in more detail

Answer: One staff member per audience segment's salary must be covered by the applicant as an in-kind contribution – those staff members would be involved in all aspects of the RFW program.

8. Question: Are private Ontario-based post-secondary institutions eligible or would it only be public?

Answer: Question to be taken away.

Final Answer: Yes, if the cost to student participants is free, then private schools in Ontario are eligible to apply.

9. Question: You mentioned the multi-regions: in the event that we were to also partner with another adjacent school boards and we helped facilitate the delivery component, would that preclude us?

Answer: Question to be taken away.

Final Answer: An organization cannot receive funding for delivering RFW programs from multiple sources. If you partner with an applicant, that applicant can enter into a partnership agreement with you, but then you cannot apply for your own separate funding from OCI.

You may provide in-kind support to other programs while receiving RFW funding for your own program. However, any outcomes or impact from your in-kind support to other programs would not count towards your own program's goals and metrics.

10. Question: Is there going to be an effort to select those from across Ontario at the EOI stage?

Answer: We hope to have an equitable distribution in terms of regions across Ontario and audience segments.

11. Question: Is there going to be an effort to ensure there is diversity for different organizations and bodies (ex: non-profits vs. post-secondary institutions)? Curious about whether that is a consideration?

Answer: Our eligibility criteria is intentionally diverse to accommodate different organization types with important roles in the sector related to the early engagement of students.

12. Question: Is there an expectation that schools join with another school board? Does partnering with another school board preclude other partnerships?

Answer: Regions are divided into different school boards; the idea is to hit two or more regions and we want to target multiple regions across the province. We are encouraging people to create partnerships to develop collaborative, industry-relevant, innovative and engaging content. Two school board regions would count, but you could also partner with a PSI in a region outside of your school board district, for example.

13. Question: There was a requirement for matching funds, things like salaries for one staff, can you clarify what that means?

Answer: The salary of one staff per audience segment would be in-kind. Usually, OCI asks for co-investments in funded programs, but for this program we are asking for in-kind staff salaries to be budgeted without OCI funds. Additional staff salaries can be included in the program budget.

14. Question: Is there an expectation that there would be other sources of funding at the time of the application?

Answer: No

15. Question: How much of program that you design, and deliver/offer should be teacher centered or student centered? Would it be a bit of both? Are you permitting the planning and development time into the prep of the program?

Revised Answer: There is an understanding that administration and planning needs to be done. The primary focus should be on students but focusing on teachers can be part of that programming as long as everything is justified and can be reported on appropriately (and the impact [on students] can be measured). However, at least 500 students must be engaged.

16. Question: The goal is to reach 500 student participants; for example, if you were to fund 500 students to participate in summer activities and marketing but only 300 end up participating – would funding be reduced?

Answer: 500 students is the minimum that need to be engaged for this program. We recognize the costs may be higher for some organizations depending on the inputs or technologies used. You should only

include a target that you are confident you can achieve, but you must be able to engage at least 500 students.

17. Question: Does the material have to directly go to students, or could there be a targeted effort for teachers who educate children?

Answer: The primary focus should be on the students but focusing on teachers can be part of that programming if everything is justified and can be reported on appropriately, and the impact [on students] can be measured. But ultimately 500 student participants must be engaged. Please refer to the Eligible Expenses in our Program Guidelines for more detail.

18. Question: This is obviously a new initiative, but I wonder what the long-term outlook for this is for the years to come? Have there been conversations for OVIN to extend beyond the one-year period

Answer: This is a pilot program.

19. Question: With this funding, once you look at the applications will you be dividing the funding amongst all of the applicants? Is it unlimited? Is there a targeted number of applicants?

Answer: There are different scenarios that are being considered – there could be lots of strong applications that are asking for the full 500k, or there could be strong applications asking for less in which case it could mean more projects funded.

20. Question: This is to be at no cost to students/participants? Open access from an equity perspective?

Answer: Yes

21. In terms of partnering with an industry partner, are there specific KPIs involved in that?

Answer: OCI is entering into a bilateral agreement with the applicant and not their partners. The applicant would need to enter their own agreements with industry partners. However, the applicant can report on relevant KPIs from industry partners that feed into their own reports.

22. To prepare for application, when would you have the answers?

Answer: All questions and answers will be shared and posted on the website before the end of the week.

