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Request for Proposals to Increase Adult Degree Completion

Lumina Foundation to support large-scale efforts to increase degree completion among adults who have earned some college credits.

The mission of Lumina Foundation is to expand access and success in education beyond high school, particularly among adults, first-generation college students, low-income students and students of color. This mission is directed toward a single overarching “Big Goal” – to increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.

Given demographic trends and attainment rates among young adults, it is highly unlikely that the nation can meet its growing need for college-educated workers by continuing to focus primarily on recent high school graduates. All states need to increase the postsecondary participation and success of adults, many of whom have some college credits but lack a degree.

The current economic downturn is already funneling hundreds of thousands of over-25 Americans into postsecondary education -- and that trend is sure to intensify as the global, knowledge-based economy demands workers with ever-higher levels of education and training. Overall, this adult-learning boom is a positive trend, and one that holds tremendous promise for individual Americans and the nation as a whole. It is a trend we must embrace if we hope to return the U.S. to a position of global leadership in college degree attainment. We must increase the number of degree-seeking adults, and we must do everything possible to ensure their success.

Through the Adult Degree Completion program, Lumina Foundation plans to provide grants of up to \$8 million during the next four years to support large-scale efforts to increase degree completion among adults with some college credits.

I urge you to consider this important grant opportunity.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. P. Merisotis".

Jamie P. Merisotis
President and CEO



Request for Proposals

Issue Date: April 1, 2010
 Pre-Proposal Due: May 14, 2010

To support large-scale efforts to increase degree completion among adults who have earned some college credit.

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Lumina Foundation for Education
 30 South Meridian Street, Suite 700, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

This application is available at: www.luminafoundation.org

Lumina's Mission and Goal

The mission of Lumina Foundation for Education is to expand access and success in education beyond high school, particularly among adults, first generation college-going students, low-income students and students of color. This mission is directed toward a single overarching “Big Goal” – to increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials¹ to 60 percent by the year 2025. For more information about Lumina’s Big Goal, see our Strategic Plan for Goal 2025, which is available on our Web site at <http://www.luminafoundation.org/>

Background

Labor market. Recent job projections forecast that, by 2018, the economy will create 47 million job openings or jobs (14 million new jobs and 33 million openings created by retiring baby boomers). Two-thirds (64 percent) of all job openings will require at least some postsecondary education or training.²

To prepare for this expanding labor market, adult education must become a mainstream component of workforce development. This will require large numbers of adults to quickly acquire needed basic skills and find pathways to postsecondary attainment and employment. Two factors will be key in this effort: 1) Integrating adult education into a unified workforce system, and 2) helping states leverage all appropriate funding sources (e.g., WIA, the unemployment insurance system, TANF, Wagner-Peyser, TGAA, Perkins).³

Postsecondary credentials have value in the marketplace. Despite the turbulent economy, there is growing demand for skilled workers in a variety of fields, particularly in jobs that require more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree. These jobs represent nearly half of America’s current labor market and will constitute a large proportion of the post-recession jobs.⁴ Our economic recovery and competitiveness, both nationally and internationally, demand a better-educated workforce.

The labor market generally rewards postsecondary credentials and, while the rewards increase with higher levels of college attainment, even one year of postsecondary education pays off.⁵ Americans with high school diplomas have work-participation rates 14 percentage points higher than those who have not graduated from high school, and college degree holders have work-participation rates an additional 9 percentage points above those of high school graduates.⁶

Adult attainment levels. Despite the fact that adult enrollments in postsecondary education are critical to the economic health of our nation, 60 percent of the U.S. population between the ages of 24 and 64 have no postsecondary credential (associate degree or higher). Moreover, college-

¹ Lumina defines high-quality credentials as degrees and certificates that have well-defined and transparent learning outcomes which provide clear pathways to further education and employment. For the purpose of this RFP, *degree* will be used interchangeably with *credentials* – to include certificates, associate degrees and baccalaureate degrees.

² Ready or Not: The Jobs Recovery and Educational Requirements through 2018, Anthony Carnevale, The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, March 2010.

³ Ready or Not: The Jobs Recovery and Educational Requirements through 2018

⁴ Creating a Truly Adequate 21st Century Workforce System “*Taking No Worker Left Behind*” National, Andrew Levin, March 2010.

