

HEQCO 14/15-RFP-020 RESPONSE TEMPLATE

RFP Number:	14/15-RFP-020
RFP Title:	HEQCO Learning Outcomes Assessment Consortium Expansion (Universities and Colleges)
Proposed Budget Range of RFP:	<i>To be completed by applicant</i>
Issue Date of RFP:	March 3, 2015
Deadline for Questions or Clarifications to RFP:	March 27, 2015, 5:00 PM EDT
Proposal Submission Deadline/Time:	April 24, 2015, 5:00 PM EDT
HEQCO Contact for Enquiries Regarding RFP:	rfp@heqco.ca
Title of Proposed Project:	<i>To be completed by applicant</i>
Description of Proposed Project:	<i>To be completed by applicant</i>

CONTACT INFORMATION:	
Organization/Company/Institution:	
Primary Contact – Name and Title:	
Primary Contact – Mailing Address:	
Primary Contact – Phone Number:	Email:
Name(s)/Title(s)/Contact Information of Project Co-Leads: (if applicable)	

SECTION A – ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

A.1 About HEQCO

The Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) is an independent agency of the Government of Ontario that conducts research and provides objective advice to government to improve the accessibility, quality and accountability of Ontario’s public colleges and universities. HEQCO employs a multifaceted research approach to inform the implementation of meaningful policies that improve postsecondary education in Ontario, Canada and around the world.

A. 2 Description of Assignment

Defining what students should know and be able to do upon completion of their postsecondary programs of study, and constructing reliable and valid methods for measuring these desired learning outcomes are two of the most significant challenges in PSE today. HEQCO has conducted work on these issues for the past four years.

Three years ago, as part of its focus on learning outcomes assessment, HEQCO created a [Learning Outcome Assessment Consortium \(LOAC\)](#). Institutions that are part of the consortium are developing and piloting tools and techniques that assess students' [higher-order cognitive skills](#), such as critical thinking and communication. While current members of LOAC continue to develop their assessment tools and techniques, this RFP is a call for a second round of applications from colleges and universities that wish to join and contribute to the consortium.

Background

Different strategies have been used in different jurisdictions to assess learning outcomes. In 2006 the OECD initiated the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO) study to determine the feasibility of measuring learning outcomes in different countries. Many countries, including the United States, are also engaged in 'Tuning' projects that work with faculty to articulate learning outcomes in specific disciplines, groupings of disciplines or degrees. There has also been considerable work done to design tests, like the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), that seek to measure specific learning outcomes.

Over the last four years, HEQCO has supported a host of projects to explore the feasibility, challenges and constraints of incorporating better measurement of learning outcomes into Ontario's PSE system. These projects include: creating a Learning Outcomes Assessment Practitioner's Handbook; conducting an environmental scan and review of the literature on the shift to competency-based education; leading the Ontario involvement in the civil engineering strand of AHELO; working with Ontario college and university faculty to articulate learning outcomes in the physical sciences, social sciences, and life and health sciences sectors; pilot projects examining the feasibility of using the Collegiate Learning Assessment tool; and the evaluation of a host of innovative interventions to promote better and more effective learning in large classes or through the use of technology.

In response to the need for more reliable and valid methods of assessing students' achievement of learning outcomes, HEQCO created in December 2012 a consortium of [six postsecondary institutions](#) that were prepared to commit themselves to the task of assessing higher-order cognitive skills such as critical thinking and communication. Institutions participating in the consortium are developing and piloting different techniques to measure student competencies and skills, ranging from ePortfolios to the development of analytic rubrics, and then testing whether these techniques are valid, reliable and ultimately scalable to the institution level.

The purpose of this RFP is to select additional institutions to join the Learning Outcomes Assessment Consortium (LOAC) to further the discussion about developing and implementing learning outcomes assessments. Specifically, we seek institutions that are prepared to:

1. Commit to a multi-year project developing, validating and implementing assessment tools to measure higher-order cognitive skills in their institutions;
2. Commit to sharing best practices with other members of the consortium and to the broader community through a yearly deliverable; and
3. Participate actively in various knowledge mobilization strategies, such as presenting at conferences, participating on webinars or writing blog posts, to share their approaches and learnings with other members of the consortium, as well as the broader postsecondary community.

We do not expect all member institutions of the consortium to approach learning outcome measurement and implementation in the same way. In fact, we believe that a diversity of approaches

will serve the sector best. We appreciate that institutions may choose to develop and refine their assessment tools when working with specific populations of students. However, to be successful in this competition, institutions are expected to commit to using their assessment tools with the widest possible set of students in their institution. Institutions will also be expected to have a senior administrator sign off on these commitments and to designate an appropriate high-level administrator as the person responsible for this initiative and as the liaison to the consortium and HEQCO for this project.

