

Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund Frequently Asked Questions

During the 2022 Florida Legislative Session, Senate Bill 2524 created section (s.) 1009.8962, Florida Statutes (F.S.), to establish the Linking Industry to Nursing Education (LINE) Fund, a competitive grant program that provides matching funds, on a dollar-to-dollar basis, to participating Institutions that partner with a health care provider. The 2025 Legislature provided \$24 million in funding for the LINE Fund for the 2025-26 fiscal year in the General Appropriations Act and amended eligible institutions in s. 1009.8962, F.S.

On September 19, 2025, the Florida Department of Education (Department) released the Request for Proposal (RFP). These Frequently Asked Questions are intended to supplement the RFP. Visit www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/funding-opportunities/linefund for more information on the program.

Request for Proposal (RFP)

1. When will the RFP be available?

The RFP was released on September 19, 2025. All required documents for the RFP submission will be available at <https://www.fldoe.org/academics/career-adult-edu/funding-opportunities/linefund/>

2. What are the proposal deadlines?

Institutions intending to apply for the LINE Fund must submit a Notice of Intent-to-Apply form, completed and signed by an authorized institution official, to LINE_Fund@fldoe.org by **October 6, 2025**, no later than 11:59 pm (ET). For consideration of a LINE Fund award, completed proposals must be received between **Wednesday, November 5, 2025**, through **Friday, November 21, 2025**, no later than 11:59 PM (EDT). Institutions that do not submit a proposal to the Department by **November 21, 2025**, will not be considered.

3. How will the Department evaluate each submitted proposal?

In order to have a proposal reviewed, the proposal submission must include all the required forms on the Proposal Review Criteria and Checklist. Institutions must have completed the required components in their entirety (e.g., all narrative sections addressed, all forms included, etc.) for the proposal to be considered complete. Within each Narrative Component are “Criteria.” *These are the bulleted, italicized statements used by proposal reviewers to assess and score each Narrative Component.*

Completed proposals will be reviewed and scored by at least three qualified reviewers representing experienced educational professionals. Using a standard scoring system, based on a 100-point scale, the Program Office will rank proposals

in order from highest to lowest score.

4. How should my institution submit our completed proposal?

Eligible Applicant(s) must upload all proposal documents via the Florida Department of Education ShareFile, **Wednesday, November 5, 2025**, through **Friday, November 21, 2025**, no later than 11:59 pm (EST). Once an institution submits a Notice of Intent-to-Apply, the Office of Grant Management will grant them access to the ShareFile account.

5. How do we determine whether our institution is eligible to apply for the LINE grant?

Eligibility for the LINE grant has been established by statute Rule 6A-10.0352, F.A.C., which includes definitions, proposal criteria, review process, disbursements, and reporting requirements. www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=6A-10.0352

6. The 2025 General Appropriations Act provided LINE funds for the following institutions:

- Florida College System institutions under s. 1000.21(3), F.S.
- School district postsecondary technical career centers under s. 1001.44, F.S.
- Charter technical career centers under s. 1002.34, F.S.
- Independent nonprofit colleges or universities located and chartered in this state and accredited by an agency or association that is recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education to grant baccalaureate degrees.
- Independent schools, colleges, or universities with an accredited program as defined in s. 464.003, F.S., which is located in this state and licensed by the Commission for Independent Education pursuant to s. 1005.31, F.S.
- Institutions that were recipients of the Access to Better Learning and Education (ABLE) Grant Program if such an institution has been located in this state for more than 20 years; offers nursing programs at its Florida campus which include licensed practical nurse (LPN), registered nurse (RN), including associate of science in nursing (ASN) and bachelor of science in nursing (BSN), accelerated BSN, practical nurse bridge to ASN, and practical nurse bridge to BSN; and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.
- Independent for-profit colleges or universities located in and chartered by Florida, accredited by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the database created and maintained by the United States Department of Education, was licensed by the department on or before October 1, 2021, and has Level 6 accreditation from the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

7. Should we include the health care partner's contribution in the DOE101S? No. The DOE101S, Budget Narrative, should only include the LINE Funds being requested. The institution's narrative component should include information on how the institution plans to spend the health care partner's contribution.

8. What is my intuition's "DOE Assigned Project Number" mentioned on the DOE100A and DOE101S?

The Department will assign the "DOE Assigned Project Number" after an institution is chosen to receive LINE Funds. Please leave this field blank when completing your institution's proposal submission.