23. For clarity: you had mentioned that proposal should be encouraging students and youth to be more aware of non-traditional pathways in automotive – can you elaborate more on what that means in terms of non-traditional?

Answer: Traditional pathways into the automotive and mobility sector are welcome, but we also recognize that there are many other relevant adjacent sectors. When you enter any sector, there are many roles required beyond the roles we typically associate the sector with (PM, Sales, Graphic design, AI, etc.). Please refer to OVIN's [Talent & Strategy Roadmap](#) and [Skills & Career Navigator](#) for more sector-specific information on current and emerging career pathways for the automotive and mobility sector.

24. Clarification on project planning and early funding requirements.

Answer: The applicant will get the advanced funds at program activation, but you do not necessarily need students in seats at that time. You will be required to provide a detailed workplan for your program with milestones and timelines for achieving those milestones. Successful applicants must provide a report on the advanced use of funds on March 31, 2023.

25. Are paid work-integrated learning placements for students permitted for this program?

Answer: This program was not designed with WIL programs or paid internships in mind. Applicants must demonstrate that they will engage a minimum of 500 students for this program. If you think some form of paid placement it is the best approach, you are able to engage a minimum of 500 students, and it adheres to the Program Guidelines, then please use your discretion when building out your work plan.

Questions via Email Nov. 1, 2022:

26. How many organizations will be funded through this program? Is there an intention to fund one organization **per** region, or could multiple organizations within one region receive funding for different projects?

Answer: While we would like to cover as many regions across Ontario as possible, it is possible that we would fund multiple projects in a particular region.

27. It appears the project requires one full time person dedicated to the project that is “in-kind”. Could this be a combination of people within the organization that collectively constitutes an FTE?

Answer: As a matching contribution, we require one full-time staff member per audience segment served to have their salary included in-kind by the applicant. The staff members included as in-kind must be involved in all aspects of the program. Additional staff members can be included in the program budget.

28. In the case of a university where there are many groups and departments working independently in many areas, does any recipient at the organization receiving OVIN funds disqualify the entire organization?

Answer: If you are unclear whether your organization is receiving OVIN funding, please reach out to Christine Stenton at cstenton@oc-innovation.ca directly to inquire.

29. Regarding the question about cost per student and the number of students projected to be engaged, if we used a variety of outreach approaches to engage students, when calculating the cost per student can we first sum up all the outreach methods?

Answer: The most important thing is that you provide an itemized breakdown of the costs for your various outreach methods relevant to the expected number of students you will engage. The more justification you can provide for your program costs, the better. The financial breakdown of all your outreach methods should be clearly explained since different methods will have different costs per student (e.g., in person learning will have a different cost per student than a virtual event).

30. Is there a particular cost per participant that OVIN is expecting?

Answer: There is no expected cost, but we would like a detailed and itemized breakdown of the costs for your engagement methods relevant to the expected number of students you will engage. The more justification you can provide for your program costs, the stronger your application will be.

31. What are the next steps after the expression of interest form is completed?

Answer: Once the EOI form is completed, they will be sent to an External Review Panel with subject matter experts to determine whether they will move forward to the full application stage. If successful, applicants will be asked to submit a full application by January 16, 2023. More details on the program deadlines can be found on our website: <https://www.ovinhub.ca/programs/regional-future-workforce-program/>

Questions via Email Nov 3, 2022:

32. Can Post-Secondary Institutions submit multiple applications if they come from different departments?

Answer: Yes, multiple applications can be sent from an institution as long as the budgets, personnel, activities and deliverables are independent for each application.

Questions and Answers for Proponent Information Session - November 9, 2022

33. Question: Are post-secondary institutions allowed to submit multiple applications?

Answer: An institution can submit multiple applications from different departments or campuses if the budgets, personnel and programming are clearly separate.

34. Question: Does the audience have to currently be enrolled in educational programs, or can this include immigrants? I.e. Partnering with immigrant services.

Answer: This objective of this program is for early engagement of the talent pipeline into the automotive and mobility sector. You should be able to demonstrate that your participants belong to the audience segments detailed in the Program Guidelines.

35. Question: For the hiring of staff, is the funding inclusive in the \$500,000, or is staff a matching contribution?

Answer: The salary of one staff per audience segment served should be in-kind. Usually, OCI asks for co-investments in funded programs, but for this program we are asking for in-kind staff salaries to be budgeted without OCI funds. Additional staff salaries can be included in the program budget.