⁵ Van Opstal, Debra. Thriev. The Skills Imperative. Washington, DC: Council on Competitiveness, 2008.

⁶ Tipping Point Research, Washington Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

⁶ CAEL in partnership with NCHEMS, State Policies to Bring Adult Learning onto Focus. 2008

completion rates reflect historic inequities: Whites are twice as likely as African Americans and three times as likely as Latinos to earn degrees.⁷

Given demographic trends and attainment rates among young adults, it is highly unlikely that we can meet the nation's growing need for college-educated workers by continuing to focus primarily on recent high school graduates. While all states need to increase the postsecondary participation and success of traditional-age students, greater success will not get us to our goal. We must reach adults who are already in the labor force, both those who have not attended postsecondary education and, in particular, those who have but did not complete degrees.

Statistics show that every one of the 50 states has a large number of working-age adults (18-64 years old) with no college degree. In fact, that group typically accounts for 60 percent to 75 percent of each state's population.⁸ What's more, only 15 states can boast working-age populations in which 40 percent of citizens have at least an associate degree. In short, we must develop new approaches to reaching the adult market. These approaches must be academically sound; provide new options for learning that balance work, family and study; and create pathways to degree completion.

Definitions. Adult learners are typically defined as students at least 25 years old who are participating in some type of formal postsecondary education. This group includes some 6.5 million people, about 40 percent of the U.S. student population. Still, this group of credit-seeking adult students represents just a small part of the nation's more than 90 million adult learners. Tens of millions more are participating in Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, work-related training, personal development courses and other forms of post-high school education.⁹

There are three subgroups that make up the broad adult-learning category of working-age adults with no college degree. Individuals in all these groups are having – and will continue to have – significant problems in our rapidly changing economy. Different strategies in both state policy work and program work will be needed for each of the three subgroups:

1. Adults who have dropped out of high school and have no diploma (13 percent or 26.4 million). Many face basic literacy challenges and need Adult Basic Education and GEDs.
2. Adults with high school diplomas but no college (29 percent or 56 million).
3. Adults who have a high school diploma and some college credit (19 percent or 42.5 million).¹⁰

This Request for Proposal (RFP) targets the third group – adults with some college credits but no degree – what we are calling the *adult degree completion market*. There are five primary reasons for this focus:

1. The size of the adult degree completion market is huge and continues to grow.
2. Many adults harbor the dream of returning to college to complete what they started years, and often decades, ago.
3. There is growing evidence that adult degree completers, when presented with viable options, will return and succeed.
4. A growing number of states and institutions are developing, or want to develop, programs to serve this market.
5. The labor market generally rewards postsecondary credentials.

⁷ 2000 Census.

⁸ CAEL and NCHEMS, A Profile of Adult Learners, 2008.

⁹ Adult Learners in the United States: A National Profile, American Council on Education, March 2006.

¹⁰ There are also growing numbers of adult immigrants to the U.S. who increasingly are joining the large subgroups of adults with no postsecondary credential.

Context considerations. Several key trends will influence any large-scale effort to increase the number of adults returning to postsecondary education to complete credentials:

- Cost: The out-of-pocket costs of tuition, fees, books and other items can easily add up to \$500 per course – even at the least expensive community colleges. For a family earning less than \$35,000 annually, that can be unaffordable.¹¹
- Remediation: In 2002, the Education Commission of the States reported the results of a state survey about postsecondary remediation. Of 30 responding states, half reported that more than 50 percent of entering students in their public community colleges need remediation –and remediation needs are on the increase. In most community colleges, incoming students unable to offer evidence of well-developed basic skills (through prior degrees or SAT and ACT scores) are required to take placement tests. Students who score below nationally normed cut-off scores for reading, writing, and math are frequently required to complete academic term-long remediation courses prior to enrolling in program courses for which prerequisite skills levels have been established. All developmental-level (remediation) courses are “for-credit” courses, and financial aid-eligible students who have a high school diploma or GED who enroll in these courses qualify for federal and state assistance. However, these courses rarely count toward completion of the requirements for degrees or certificates.

For many adult degree completers, returning to college means overcoming past failures and fears of contemporary learning environments, remediation in essential skills and developing effective study habits and time management. But most adults who do return come armed with a dedication to their goal of acquiring a degree and with a maturity many did not have at 18, 19, or 20.