In addition, institutions wishing to be considered for this RFP are asked to:

1. Describe their intended approach for the development and implementation of learning outcomes assessments. This description should include: What higher-order cognitive skills will you measure (Do you have your own list? Will you use skill sets developed by others, such as HEQCO's Tuning project, LEAP, etc.)? Which student populations do you intend to use initially to develop your assessment tools? What is your time frame for the development and testing of your assessment tool and when will this tool be extended institution-wide? (HEQCO would be expecting no more than a three-year period from the initiation of the project).
2. Describe the dissemination strategy that they plan to use to share the results of their research. Please be as specific as possible, listing the avenues you will use, the communities you hope to target and the impact you hope your research will have. As a government agency, HEQCO supports research that will impact discussions of Ontario's policy priorities or business/educational practices within a range of different communities, including policy makers, academia and the public.
3. Identify their real and in-kind contribution to this project, both of which are expected. The demonstrated approval and support of the institution's senior administrators is essential to ensuring the ongoing health and productivity of the consortium.

HEQCO will provide successful institutions with an immediate seed grant of \$10,000 for this project. In successive years, we are also prepared to provide additional funding based on the budget submitted by the institution in their application. HEQCO will also support and cover all administrative and meeting costs for the consortium. It is also expected that institutions provide a yearly progress report summarizing their work and lessons learned that will be disseminated within the broader community.

A. 3 Deliverables

RESEARCH PROPOSAL:	
<p>1) METHODOLOGY – PART A:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indicate which higher-order cognitive skill(s) you will assess and describe the methodology for <i>developing</i> a learning outcomes assessment tool(s). Explain your choices. <p>(10 POINTS)</p>	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 500-1,000</p>
<p>2) METHODOLOGY – PART B:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indicate your proposed methodology for <i>validating</i> your learning outcomes assessment tool(s). Explain your choices.Indicate:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Your proposed pilot area, including the academic program(s), and provide an explanation for your choice;Target sample size;How the assessment will be administeredHow you will work with facultyIndicate what data or information you will collect and the data analysis procedures you will use to validate your assessment tool. Explain your choices. <p>(10 POINTS)</p>	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 500-1,000</p>
<p>3) METHODOLOGY – PART C:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indicate your proposed methodology for <i>implementing</i>	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 250-500</p>

<p>your learning outcomes assessment tool(s). Explain your choices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate the proposed process for expanding learning outcomes and/or methods to the whole institution. <p>(5 POINTS)</p>	
<p>4) Knowledge Mobilization Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your knowledge mobilization strategies within the consortium and the broader postsecondary community, such as, but not limited to, webinars, blog posts and conference presentations <p>(5 POINTS)</p>	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 250-500</p>
<p>5) RESEARCH BUDGET:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate how the immediate seed grant of \$10,000 will be used. • Indicate additional funding requirements in subsequent years. • Indicate real and in-kind contributions from the institution, which should also be provided in the <i>Research Budget</i> section (Pages 6-7). <p>(20 POINTS)</p>	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 500-1,000</p>
<p>6) PRICING EVALUATION:</p> <p>Refer to the pricing evaluation formula in the RFP instructions for an explanation of how points are calculated.</p> <p>(10 POINTS)</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY HEQCO CONTRACTS CONSULTANT</p>

<p>7) RFP TOPIC EXPERIENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how the academic training, qualifications and past experience of the research team are relevant to the research topic of this RFP. • Include CVs of research team members as an addendum. <p>(10 POINTS)</p>	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 300-600</p>						
<p>8) CHALLENGES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and address how you will resolve any potential challenges in terms of your research approach. • Consider challenges such as research ethics board delays, challenges associated with creating an assessment tool, lack of faculty engagement and recruitment challenges. <p>(10 POINTS)</p>	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 300-600</p>						
<p>9) PROJECT MANAGEMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline your plan for ongoing communication and collaboration between the research team, HEQCO and any other partners or collaborators. • Identify the senior administration project lead/HEQCO liaison. • In the <i>Milestones</i> section, include due dates, descriptions and payment amounts for your project deliverables. Ensure that the timelines, milestones and planned 	<p>PROPONENT TO RESPOND</p> <p>SUGGESTED # OF WORDS: 250-500</p> <p>MILESTONES:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="664 1820 1534 1959"> <tr> <td>Due Date</td> <td>Deliverable Description</td> <td>\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Due Date</td> <td>Deliverable Description</td> <td>\$</td> </tr> </table>	Due Date	Deliverable Description	\$	Due Date	Deliverable Description	\$
Due Date	Deliverable Description	\$					
Due Date	Deliverable Description	\$					