36. Question: Does it have to be one person assigned to audience segments?

Answer: One staff member per audience segment should have their salaries contributed as in-kind; those staff members should be involved in all aspects of the program. Additional staff salaries can be included in the program budget.

37. Question: For the matching contribution, can it be funding that comes from our partners for this project or does it have to be further external?

Answer: The applicant should provide the matching contribution of in-kind salaries for one staff member per audience segment served. Those staff members should be involved in all aspects of the program. The salaries of additional staff members can be included in the program budget.

38. Question: Is there information about ESL students as a target population?

Answer: ESL students could be included within equity-deserving and underrepresented groups. Students belonging to the following equity-deserving and underrepresented groups would be included as EDI target populations: Women, Black, Indigenous & People of Colour (BIPOC) communities, 2SLGBTQ+ communities, Persons with disabilities, Immigrants/refugees/newcomers to Canada, French-speakers, Individuals living in remote areas.

39. Does the program have to be exclusively automotive, or can it include other lessons?

Answer: Programming should involve skills relevant for the automotive and mobility sector but does not have to be exclusive to it. Please refer to [Talent & Strategy Roadmap](#) for more information on the types of in-demand and emerging skills in the automotive and mobility sector relevant for the next generation of talent.

40. Will the slide deck be shared with the session participants?

Answer: Yes, we can share the slide deck on our website along with the session recording and questions and answers.

41. How have school boards been made aware of this program and do you have a sense of their interest at this point?

Answer: We have had several school boards express interest. If you would like support connecting with potential partners, applicants can visit the OCI website and connect with a Business Development and Commercialization contact in your region to see if they can connect you with other relevant stakeholders in their network: <https://www.oc-innovation.ca/about/business-development-and-commercialization-contacts/>

42. If you are successful with obtaining funding, what is the time to develop? When is the time frame for rolling it out? Start and end dates for reporting?

Answer: Applicants should clearly outline their proposed workplans and timelines for implementing the program and engaging students. OVIN's timelines have considered that applicants require time for program design, development and implementation. Please refer to the Program Guidelines on our website for details on reporting requirements.

43. Question: Concerns about multiple regions in more rural regions. Is there a limit on travel expenses?

Answer: Regions within Ontario have been divided by school boards for this program. Please refer to the map provided in our Program Guidelines. For travel expenses, please refer to the [Eligible Expenses](#) in our Program Guidelines. All eligible budget items should have a breakdown justifying the expense.

44. Question: is there a match for in-kind with industry partners

Answer: The successful applicant is responsible for the relationship with industry partners. OCI is entering into a bilateral agreement with the applicant and not their partners. However, as detailed in the Program Guidelines, industry partners are encouraged to contribute in-kind (expertise and other appropriate resources) towards the program.

45. Question: Can the budget include new assets required to execute and deliver programming (i.e., simulations)?

Answer: Please refer to the [Eligible Expenses](#) detailed in our Program Guidelines. Details on the eligibility of Hardware/Software expenses can be found there.

46. Question: Can the budget include facilities improvement or leasing?

Answer: Please refer to the [Eligible Expenses](#) detailed in our Program Guidelines.

47. Question: Could an association like OCTE be a formal partner given their access to all school boards and most technology education teachers?

Answer: Yes, an association like OCTE can be a partner on this initiative. However, the applicant would still require an industry partner from the automotive and mobility sector.

48. Question: Often when organizations put a lot of time into the application process, they don't hear back. Is there a hard number of hours to be dedicated to this – rather than if the original plan was to deliver 5 or 6 hours on a certain day, can it be increased to 7? It takes a lot to get this going.

Answer: If you think it is the best approach and it adheres to the Program Guidelines, then please use your discretion when building out your work plan.

49. Question: Can it include capital equipment for schools, owned by schools after the initiative to teach future students (versus training in 2023-2024)?

Answer: When providing the budget breakdown and justification, you should detail why your budget items are necessary for engaging students as part of this program. Please refer to the [Eligible Expenses](#) in our Program Guidelines for details on eligible costs.

50. Question: How much involvement does the industry partner need to have in the application?

Answer: You should clearly detail what your industry partner's commitments and involvement would be as part of your program.