- Online delivery: Online programs are a significant and growing aspect of postsecondary education. The latest research from the Sloan Consortium indicates that more than 4.6 million students (one in every four students in postsecondary education) took at least one online course in 2008. In addition, the 17 percent annual growth rate of online learning far outstrips the overall growth rate (1.2 percent) of all of higher education.¹² The flexibility offered by this mode of learning attracts adult learners, a factor driving its growth to unprecedented levels. The top choices in rank order for choosing online education are: 1) flexible scheduling, 2) price/cost, 3) fits with personal learning style, and 4) total time spent in course.¹³
- Adult-friendly institutions: Postsecondary institutions have tended to focus on serving traditional students – recent high school graduates who are not employed and can attend fulltime. Even at most community colleges, most programs and courses are geared to serving the traditional student, not the person with a job or family obligations. To gain an associate degree, students typically have to complete between 20- and 25

¹¹ Can the Working Poor Move Ahead? *Working Hard, Staying Poor: A National Survey of the Working Poor and Unemployed.* Work Trends Series by the John J. Heldrich Center at Rutgers University and the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut. October 1999.

¹² I. Elaine Allen and Jeff Seaman *Learning on Demand: Online Learning in the United States*, 2009. Babson Survey Research Group, 2010.

¹³ Presentation to Lumina Foundation by Abigail Callahan, Eduventures, at Lumina Professional Development Session the Adult learner, 2006.

semester-long courses. Even for students able to maintain a steady pace of two courses per academic term, an associate degree would require four years or more, and bachelor's degree at least eight years. Too many things change in the lives of working adult students for that slow pace to permit success.

Promising practices. There are postsecondary institutions (two- and four-year, public and private and proprietary) that are specifically seeking to attract the adult market. Many have developed effective, affordable programs for adults. Although these programs are still the exceptions, they constitute promising practice in terms of cost, program structure and/or delivery methods. For example:

- Some institutions have reorganized conventional, fulltime, credentialed programs into shorter modules (mini-mesters), each with distinct credentials that can be "stacked" together over time into more conventional degrees and certificates.
- Some institutions are making more extensive use of "career ladder approaches" in high-growth occupations. These approaches enable students to earn basic, industry-recognized certification quickly, gain entry to higher-wage occupations, and then continue their training toward degrees and more advanced credentials.
- Some programs offer open-entry/open-exit classes that allow students to progress at their own pace. They also offer weekend classes as well as course offerings that combine distance-learning and on-campus support. Some establish cohort models, which have been found to enhance retention and success.
- Some institutions have created compressed or short-term intensive or accelerated programs with curricula and scheduling formats that can better accommodate the time limitations of working adults.
- Some statewide and interinstitutional collaboratives have redesigned degree programs meant to serve adult students, especially those who have some college but no degree. Some of these efforts feature marketing campaigns that inform adults about these opportunities and provide advising assistance when adults inquire about opportunities ("high touch" approaches).
- Some states have assigned the mission of focusing on completion degrees to select institutions (lead institutions).
- Some institutions are redesigning support services to make them more "adult friendly" and responsive to the needs of adult learners.
- A growing number of institutions are using online and "blended" learning (a combination of online and in-class offerings) to provide greater access and flexibility for adults.
- Some statewide efforts have targeted policy reforms that can help officials and institutions better address the needs of adult students. For example, providing financial aid assistance for part-time adult students (e.g., less than half time) and linking discrete data systems so adults with some college credit can be identified and recruited into programs that can help them earn a postsecondary credential.
- Some institutions have developed exemplary prior learning assessment programs and redesigned their approach to remedial education.
- Some states are starting to reward institutions for student outcomes rather than seat time. This allows for innovations like accelerated formats, prior learning assessment and other practices that serve adult learners well.

These are all promising practices but they are still too limited to have the necessary impact. Further, many of these efforts are relatively small and have yet to achieve institution-wide, system-wide, or statewide levels. To reach our goals, scaling such efforts is essential.

