

60x30TX



Texas Higher Education
Coordinating Board

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

**Emergency and Trauma Care Education
Partnership Program**

2022-2023

Graduate Nursing Education

25149

NOTICE OF INTENT DEADLINE: 11:59 p.m. CDT, September 14, 2021

THECB INVITATION TO SUBMIT APPLICATION: September 24, 2021

INQUIRY DEADLINE: 11:59 p.m. CDT, October 7, 2021

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 11:59 p.m. CDT, October 14, 2021

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1. OVERVIEW OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

1.1 PROGRAM TITLE

Emergency and Trauma Care Education Partnership Program-Nursing Program (ETEP Nursing Program)

1.2 SYNOPSIS OF PROGRAM

In 2011, the 82nd Texas Legislature created the Emergency and Trauma Care Education Partnership Program (ETEP) to address the state's need for physicians and registered nurses with training in emergency and trauma care. ETEP provides funding support for partnerships between hospitals and graduate professional nursing programs (as defined in Appendix A, RFA Definitions) to increase the education and training experiences in emergency and trauma care for registered nurses pursuing graduate-level education. The program provides similar support for partnerships between hospitals and graduate medical education programs in emergency and trauma care to increase training opportunities in the medical specialty/subspecialty areas of emergency medicine and surgical critical care.

This Request for Applications (RFA) is to support partnerships between hospitals and graduate professional nursing programs in emergency and trauma care (hereinafter referred to as "ETEP Nursing Program"). The THECB issues a separate RFA relating to support for partnerships between hospitals and graduate medical education programs in emergency and trauma care.

1.3 PROGRAM AUTHORITY

The statutory authority for ETEP is found in Texas Education Code, Sections 61.9801 through 61.9807, Texas Emergency and Trauma Care Education Partnership Program.

1.4 POINT OF CONTACT

All inquiries and communications concerning this RFA shall be directed **in writing** via email to:

Fu-An Lin, Ph.D., Program Director
Academic and Health Affairs
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Email: ETEP@highered.texas.gov

1.5 INQUIRIES

All inquiries shall be directed to Point of Contact. Applicants and prospective Applicants must not discuss an Application, including a Notice of Intent to Apply, or this RFA with any other THECB employee unless authorized by the Point of Contact. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the disqualification of an Application. All responses by the THECB must be in writing to be binding. Questions must be submitted via email to ETEP@highered.texas.gov by 11:59 p.m. Central Daylight Time (CDT), October 7, 2021.

Any information deemed by the THECB to be important and of general interest or which modifies requirements of the RFA shall be sent in the form of an Addendum to the RFA (Addendum) to all Applicants that have submitted a Notice of Intent to Apply and/or an Application. All Applicants must acknowledge receipt of all Addenda, if any, to this RFA by an email to ETEP@highered.texas.gov.

2. AWARD SUMMARY

2.1 MAXIMUM NUMBER OF AWARDS ANTICIPATED AND MAXIMUM AWARD AMOUNT ANTICIPATED

For the 2022-2023 biennium, ETEP is funded from a general revenue appropriation of \$3,914,406. The THECB anticipates that up to \$950,000 of the appropriated funds will be available to support ETEP Nursing Programs. Contingent upon the amount of appropriation available, the THECB expects to award up to two grants (Grant Award) under this RFA for the Grant Period (Grant Period).

2.2 GRANT PERIOD

The Grant Period will begin upon the execution of the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA) or on January 1, 2022, whichever is later, and will conclude on December 31, 2023, for a 24-month Grant Period. Awarded Applicants will have contractual obligations that extend beyond the Grant Period.

At the THECB's sole discretion, the second year of funding (January 2023 - December 2023) will be contingent upon the Awarded Applicant using the grant funds according to the grant contract terms and conditions, meeting established benchmarks and deadlines, and producing expected outcomes and results in the first year (January 2022 - December 2022) of the Grant Period.

2.3 SELECTION FOR FUNDING

The funding available to support ETEP Nursing Program Grants in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 and 2023 will be awarded to Applicants selected on a competitive basis. Criteria for evaluation and selection of Applications for Grant Awards are described in Section 7.

2.4 APPLICATION TIMELINE

The application process for this RFA is anticipated to proceed according to the published application timeline. The THECB reserves the right to revise this timeline or any portion of this RFA by publishing an Addendum. A Calendar of Events for the entire Grant Period is in Appendix B.