51. Question: In terms of curriculum, is there a specific curriculum that you want taught to the students or do we develop our own? Do we rely on the collaboration with the industry that we are required to partner with to develop the curriculum?

Answer: It is up to the applicant to develop their own content and programming, but industry partners should help inform content as subject matter experts.

52. If we implement this in an afterschool program in a grade school (grades 2-7), is there a certain number of hours or subjects required to implement the OVIN curriculum? Can it be a one day a week class or is it required to be taught every day?

Answer: It is up to the applicant to develop their own content and programming, but as detailed in the Program Guidelines, we ask that applicants to leverage OVIN's Talent & Strategy roadmap and Navigator tool. These resources have been informed by extensive labour market research for the sector. There is not a specific time requirement attached to the use of OVIN resources. If you think it is the best approach and it adheres to the Program Guidelines, then please use your discretion when building out your work plan.

53. Question: What have you been doing to promote this program to school boards?

Answer: We have leveraged our ecosystem stakeholders to reach potential applicants for this program. Please share the opportunity widely in your networks.

54. Question: Is it ok for matching in-kind staff to come from another Provincial Ministry or Agency that is currently funding a similar program that we are running?

Answer: The applicant must demonstrate that the staff provided in-kind is fully dedicated to the program, and that their salary is paid for by the applicant. The applicant must provide invoices on the salaries of the staff provided in-kind.

55. Question: In terms of the 4 audience segments, would it be okay to teach the same topic with advancing curriculum based on the group age range?

Answer: Program content must be unique for each audience segment served. Each audience segment encompasses multiple grades/age groups (e.g., Kindergarten – Grade 4; Grade 5 – Grade 9; Grade 10 – Grade 12; post-secondary).

56. Question: Can you be a lead applicant and a partner on a different application?

Answer: An organization cannot receive funding for delivering RFW programs from multiple sources. If you partner with an applicant, that applicant can enter into a partnership agreement with you, but then you cannot apply for your own separate funding from OCI.

You may provide in-kind support to other programs while receiving RFW funding for your own program. However, any outcomes or impact from your in-kind support to other programs would not count towards your own program's goals and metrics.

57. Question: Regarding the platform to submit the EOI, is there a registration process and how long does registration process take?

Answer: We are using FormStack to gather EOI submissions (there is no formal registration required). If the applicant moves forward to the full application, we will provide further instructions for how to apply through our online system.

58. Can you please clarify the school board regions? Do the catholic and public-school boards in the same city count as 2 regions? Or does it need to be separated based on the map in the Program Guidelines?

Answer: Regions within Ontario are divided up geographically by school board for this program. Please refer to the map provided in the Program Guidelines to clarify what constitutes a region in your area.

59. Question: In terms of evaluation, where are the different segments fit into the evaluation regarding the industry segments (e.g., freight/transportation, manufacturing)

Answer: The evaluation process for this program will involve an external review panel who will consider assessment criteria that has been highlighted in the Program Guidelines.

60. Question: Is the intention within the program to expose to all the segments, or to focus on one segment?

Answer: As detailed in the Program Guidelines, applicants must target at least 2 audience segments. We hope to reach all audience segments across the different funded programs, but that will depend on the volume and strength of applications.

61. Question: Christine are you available for one-on-one conversations as questions come up over the next 1-2 weeks going forward?

Answer: Please reach out to Christine Stenton via email (cstenton@oc-innovation.ca) with your questions so that we can ensure questions are answered equitably.

62. Question: Are we able to use existing programming?

Answer: Ideally programs should be unique, innovative, and not reiterating something that already exists. If the applicant is replicating something, you must demonstrate that you are improving or adding to what already exists.

Questions via Email Nov 4 – 8, 2022:

34. Could a city become involved in this program?

Answer: Unfortunately, eligible applicants must be either a non-profit organization with an Ontario-based bank account, a school/school board, or a post-secondary institution within Ontario. However, you are welcome to collaborate with an eligible applicant in your region.

35. When will successful applicants be notified that they will be moving to the next stage?

Answer: All applicants will be notified whether they will be moving to the full application stage on December 21, 2022.

36. What is the position of OVIN regarding the IP of the materials developed?

Answer: OCI would not take ownership in IP for this program.