Characteristics of adult learners. Statistically, adult learners have the following characteristics:¹⁴

- Are less likely than younger undergraduates to seek a bachelor's degree and more likely to enroll for personal satisfaction and career advancement.
- Typically pursue studies part-time.
- Are predominantly female (60 percent).
- Are more likely to enroll at community colleges and for-profit institutions than are younger students.
- Are likely to be married and have children. This is especially true of students 30 years and older (although low-income adults are more likely to be single parents).
- Account for more than half of the undergraduate student population at for-profit institutions and tribal colleges.
- Are becoming a more diverse group, thanks to growing numbers of African American and Latino adults entering postsecondary education.
- Are less likely than traditional-age students to apply for financial aid (although 85 percent of adults who do apply receive assistance).
- Are more likely to earn a certificate within six years than to earn either an associate or bachelor's degree.

Challenges of serving adult learners. More than a decade ago, the U.S. Department of Education identified four key barriers to adults' participation in further education:¹⁵

- Lack of time.
- Family responsibilities.
- Time and place the courses were scheduled.
- Cost of the courses.

More recent studies have confirmed these and revealed other barriers that adult learners often face when seeking postsecondary education:

- Lack of courses and resources suited to adult learners.
- Lack of financial aid.
- Lack of remedial or "refresher" courses.
- Lack of accelerated programs that can cut the cost and time required to earn a credential.
- Lack of off-campus centers to eliminate location barriers for some adult learners.
- Class schedules that are limited or inflexible (too few night courses, weekend classes and once-a-week, three-hour courses).
- Financial aid packages that fail to make provision for child care.
- Perceptions about the social and economic value of postsecondary education that motivate adults to enroll in and persist toward degree completion.
- Lack of employer support for adults who work while attending school.
- Inadequate advising and information services.¹⁶
- Lack of transparent policies for credit transfer.¹⁷
- Lack of consistent and transparent policies, practices, and opportunities for prior learning assessment.¹⁸

¹⁴ *Adult Learners in the United States: A National Profile*, American Council on Education, March 2006.

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Education, NCES, *Adult Education Participation Decisions and Barriers*, Tim Silva, Margaret Cahalan, and Natalie Lacireno-Pacquest, August 1998.

¹⁶ *What We Know About Access, Persistence, and Success for Adult Learners in Postsecondary education: A Review of Contemporary Literature*, Lumina Foundation, 2005

¹⁷ Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Nontraditional No More Project*, 2010.

¹⁸ Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Nontraditional No More Project*, 2010.

The institutions that succeed in reaching and serving adult degree completers address these barriers by developing strategies and providing a variety of services that are attractive and welcoming to adults. But too often, these efforts are limited in scope and have not been scaled to serve the millions of working-age adults who can benefit from these efforts.

Purpose of the RFP

Lumina Foundation is interested in **supporting large-scale efforts to increase degree completion for adults who have earned some college credits**. We are also interested in efforts that demonstrate achievement of intermediate outcomes that may lead to increased degree attainment; e.g. reduced time to degree, accelerated programs in higher education institutions, more adult applicants for financial aid, and policy supports for increased attainment among adults.

We define *large-scale* efforts as those that are national; statewide; state system level (multiple institutions within a state system of postsecondary education – two-year and/or four-year institutions); and/or multi-institution consortia, groups, networks, and partnerships. Large-scale also refers to the scope of programs and services. Applicants must define both the scope and scale of the proposed effort in their pre-proposal.

We're looking especially for efforts that employ multiple, cross-cutting strategies that target the returning adult. These strategies could include the improvement of practices, programs and services; will-building (e.g., communications, convenings and forums); state and institutional policy reforms; research and evaluation (e.g., strengthening data systems to follow results of efforts); planning (e.g., state action plans); and special approaches to working with employers.

Efforts might target one or more of the following groups:¹⁹

- Adults who have completed all credits for a degree but have not received a degree.
- Adults who have completed almost all credits for a degree (within a few credit hours).
- Adults with 45 to 90 credits seeking to earn an associate or baccalaureate degree.
- Adults with 15 or more credits seeking to earn a certificate and/or associate degree.

Different strategies may be needed for different target populations.

Preference will be given to efforts that have the potential to rapidly increase credential attainment for adults with some college who are also first-generation college students, low-income, and/or people of color. However, it is not expected that projects will focus solely on these populations.

The following are funding categories for grant consideration (not in priority order). Applicants should choose the category that best matches their proposed work, but may include elements of other categories; e.g., a large-scale program expansion that includes a policy component.