Dates	Application Steps
September 14, 2021	Notice of Intent (NOI) Deadline
September 24, 2021	THECB Invitation to Submit Application based on NOI
October 7, 2021	Inquiry Deadline
October 14, 2021	Application Deadline
Mid-December 2021	THECB Announcement of Grant Awards

3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

3.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANT

Entities in the following categories and located in the state are eligible to apply for an ETEP Nursing Program Grant Award:

(a) A graduate professional nursing program that

- (1) is an educational program of a public or private institution of higher education that prepares students for a master's or doctoral degree in nursing;

- (2) is accredited at the programmatic level by an agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and/or by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA); and
- (3) prepares students to earn a graduate-level nursing degree with a specialty focus in emergency/trauma care or prepares nurse practitioner students to earn a post-master's certificate in emergency/trauma care.

3.2 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Each ETEP Nursing Program Applicant must include documentation of a partnership that:

- (a) consists of one or more eligible graduate professional nursing programs in the state of Texas and one or more hospitals, as defined in Appendix A;
- (b) uses existing facilities and expertise of the hospitals and graduate professional nursing programs participating in the partnership; and
- (c) certifies an increase of additional nurses in the participating graduate professional nursing programs.

Each eligible Applicant shall name a program director who will be responsible for implementing and overseeing the proposed ETEP Nursing Program and will be the primary recipient of communication from the THECB. The program director shall be a full-time employee in an eligible graduate professional nursing program, preferably a faculty member in a tenured or tenure-track position, at the eligible institution.

3.3 PRIORITY PROJECTS

Applications that meet the Priority Criteria in Section 7.2 will be given priority in the award selection process.

3.4 MAXIMUM NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS PER APPLICANT

An Eligible Applicant may submit a maximum of one (1) Application.

3.5 NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPLY

A Notice of Intent to Apply (NOI) is required. Each potential Applicant shall submit an NOI to the THECB according to the deadline and submission instructions established in this section.

Each Applicant must submit electronically to the THECB a completed NOI on or before **11:59 p.m. CDT, September 14, 2021**. The Applicant will submit an NOI using the form available on the ETEP website: www.highered.texas.gov/ETEP. Only NOIs submitted on the THECB Notice of Intent to Apply Form and received by the established deadline will be accepted. All completed NOI forms must be submitted electronically to ETEP@highered.texas.gov. The email subject line should contain "NOI ETEP Nursing Program."

Applicant is solely responsible for ensuring that Applicant's complete electronic NOI is sent to and received by the THECB on or before the established deadline. Applicant should retain proof of timely NOI submission.

The THECB will confirm receipt of the NOI via email to Applicant within **three (3)** state business days of receipt by the THECB. Applicant must not consider an NOI received by the THECB until Applicant has received an email confirmation from the THECB.

If Applicant has not received an email confirmation from the THECB within three (3) state business days of submission, contact the Point of Contact at ETEP@highered.texas.gov. Applicant may be requested to provide proof of timely submission. THECB staff will verify if the submission was received by the established deadline before confirming acceptance of the submission.

The THECB takes no responsibility for electronic NOIs that are captured, blocked, filtered, quarantined, or otherwise prevented from reaching the proper destination server by any THECB or Applicant antivirus or other security software.

The THECB will respond to all Applicants that submitted an NOI. The THECB will notify the program director at an Applicant via email by September 24, 2021, to indicate if the Applicant may proceed to submit an Application. If an Applicant is not selected to submit an Application, THECB staff will provide Applicant with information explaining the decision. Applications for which an NOI has not been submitted will not be considered for a Grant Award.

4. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

4.1 APPLICATION DEADLINE: 11:59 p.m. CDT, October 14, 2021

Please refer to the ETEP website (www.highered.texas.gov/ETEP) to view and download the ETEP Application Form. Applications to be considered for possible Grant Awards must be:

- completed according to the guidelines and requirements in this RFA;
- submitted, with required Attachments, by an authorized agent of the Applicant institution; and
- submitted via email to ETEP@highered.texas.gov and received by the established deadline.

Late or incomplete Applications will not be accepted. Applications submitted to an address different from ETEP@highered.texas.gov will not be accepted.

The THECB will not accept mailed, hand-delivered, or faxed Applications.

Submission of an Application confers no rights of Applicant to an award or to a subsequent Contract if there is one. The issuance of this RFA does not guarantee that a Contract will ever be awarded. The THECB reserves the right to amend the terms and provisions of the RFA, negotiate with Applicant, add, delete, or modify the Contract and/or the terms of Application submitted, extend the deadline for submission of Application, or withdraw the RFA entirely for any reason solely at the THECB's discretion. An individual Application may be rejected if it fails to meet any requirement of this RFA. The THECB may seek clarification and additional documentation from Applicant at any time, and failure to respond within a reasonable timeframe is cause for rejection of an Application.