9. Should we amend the Project Performance Accountability Form (PPAF) before submitting it with our proposal?

No. Please submit the PPAF as it is provided in the RFP. A PDF of the PPAF is also available for download on the LINE Fund website.

10. My institution is an independent nonprofit institution and does not have an "agency grant number." How do we receive an agency grant number?

Independent nonprofit colleges and universities submit their proposal without an agency grant number. For the required documents, please include your institution's name in place of the grant number. If chosen for LINE Funds, the Department will provide information on how to request a permanent agency grant number.

11. The RFP mentions a required general assurances document and risk analysis form. When should we complete these?

Upon the awarding of LINE Funds, the Department will follow up with institutions who are required to complete these documents. These do not have to be completed during the proposal submission process.

12. Where do we find function and object codes for the DOE101S, Budget Narrative?

Function Code – For School Districts Only – Enter the Function Code, as required in the Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools Manual that best classifies the overall purpose or objective of the goods or services budgeted.

Object Code – Enter the Object Code that best classifies the goods or services budgeted.

- School Districts - Use the three-digit Object Code as required in the Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools Manual;
- Public Colleges and Universities - Use the first three digits of the Object Codes listed in the Florida Accounting Information Resource Manual;
- Non-public entities – Use the Object Codes that are used in the respective

entity's/institution's chart of accounts.

13. Does the person who signs the DOE101S, Project Application (authorized officer) need to be the same individual who signed the Notice of Intent-to-Apply?

No. The signatures should be of the institution head or another authorized person on behalf of the institution. Both forms do not have to be signed by the same individuals so long as the signatures on all forms are from authorized officers.

Health Care Partner(s)

Can an institution apply with more than one health care partner?

Yes. Applicants are allowed to have more than one health care partner when applying for the LINE Fund. If an applicant has more than one health care partner, the applicant should submit one proposal with all health care partners included with the total funds contributed detailed. Additionally, the applicant should submit a completed Health Care Partner Certification Form for each health care provider.

14. Is there a maximum number of health care partners allowed?

No.

15. How is the "health care partner's contribution" defined?

For purposes of the LINE Fund, "health care partner's contribution" means the dollars provided by an eligible health care partner to an eligible postsecondary institution.

16. My institution has a direct support organization (DSO). Can our health care partner's contribution be made to our DSO?

The health care partner's contribution can be made to either the institution or DSO.

17. Can my health care partner contribution be made from the health care provider's direct support organization (DSO)?

Yes, as long as there is legal documentation showing the DSO serves a health care partner defined in s. 768.38(2), F.S.

18. Does the health care partner's monetary contribution have to be spent on an "eligible purpose"?

Yes.

19. My institution received a monetary contribution from a health care partner for our nursing program(s). Can this be considered as the contribution for our proposal?

If the health care partner's contribution was received by the institution on or after **July 1, 2025**, and the health care partner completed the Health Care Partner

Certification Form (Attachment F) indicating the funds are to be used for an “eligible purpose” as outlined in Rule 6A-10.0352, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C), then it can be included in the institution’s proposal. A contribution received before July 1, 2025, or that does not meet the criteria for “eligible purpose” is not allowable.

20. Does my institution have to receive the health care partner’s contribution by the time we submit our proposal?

No. Applicants who are selected to receive LINE Funds must be in receipt of the health care partner’s contribution in order to be disbursed LINE program funds.

21. What documentation is required to show the institution received the health care partner’s contribution?

Acceptable documentation includes financial statements, bank statements, budget reports, or bank letters that show the cash transaction(s).

22. My institution received a pledge for funding from an eligible health care provider before July 1, 2025, however, the actual funding was awarded and received after July 1, 2025. Can these funds be counted as the health care partner’s contribution?

If the health care partner’s contribution was received by the institution on or after **July 1, 2025**, and the health care partner completed the Health Care Partner Certification Form (Attachment F) indicating the funds are to be used for an “eligible purpose”, as outlined in Rule 6A-10.0352, F.A.C., then it can be included in the institution’s proposal. A contribution received before July 1, 2025, or that does not meet the criteria for “eligible purpose” is not allowable. Rule 6A- 10.0352, F.A.C., was amended to incorporate the changes set forth in HB 1255 (2025). The amendment will expand the requirements for the LINE fund so that eligible institutions outlined in s.1009.521, F.S., may utilize the funds.