¹⁹ This RFP focuses on categorization by the number of credits toward completion of credentials, with the assumption that any and all of the many subgroups that make up the adult population could be addressed in project efforts. Common subgroup categories are: 1) adults needing significant academic remediation, 2) adults with significant situational barriers (difficult work schedules, family responsibilities, etc.), 3) adults with significant industry-based, military or on-the-job training but no postsecondary credentials, 4) adults working in jobs that are “at risk” in this changing economy, 5) adults who are displaced workers due to economic conditions, and 6) immigrants to the U.S.

Categories not on the list may be included if a compelling case can be made that they will lead to the desired outcome of increased degree completion for adults with some college.

Funding Categories

#1 Build on and expand large-scale strategies already in place

Where large-scale returning adult programs and services exist, we welcome strategies to move these efforts to the next level. Such strategies might include:

- a. Institutionalizing or mainstreaming programs and services within existing postsecondary structure(s).
- b. Strengthening a program's research capacity to study the impact of degree attainment on workforce attainment (e.g., wage increases, promotions, employment in a new area).
- c. Evaluating adult-focused programs to see if programs are working well, and then making improvements based on evaluation (e.g., enhancing program performance in terms of enrollment through graduation, improving delivery formats).
- d. Partnering with employers so that cohorts of employed adults can complete programs together and with the support of their employer.
- e. Strengthening social marketing or consumer awareness campaigns and the use of Web-based technologies to better serve adults. Particularly, such efforts might include "high touch" components in which student are contacted directly to keep students involved in programs, and portals that go beyond mere course/program listings. No large-scale marketing campaigns will be considered for support unless they are adequately researched prior to implementation and there are policies and programs in place to serve adult learners.

#2 Implement strategies for large-scale efforts that have been planned and/or piloted

Where new large-scale programs and services are needed following planning and pilot-testing, we seek to assist their development. The goal here is to support both two- and/or four-year institutions that seek to implement, scale-up and/or widely publicize degree or certificate-completion programs that serve returning adults students.

- a. Priority consideration will be given to efforts that are ready to go (where the planning and pilot work has occurred) rather than efforts on the drawing board; and to efforts that are committed to tracking data and developing benchmarks related to adult populations. Preference will be given to efforts that have adapted successful practices from pilots elsewhere, rather than inventing their own solutions all over again unless unique solutions are called for. Efforts might include developing newly designed degree programs or reshaping "dead-end" programs so that they stack or build into next degrees (sub-associate degree or certificate efforts, associate or baccalaureate), career pathways and/or applied degrees for adults already in the workforce. Another possibility would be programs for recently unemployed adults who are returning to college to enhance their job prospects.
- b. Efforts could include strengthening social marketing or consumer awareness campaigns and the use of Web-based technologies to better serve adults. Particularly, such efforts might include "high touch" components in which student are contacted directly to keep students involved in programs, and portals that go beyond mere course/program listings. No large-scale marketing campaigns will be considered for support unless they are adequately researched prior to implementation and there are policies and programs in place to serve adult learners.

#3 State policy and system change efforts

We seek to support efforts in which states and/or institutions create, adopt or adapt policies that lead to improved outcomes for returning adults. Such efforts could feature: partnerships with the private sector to better leverage resources; development of flexible and integrated service delivery models for adult workers; improvements in academic and personal support services; and better use of data to measure effectiveness and align degree programs with workforce needs. Examples might include:

- a. Performance-based funding formulas to encourage colleges to improve completion rates among adult learners.
- b. Redesigned financial aid policies for adult learners, to support degree completion.
- c. Incentives for working with employers on employer-aid strategies such as establishing pre-paid tuition policies or deferred billing with employer tuition-assistance plans.
- d. Exploring the use of campus-based work-study, cooperative education and internship funds to provide meaningful work and learning opportunities at employer sites.
- e. Exploring state incentives to expand the use of prior learning assessment for returning adults.
- f. Using data to improve course completion and retention rates among adult learners and to align higher education programs with workforce needs.

Expected Outcomes

All applicants must specify the extent (i.e., number and percent of those served) to which the proposed work is expected to result in increased attainment of degrees and/or certificates by adults with some college. This will require that baseline benchmarks be established.

