

Longer-Term SAHE Projects: Templates, Forms and Features

Query – 05.18.2009

Query:

In the past, Washington State has issued relatively short term SAHE grants, but now we are moving to longer term SAHE grants (3 years) so that we can evaluate projects better.

Would any states experienced with long-term grants be willing to share:

- 1) **Templates** for interim and final project reports.
- 2) **Forms** (if any) for projects to request annual renewal of a multi-year project (e.g. an application for continuation of funding).
- 3) Also, are any **features** of your project monitoring protocols that explicitly address the long term nature of projects (i.e. do you look for different things during a site visit in the second year of a third year project than you do during the first year?)

From: Washington

Responses:

Missouri	<p>We have allowed multi-year projects (up to 3 years) for some time now and have found them to quite successful in improving teacher and student content knowledge. Also it allows the LEAs to developed a strong relationship with the colleges/universities.I have attached the final report guidelines for our cycle ending in June 09; there are special instructions for multi-year projects at the top.</p> <p>As for the continuation for each new year of the project, we rely on information from our evaluators and the final report, in the original contract (sample attached) it states that satisfactory progress toward project goals is required for renewal. Regarding the evaluation during the second and third year, you may want to look on our evaluators website http://www.pdeval.missouri.edu/. My visits are essentially the same regardless of the year of the project, although some of the questions that I ask the teachers will be different depending on whether a project is brand new or wrapping up after three years.</p>
Maryland	<p>Maryland has tried 18 month, 24 month and 36 month grant terms. We have had more problems with the 36 month grants than other terms. Problem areas include project staff turnover, increased requests for budget revisions and recruiting and retention of cohorts. Most of our grantee gave up trying to retain one cohort for the duration and run 2-3 cohorts like two back to back 18 month grants.</p> <p>We require two interim (end of year 1 & 2) and one final report for the three year grants. The interim report form is the same for both years but the year two report is cumulative. See attached. At present we use the attached site visit protocol. No specific adaptations have been made for three year grant programs but the conversation can be couched based on the prior year visit.</p> <p>We've decided that the 18 month grant with the possibility of a 6 month no-cost extension works best. We do not guarantee continued funding for any project. Each funding round is competitive and project directors have to respond to the specs in the applicable RFA. Many IHEs do apply for continuing funds and some do receive them</p>

	<p>but it is dependent upon fit with the RFA and their competitiveness of the applicant pool.</p> <p>I'd be interested in hearing more about what you are thinking in terms of evaluation, Mark. Some of our grantees have requested special training in program evaluation and assessment for federally funded programs. We cover this topic in the technical assistance workshops but they seem to want more depth. A colleague and I have been giving some thought to developing a ½ to ¾ day workshop on the topic.</p>
Alabama	<p>We give preference to long-term projects, most of which are longer than three years. However, we require all projects to apply each year even if designed for more than one year. Doing so provides for changes in funding, or project success in meeting objectives, or other situations without the obligation to continue support for a long-term project that may not be reasonable or possible. This also gives flexibility to accept worthwhile new projects each year <i>after</i> grants for continuing projects have been determined. It also simplifies the administration of applications since all applicants use the same form. The difference is in the weight given to applications for continuing projects.</p> <p>[ref: ACHE NCLB RFP available at http://www.ache.alabama.gov/NCLB/Index.htm]</p>
South Carolina	<p>Elizabeth and Jim, thank you for this response. We have traditionally funded multi-year projects, but have not made the project directors actually "apply" again each year. We have required the project directors to submit a "continuation request," but it has not gone through the formal review panel. We are considering adjusting the reapplication process in the future and your RFP gave me some great ideas.</p>
Wisconsin	<p>Most of Wisconsin's projects are funded for 2 or 3 years. In the original proposal, the applicant identifies measurable objectives that will be reached in the first six months of the project. Projects are funded in March, and continuation requests must be received in October. I have attached a part of the email that I send to continuing projects requesting information for the next year's funding.</p> <p>The forms required are the standard original forms, i.e. Cover page, Assurances statements, Budget, 50% special rule, and final report. During site visits I am always looking for progress towards the year's objectives. All of the applicant information and my report from a project visit is presented to the review committee. Very seldom do they recommend not continuing a project.</p> <p>For record keeping, I number the proposals with six digits. The first two digits are the year the first proposal was received, the second two digits are for file ordering, and the last two indicate whether the project is in its first, second or third year. e.g. Project number 09-1531 is a proposal that is funded for year one, when it is funded for year two it will be numbered 09-1532, and it will be 09-1533 for year three.</p>
Illinois	<p>In Illinois we fund long term projects, but project directors must renew each year and submit an interim evaluation report to show progress made towards their goals throughout the year. Multi-year projects are not automatically renewed. We have found site visits to be invaluable to get a good feel for how well a project is performing its goals. Each year in the fall we bring all the projects directors together for an annual symposium. The theme for the symposium last year was "Effective Professional Development Resulting in Long-Term Student Achievement". We introduced <i>Logic Modeling</i> at the symposium to emphasize the importance of</p>

outcomes and evaluation. Since all projects are long term, we feel it is critical to offer projects support throughout the year.

I am attaching a link to all the materials provided to Illinois partnerships prior to the Fall 2008 symposium. If you are interested in *Logic Modeling*, be sure to view the PowerPoint titled "Theory of Change and Logic Modeling" and the supporting exploratory papers.

<http://www.ibhe.org/Grants/NCLBProfile/2008/symposium/default.htm>

Here is a link to our renewal application which includes a copy of the interim evaluation report. We collect all this information via an online system.

<http://www.ibhe.org/Grants/RFP/FY2009/NCLB/RENEWALApplication.pdf>

We have also hired some excellent consultants with experience in evaluation and logic modeling. They also assist with the site visits.