<p>overall approach are realistic for this research project.</p> <p>(10 POINTS)</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="665 105 847 172">Due Date</td> <td data-bbox="847 105 1247 172">FINAL REPORT</td> <td data-bbox="1247 105 1529 172">\$</td> </tr> </table>	Due Date	FINAL REPORT	\$
Due Date	FINAL REPORT	\$		
<p>10) QUALITY OF RESPONSE:</p> <p><i>Your proposal will be evaluated against the following criteria:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is it clear that the proponents have understood the objective of the original RFP and responded accordingly? Is the proposal written in a way that is easy to comprehend and evaluate? <p>(10 POINTS)</p>	<p>TO BE COMPLETED BY HEQCO EVALUATOR</p>			

RESEARCH BUDGET:

Please include ALL anticipated costs for the project, including in-kind* and other costs (*in italics and without bold*) for which HEQCO funding is not being requested.

* We recommend, where applicable, that proposals include estimates of the per day/semester costs for faculty/senior administrators that are providing ‘in-kind’ support to the research project, as well as any other contributions being made to the research by your institution. This will allow us to have a better sense of the ‘true cost’ of the overall research project and the contribution that is being made by the college/university and their personnel.

PERSONNEL:				
Names of Proposed Team Members <i>(insert additional rows if necessary)</i>	Title/Position	# of Days/ Semesters	Per Day/ Semester Rate	Total: # x Rate
			\$	\$
			\$	\$
			\$	\$
Personnel Costs Subtotal				\$

DIRECT COSTS:	
Detailed Description of Direct Costs (if applicable) <i>(insert additional rows if necessary)</i>	Cost
	\$
	\$
	\$
Direct Costs Subtotal	\$

TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION:	
Detailed Description of Travel and Accommodation (if applicable) <i>(insert additional rows if necessary)</i>	Cost
	\$
	\$
	\$
Travel and Accommodation Subtotal	\$

OVERHEAD:		
A detailed description of what constitutes overhead must be provided (if applicable) <i>(insert additional rows if necessary)</i>	Cost	10% of Cost
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
	\$	\$
Overhead Subtotal	\$	\$

FUNDING:	
Personnel Costs Subtotal	\$
Direct Costs Subtotal (if applicable)	\$
Travel and Accommodation Subtotal (if applicable)	\$
10% of Overhead Total (if applicable)	\$
Firm Fixed Price (HEQCO Funding)	\$
HST (13%) (if applicable)	\$
Total HEQCO Funding (Firm Fixed Price + HST)	\$
In Kind Contribution	\$

Total Project Cost (Total HEQCO Funding + In Kind)	\$
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REFERENCES: PAST FUNDED RESEARCH WITH HEQCO (IF APPLICABLE) <i>(insert additional rows if necessary)</i>			
HEQCO Project Lead:		HEQCO Contract #:	
HEQCO Project Name:			
HEQCO Project Lead:		HEQCO Contract #:	
HEQCO Project Name:			
HEQCO Project Lead:		HEQCO Contract #:	
HEQCO Project Name:			

REFERENCES: RELEVANT RESEARCH/EXPERIENCE (PROVIDE A MINIMUM OF TWO) <i>(insert additional rows if necessary)</i>			
Contact Name, Title and Organization:			
Contact Telephone #:		Email:	
Project Name: (if applicable)			
What/whom will reference be provided for? <small>i.e., Individual/Organization/Project</small>			
Contact Name, Title and Organization:			
Contact Telephone #:		Email:	
Project Name: (if applicable)			
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Contact Name, Title and Organization:			
Contact Telephone #:		Email:	
Project Name: (if applicable)			
What/whom will reference be provided for? i.e., Individual/Organization/Project			

SIGNATURES:	
Conflict of Interest: Affirmation that neither the vendor nor the staff have any real or perceived conflict of interest in performing the assignment.	<hr/> Signature of Principal Investigator or Official Representative of Vendor Institution/Organization
Vendor's Signature of Offer: Affirmation by an individual with the authority to bind the 'supplier' institution/organization	<hr/> Signature of Official Representative of Vendor Institution/Organization
	<hr/> Name, Title and Legal Name of Vendor Institution/Organization