Grantees should also describe intermediate outcomes, including major programmatic or policy outcomes that they expect to lead to greater attainment of degrees and certificates among adult learners. Examples of such outcomes include but are not limited to the following:

• Reduced time to degree.
• Increased accessibility for adult learners to instruction and support services.
• Increases in adults applying for and receiving financial aid.
• Decreased cost of earning a degree.
• Increased participation in programs redesigned to serve adult learners (e.g. as a result of marketing campaigns).
• Greater success in taking advantage of improved work and career options.
• Creation or adoption of policies that enhance adult degree attainment.
• Inclusion of adult learners in the institutional and state contexts (making adult learners part of the culture and discussions at the state and institutional levels).

Evaluation

Lumina Foundation plans to commission an external evaluation of the Adult Degree Completion program described in this RFP. All grantees will be required to participate in this larger evaluation.

In addition, all applicants must describe an evaluation plan for their individual project in the pre-proposal. The evaluation plan should enable the grantee to track and report its success in achieving its stated outcomes.²⁰ The evaluation plan must include a formative component, so that projects can assess implementation effectiveness and build in the capacity and flexibility to make mid-course corrections. The evaluation must also assess impact of the proposed strategy in increasing degree and certificate attainment for adults with some college.

Applicants may propose the use of an external evaluator or the use of internal evaluation expertise, if such expertise is available to the applicant. Up to 8 percent of grant funds may be used for the grant evaluation.

Other Conditions of Funding

Successful grantees must agree to participate in a national collaborative, facilitated and funded by Lumina Foundation. This collaborative will enable grantees, practitioners and experts to share effective practices in adult completion efforts. Participation by grantees will be supported separately by the Foundation; i.e., these costs should not be included in the budget estimate for the RFP pre-proposal application.

Eligibility

Entities eligible to apply for grants include the following:

- State systems of higher education.
- Regionally accredited community colleges and four-year institutions.
- Regionally accredited higher education institutions applying as a group, network, consortium or partnership.
- 501(c)(3) intermediary organizations that are working with states and/or institutions on adult learning policy and/or practice.
- For-profit educational institutions and corporate entities may not apply directly but may partner with any of the eligible applicants above.

The entities above may submit multiple pre-proposals.

No single-institution effort will be considered unless it provides services to adult-completion populations on an interstate and/or national level (large-scale), or unless the institution is designated as lead provider with a key mission to serve returning adults in a state. Discipline-based proposals will not be considered.

Although Lumina Foundation generally defines target adult populations as 25 years and older, applicants are asked to define their target populations in their application. In some cases, adult populations may be younger than age 25 if the target includes working students who are the primary means of support for their families. In some cases, efforts may target older adults, especially given the impact of the economic recession on adults 50 and older. Wider age targets may be acceptable if the grantee provides clear and compelling rationale for its definition of the targeted population.

²⁰ Full proposals will be required to include outcome indicators that will be used. Inclusion of a logic model or theory of change diagram showing the connection between activities and outcomes in the full proposal is recommended but not required. Grantees will be required to document success rates by the specific populations served.

Amount, Duration, Number of Grants

The amount of the grant will be based on the scope and scale of the proposed effort. Grants may range between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per year, up to four years.

Grants may be awarded for a two-, three, or four-year duration, depending upon the scale and scope of the work. The maximum grant period will extend from October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2014. Continuation of multi-year grants will be contingent upon a satisfactory annual review.

Lumina expects to award eight to 10 grants in 2010 as a result of this RFP.

Grants are viewed as seed funding. Grantees will be required to demonstrate other resources that they plan to use or seek (e.g., cash and/or in-kind matches, including leveraged funding from sources such as WIA, TANF, Perkins and TGAA). Preference will be given to projects that demonstrate at least a 35 percent match level and that demonstrate the capacity to sustain the work following the grant period.

In developing the budget estimate for the pre-proposal, note that Lumina permits two methods for indirect cost reimbursement: 1) using a calculation of 20 percent of the project's personnel costs (salaries and benefits), or 2) itemizing indirect cost categories as direct costs.

Pre-Proposal, Proposal Invitations

There is a two-part selection process – submission of a pre-proposal and, if invited, submission of a full proposal.

Instructions for the pre-proposal are included in the enclosed Guidelines/Forms. Applicants must follow the prescribed format.

Lumina Foundation will invite full proposals from among the reviewed pre-proposals. If Lumina decides to request a full proposal, a program officer will contact the applicant to provide instructions on applying for a grant and request additional information. An invitation to submit a proposal will not guarantee funding.