23. My institution’s health care partner changed their pledged contribution after we submitted our institution’s Notice of Intent-to-Apply form. Is it allowable for our proposal to list a different contribution amount than what was listed on the Notice of Intent-to-Apply form?

Yes.

24. How do we determine if our health care partner meets the requirements for the LINE Fund?

The health care partner must be located and licensed to operate in the state of Florida, make a monetary contribution to the postsecondary institution and must meet these requirements: Pursuant to s. 768.38(2), F.S., a “health care provider” is defined as:

- A provider as defined in s. 408.803, F.S.
- A clinical laboratory providing services in this state or services to health care

providers in this state, if the clinical laboratory is certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services under the federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments and the federal rules adopted thereunder.

- A federally qualified health center as defined in 42 U.S.C. s. 1396d(l)(2)(B), as that definition exists on the effective date of this act.
- A health care practitioner as defined in s. 456.001, F.S.
- A health care professional licensed under part IV of chapter 468.
- A home health aide as defined in s. 400.462(15), F.S.
- A provider licensed under chapter 394 or chapter 397 and its clinical and nonclinical staff providing inpatient or outpatient services.
- A continuing care facility licensed under chapter 651.
- A pharmacy permitted under chapter 465.

25. My institution is still in discussion with two different health care partners. If we name one partner in our Notice of Intent-to-Apply, is it allowable if it changes before our proposal submission?

Yes.

Allowable Expenses

26. What are allowable expenses?

Funds may be used to award scholarships to students who are residents of the state, recruit additional faculty, purchase equipment, and support simulation centers to advance high-quality nursing education programs throughout the state.

27. Are there any eligibility requirements for student scholarships?

To receive a scholarship from an institution's awarded LINE Funds, a student must be a resident for tuition purposes pursuant to s. 1009.21, F.S., and be enrolled in a nursing education program.

28. Can the health care partner's contribution, and/or awarded LINE Funds, be used to support an endowment?

Awarded LINE funds may not be applied toward an endowment. Institutions may request state matching funds for a health care contribution in the form of an endowment that supports nursing education programs. In applying for LINE matching funds, institutions are expected to demonstrate through the RFP: The health care partner's contribution (principal) toward the endowment was made or will be made during the grant period (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026);

- The endowment and matching dollars are planned to be used for an eligible purpose that includes "student scholarships, recruitment of additional faculty, equipment, and simulation centers;"
- The endowment and matching dollars are planned to be used to increase student enrollment and program completion;

- The endowment and matching dollars are planned to be used to expand the institution's nursing education programs to meet local, regional, or state workforce demands; and All other requirements from statute, rule, and the RFP.

Institutions submitting requests for endowments are strongly encouraged to provide as much detail as possible about the terms of the endowment. The proposal narrative section two, Health Care Partnership, is the appropriate place to document these terms. Each institution with an approved proposal shall notify the Department upon receipt of the health care partner-provided funds; in this case, the endowment principal, or gift. Acceptable documentation includes financial statements, bank statements, budget reports, or bank letters that show the cash transaction(s).

29. If we have a new nursing program beginning during the funding period, are we able to include it in our proposal?

New programs may not be used to determine eligibility for the LINE Fund. However, institutions that qualify based on another existing nursing program may choose to use LINE Funds to support any nursing program, including new ones, so long as it is for an eligible purpose.

To be eligible to apply, institutions must present data that demonstrate that a performance metric has been met for at least one eligible, active program. All eligible applicants must meet performance metrics set forth in s. 1009.8962, F.S.

- For a CNA program, data supporting a completion rate of at least 70 percent for the prior year.
- For an LPN, A.S. in nursing, and B.S. in nursing program, data supporting a first-time passage rate on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Licensing Examination of at least 75 percent for the prior year based on a minimum of 10 testing participants.
- SB 7016 (2024) amended s. 1009.8962, F.S., to expand the requirements for the LINE fund so that eligible postsecondary institutions licensed by the Commission for Independent Education (CIE) may utilize the funds.

30. May funds be used to cover administrative services?

Yes. Administrative services for program/grant management, personnel consulting, and associated services, as well as access to technology, resources, and facilities is allowable. All administrative costs must be associated with the management of the LINE Fund and may not exceed five percent (5%) of the applicant's total award. Applicants must detail administrative services in the proposal's DOE 101S, Budget Narrative using appropriate and individual object codes; a single listing of "administrative services" is not permissible.

31. Are we allowed to claim eligible expenses expended during the fall 2025

term, such as scholarships awarded and personnel expenses?

