



# Advancing Innovation in Adult Education

Adult education programs assist adult learners in developing their foundational knowledge and skills, earning secondary credentials, and transitioning to further education and employment. To enhance adult education programs' capacity to support learners' success, the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) is funding a five-year project to identify and disseminate innovative practices in adult education that lead to improved learner outcomes.

## What are innovative adult education practices?

Adult education practices are instructional or supportive activities that facilitate learners' knowledge and skill development, secondary credential attainment, postsecondary credential attainment, and/or employment.

**Innovative** adult education practices are **new** or **significantly improved**:

- ▶ **Products** (e.g., written curriculum, instructional materials)
- ▶ **Services** (e.g., provide college and career advising, provide student supports)
- ▶ **Processes** (e.g., online learning) or **way of organizing services** (e.g., concurrent enrollment)

The new or significantly improved practices should result in outcomes for adult learners.

## Examples of innovative approaches for delivering adult education instruction are:

- ▶ Competency-based instruction
- ▶ Concurrent enrollment in adult education and credit-bearing postsecondary courses
- ▶ Integrated education and training (IET)
- ▶ Integrated English literacy and civics education in combination with IET (IELCE)
- ▶ Strategies for working with adults with learning disabilities or difficulties
- ▶ Use of learning in context
- ▶ Use of technology to increase access to, quality of, and amount of instruction
- ▶ Work-based learning



## How can my program submit an innovative practice to be considered?

An application is available on the project webpage for adult education programs to complete. Local programs must receive funding from Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and be able to provide at least one year of data on learner outcomes. To prepare for the application process, consider the following questions to determine whether an adult education program may have an innovative practice.

### *Questions to Determine Whether an Adult Education Practice is Innovative*

- ▶ Does the practice involve one of the instructional delivery approaches listed in the box above OR an approach that has not been used extensively in adult education?
- ▶ Was the practice developed in the past 10 years OR has the practice been substantially refined during this period?
- ▶ Is there evidence that the practice has increased adult learners' skill development, attainment of a secondary credential, participation in postsecondary education, or employment?

Visit the project's webpage at <https://lincs.ed.gov/state-resources/federal-initiatives/advancing-innovation> to access instructions for applying to the project and the downloadable application. The steps in the application process are below.

### The Application Process

#### STEP 1

Use the pre-application checklist to consider if our program practices are innovative.

#### STEP 2

Identify the practice and its measurable outcomes.

#### STEP 3

Work with your state staff contact to obtain a letter of support.

#### STEP 4

Complete and submit our application.

## DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact  
[innovation@lincs.ed.gov](mailto:innovation@lincs.ed.gov)

## What are the next steps after an application is submitted?

The Advancing Innovation project team will notify applicant adult education programs about the results from the team's review of their applications. All applicants will receive feedback on their applications. The project team may ask applicant programs for additional information about the components of their innovative practices and the outcomes from these practices.

## What are the benefits to submitting an application?

Selected adult education practices will be documented in products that programs can use for marketing and other efforts. Information about the practices will be disseminated nationally on LINCS and through other project activities.

The Advancing Innovation project team will provide technical assistance to selected programs to promote an exchange of ideas about innovation in adult education. The project team will also assist the programs in planning the dissemination of their innovative practices and in considering the range of outcomes that can be assessed.