Selection Process

Pre-proposals will be reviewed by at least three Lumina program officers according to the following criteria:

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significance of the priorities being addressed. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scale and scope of the proposed effort (potential impact) on target population(s). |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Likelihood that the key proposed activities will lead to the intended outcomes. For efforts with an institution-focused strategy, the extent to which they demonstrate adherence to one or more of the following principles and practices:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- broadly accessible to adult learners (e.g., uses online delivery modes or blended online/face to face)- promotes reduced time to degree (e.g., uses accelerated pace for course and program delivery)- connected to regional and state workforce data and occupational needs |

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - student services are aligned to type of students served (e.g., working adults) - using prior learning assessment to accelerate time to degree completion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise and leadership the applicant brings to this effort (e.g., expertise in adult learning efforts, prior work on planning and needs assessments to serve adult learners, leadership position in organization, how other current work will be leveraged to advance this agenda), factors related to partnering organizations that may contribute to this work. For multi-institution proposals: the strength of the plan to provide one or more individuals responsible for coordinating with the multi-campus project and with on-campus stakeholders.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specificity of outcomes and strength of evaluation components planned.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the effort may serve as a model that others may adopt.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonableness of the budget request in relation to the proposed staffing and activities, and level of resources that other funders or organizations may provide.

Notifications

Applicants will receive electronic confirmation of receipt of all pre-proposals.

By June 15, Lumina Foundation will invite full proposals from among a selected number of pre-proposal applicants. Information about the format for full proposals and reviewer feedback will be provided by a Lumina program officer. An invitation to submit a full proposal does not guarantee funding. Proposal applicants whose grants are recommended for final funding will be notified by September 1. Grant agreements will be concluded on or about September 15.

Pre-proposal applicants who are not invited to the full proposal stage will be notified by July 1. The Foundation is not able to provide reviewers' comments to unsuccessful applicants.

Pre-Proposal Web Conference

Potential applicants are invited to participate in the Adult Degree Completion grant information Web conference scheduled for April 14, 2010, 3:00 p.m. EDT. During the call, Lumina Foundation staff will provide additional information on the grant process and answer questions from participants. Please go to <https://luminafoundation.webex.com> to register for the Web conference (registration will be open approximately one week prior to the conference).

Those unable to participate in the conference call will be able to obtain audio information from the conference within 48 hours of the call. The information will be available on Lumina Foundation's Web site: www.luminafoundation.org

Key Dates

RFP Issue Date:	April 1, 2010
Pre-Proposal Web Conference	April 14, 2010 (3:00 p.m. EDT)
Pre- Proposal Due (electronically)	May 14, 2010 (11:59 p.m. EDT)
Proposal Invitations	June 15, 2010
Notification of Declined Pre-Proposal	July 1, 2010
Full Proposal Due (electronically)	July 30, 2010 (11:59 p.m. EDT)
Negotiation Period	August 5-15, 2010
Selection Announcement	September 1, 2010
Grant Agreement	September 15, 2010
Estimated project start date	October 1, 2010
Notification of Declined Proposal	October 1, 2010

Contact information for questions

- Questions submitted in writing will be answered on the Lumina Web site, in the Adult Degree Completion area.
- Questions submitted in writing within 48 hours of the Pre-Proposal Web Conference will be answered during the Web conference.
- Questions submitted in writing after the Pre-Proposal Web Conference will be posted at the Web site: www.luminafoundation.org

All questions must be submitted in writing to:
Adultdegreecompletion@luminafoundation.org

RFP GUIDELINES/FORMS

Electronic Submission of Pre-Proposal

Applicants must submit the pre-proposal electronically to Lumina Foundation for Education. The pre-proposal may be submitted as one document or three attachments, in Microsoft Word or PDF format. The electronic mailing address is: Adultdegreecompletion@luminafoundation.org

Components of the Pre-Proposal

The pre-proposal has three components:

1. A completed Lumina cover sheet (see following pages).
2. A cover letter on the letterhead of the sponsoring organization or institution.
3. A pre-proposal narrative (see following pages), single-spaced, font size no smaller than 11 point.

Applicants are required to use the enclosed Narrative Pre-Proposal Form. Incomplete applications (applications that do not include all three components) will not be accepted. Please do not send additional materials with the pre-proposal (letters of support, resumes, brochures about the institution or program, etc.).