Pre-award costs are authorized for any allowable expenditure incurred on or after July 1, 2025. As long as the expenses are allowable, as outlined in Rule 6A-10.0352, F.A.C., they can be included in your institution's proposal and budget narrative.

32. How will the LINE grant fund be distributed to approved institutions?

The LINE funds are distributed via wire transfer

33. Is it allowable for the matching funds from the health care partner to be used for salaries of existing nursing faculty, or do they need to be allocated for new faculty hired during this grant period?

The LINE Fund statute (s. 1009.8962, F.S.) and rule (6A-10.0352, F.A.C.) specify that funds can be spent on "student scholarships, recruitment of additional faculty, equipment, and simulation centers." In determining how to spend the funds, institutions should be mindful of costs that are recurring such as faculty salaries. The LINE Funding appropriation is not guaranteed beyond this award period.

Budget and Finance

34. What is the budget period for the LINE Fund?

The budget period for the LINE Fund is July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026.

35. Does the health care partner's monetary contribution have to be spent by the end of the grant period? (Please also refer to Question 23)

Yes. All funds – the health care partner's contribution and the funds provided by the LINE Fund – must be spent by June 30, 2026.

36. Can we include funds our health care partner has committed to our institution beyond June 30, 2026, to be matched?

No, not for this award period.

37. Is there a maximum amount of LINE Funds an institution can request?

No.

38. My institution's health care partner would like to contribute an in-kind match, such as a physical space, equipment or staff time. Is this allowable?

No. The health care partner's contribution must be monetary in order to qualify for the match.

39. Is an institution required to have the health care partner monetary contribution at the time of proposal submission?

No. If the health care partner's monetary contribution has not yet been received, a pledge signed by the health care partner-- will be required with the proposal materials. Applicants who have not received the health care partner's contribution may be chosen to receive LINE Funds; however, funds will not be disbursed to the

applicant until documentation is submitted to the Department showing the receipt of the health care partner's contribution.

40. Can we add a partner after the NOI is submitted?

Yes, all health care partner monetary contributions are to be included in the LINE application.

41. What if the proposals submitted exceed the \$44.5 million appropriation? The Department will award grant funding on a dollar-to-dollar basis, subject to available funds, to eligible institutions based on the outcome of the proposal review process. The Department will notify institutions of the approved proposals and award amounts.

42. In the event the proposals submitted exceed the \$44.5 million appropriation and an institution's awarded LINE Funds are less than the amount requested, will the health care partner be allowed to reduce their pledge to the amount to reflect the awarded LINE Funds?

Yes. Should the appropriation be insufficient to fund all proposals that meet the requirements and an institution's awarded LINE Funds are less than requested, health care partners will be notified and may amend their pledged contribution if they so choose. The Department will work with the institution to amend the submitted budget narrative to account for the total funds awarded.

43. If funding from the health care partner and awarded funds are received in the spring of 2026, must we spend all funds and receive all equipment/simulation items by June 30, 2026?

If awarded LINE Funds, the last date for incurring all expenditures and issuing purchase orders will be June 30, 2026. Institutions are allowed an amount of time, roughly 45 days--to submit final disbursement reports and liquidate all obligations. If awarded LINE Funds, institutions will be made aware of all timelines.

44. If selected, when will institutions be notified about their LINE Fund proposal submission?

The Department aims to distribute award letters as soon as possible after the proposal submission deadline.

45. Will a no-cost extension be provided as an option to awarded institutions to allow funds to be spent after June 30, 2026?

At this time, institutions awarded LINE Funds are advised to plan to spend all funds by the end of the grant period.

Other

46. Whom should an institution contact with questions about the LINE Fund?

All questions regarding the LINE Fund should be sent to LINE_Fund@fldoe.org.

47. What are the reporting requirements for institutions receiving LINE Funds?

Quarterly, institutions that have been awarded LINE funds must report to the Department the amount and use of funds, as outlined in the proposal, expended in the prior three months. The Department will release guidelines for institutions to securely transmit electronic files, no later than 30 days before the submission deadline. The submission deadlines for the quarterly reports may be found in the LINE Fund RFP under "Reporting Outcomes. Annually, by February 1, institutions that have been awarded LINE funds in the previous fiscal year must report to the Department all information required by s. 1009.8962(9)(b), F.S. No later than thirty (30) days before the submission deadline, the Department will release guidelines for institutions to transmit an electronic file to meet this requirement.