The pre-proposal narrative should describe the proposed work in three to five pages. Please address each of the following in this order, using the enclosed Narrative Pre-Proposal Form:

1. Indicate which category from the list included in the RFP this request will primarily address (#1, #2 or #3) and describe how significant the need is to address this priority(s) to your state, locale, region.
2. Indicate how the proposed work relates to the applicant organization's mission.
3. Define the target population(s) of adults the project will address (age and other demographic factors, amount of college credits characterized by target groups, number expected to serve).
4. Identify the geographic scope of the proposed work. Estimate the scale if this project is expected to serve a specified number of returning adults.
5. Specify the intended outcome(s) of the proposed work in terms of increased attainment of degrees and/or certificates by adults with some college. In addition, describe key intermediate outcomes that are expected to lead to greater adult degree/certificate attainment.
6. Describe how this work will achieve the intended outcomes (key activities that are planned).
7. Describe the major approach or design elements by which the work will be evaluated both formatively and in terms of outcomes and impact.
8. Describe the leadership expertise and any special qualifications the applicant will bring to this effort. Indicate what other organizations are involved, if any, and how they will contribute to the work. Describe how other existing work on the issue will be leveraged to advance this agenda.
9. Indicate the estimated cost of the proposed effort. What amount do you expect to be seeking from Lumina Foundation and for what period of time? What resources do you expect your organization, and/or other funders or organizations to provide?

Lumina Foundation for Education Narrative Pre-Proposal Form

(3-5 pages, single spaced, font size no smaller than 11 point)

1. Check which category your project will primarily address (we anticipate that some projects will have elements of more than one category):
 #1: Build on and expand large-scale strategies already in place
 #2: Implement strategies for large-scale efforts that have been planned and/or piloted
 #3: State policy and system change efforts

Describe how significant the need is to address this priority(s) to your state, locale, region?

2. Indicate how the proposed work relates to the applicant organization's mission.
3. Define the target population(s) of adults the project will address (age and other demographic factors, amount of college credits characterized by target groups, number you expect to serve).
4. Check which of the following best describe the geographic scope of the proposed work. Estimate the scale if this project is proposing to serve a specified number of returning adults.

Geographic scope:

- National
 Interstate (multiple states)
 State-level, large-scale sections of a state
 Other: _____

Program scale:

5. Specify the intended outcome(s) of the proposed work in terms of increased attainment of degrees and/or certificates by adults with some college. In addition, describe key intermediate outcomes that are expected to lead to greater adult degree/certificate attainment.
6. Describe how this work will achieve the intended outcomes (key activities that are planned).

- 7. Describe the major approach or design elements by which the work will be evaluated both formatively and in terms of outcomes and impact.**

- 8. Describe the leadership expertise and any special qualifications the applicant will bring to this effort. Indicate what other organizations are involved, if any, and how they will contribute to the work. Describe how other existing work on the issue will be leveraged to advance this agenda.**

- 9. Indicate the estimated cost of the proposed effort. What amount do you expect to be seeking from Lumina Foundation and for what period of time? What resources do you expect your organization, and/or other funders or organizations to provide?**

Lumina Foundation for Education Pre-Proposal Cover Sheet

Submission Date:

Name of Fiscal Agent (and acronym, if commonly used):

Organization Mailing Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

Name of Applicant Organization:

Organization Mailing Address:

Telephone:

Fax:

Organization IRS-Issued Employer Identification Number (EIN) or if state agency, verification of governmental unit status via letter of status:

Web Site:

Brief Mission Statement of Organization:

Purpose Statement of Proposed Project (one sentence):

Estimated Total Project Cost:

Total Amount Requested from Lumina Foundation:

Proposed Duration of Grant (in months):

Project Director Name and Title:

Address (if different from above):

Telephone (if different from above):

Fax (if different from above):

Email:

Has your organization ever received support from Lumina Foundation? Yes No

Is this a request to continue a project supported by the Foundation? (If yes, please include the grant ID number.) Yes (grant ID) No

Please note that Lumina Foundation for Education does not make grants to (a.) supporting organizations controlled by disqualified persons to Lumina, or (b.) Type III supporting organizations that are not functionally integrated Type III supporting organizations (as such terms are defined in the Internal Revenue Code).