4.2 THECB CONFIRMATION OF APPLICATION RECEIPT

The THECB shall not be responsible for Applications that are captured, blocked, filtered, quarantined, or otherwise prevented from reaching the proper destination server by THECB or Applicant antivirus or other security software.

The THECB will confirm Application receipt via email within **three (3)** state business days of receipt by the THECB. If an Applicant does not receive such confirmation from the THECB, contact the Point of Contact at ETEP@highered.texas.gov immediately. Applicant will be required to provide proof of timely submission of the Application. THECB staff will verify if the submission was received by the established deadline before confirming acceptance of the submission.

4.3 COST OF APPLICATION PREPARATION

All costs associated with the preparation and submission of an Application for this RFA are the responsibility of Applicant. These costs shall not be chargeable to the THECB by any successful or unsuccessful Applicant.

4.4 APPLICATION DELIVERY AND LATE APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted by an authorized agent of the Applicant.

Applications shall be considered to be "on time" if they are received on or before the date and time of established deadlines. Applicant shall be solely responsible for ensuring that Application is received by the THECB prior to the deadlines outlined in Section 4. The THECB shall not be responsible for failure of electrical or mechanical equipment, operator error, or inability of an electronic delivery agent to deliver an Application prior to the deadline. Failure to respond in a timely manner to this RFA shall result in Applicant losing the opportunity to receive a Grant under this program. A late Application, regardless of circumstances, shall not be evaluated or considered for award.

5. PROGRAM BACKGROUND

5.1 DETAILED PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Emergency and Trauma Care Education Partnership Program (ETEP) was created by the 82nd Texas Legislature in 2011 to meet the state's need for physicians and registered nurses with training in emergency and trauma care. ETEP funding supports partnerships between hospitals and graduate medical education programs that increase the number of emergency medicine and trauma care physician residents and fellows, in addition to partnerships between hospitals and graduate professional nursing programs to deliver increased educational opportunities for registered nurses pursuing a graduate degree or certificate in emergency and trauma care. All ETEP-supported partnerships are required to use existing expertise and facilities in providing the training to physicians and registered nurses. This RFA is seeking Applications from eligible graduate professional nursing programs to increase the number of registered nurses trained in emergency and trauma care.

For the 2022-2023 biennium, ETEP is funded from a general revenue appropriation of \$3,914,406. The THECB anticipates that up to \$950,000 will be available to support ETEP Nursing Programs.

6. PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

6.1 FUNDING RESTRICTION

ETEP funds shall not be substituted for any other funds available to the Applicant or any program or project partners. Awarded Applicants will be required to return to the THECB any ETEP funds expended as substituted funds per THECB instructions. Only reasonable costs in categories A through D identified in Subsection 6.2.1 are allowable. Awarded ETEP funds must be expended only on costs related to the operation of a proposed ETEP Nursing Program as documented in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application. Refer to Section 6.2.3 for information relating to budget changes for Awarded Applicants.

6.2 ALLOWABLE COSTS AND PROHIBITED COSTS

6.2.1 Allowable Cost Categories

Reasonable costs in the budget categories that follow are allowable. The THECB shall negotiate with each Awarded Applicant a Final Award Budget, including itemized detailed information, in the awarded Application.

- A. *Faculty and Staff Compensation* – Itemized costs for faculty and staff funded under ETEP must be related to the ETEP Nursing Program and reflect salaries appropriate to the tasks that will be performed and to the length of time spent on ETEP-related activities.
- B. *Nursing Student Support* – Support costs for students in the ETEP Nursing Program must be itemized and justified in the Application. An example of student support costs includes stipends during clinical training or instructional program licenses.
- C. *Travel* – Travel must be directly related to the ETEP Nursing Program and itemized in the awarded Application. An example of related travel costs includes clinical site visits or attendance at faculty training sessions. Travel expenses must be consistent with state of Texas guidelines as established by the Texas Comptroller.
- D. *Other Direct Costs* – All other direct costs related to the operation of the proposed ETEP Nursing Program must be identified, itemized, and justified in the Application. An example of other direct costs includes reference materials for faculty or training for preceptors providing licensed supervision.

6.2.2 Prohibited Costs

The following types of costs shall not be included in the proposed budget or the Final Award Budget or be paid with ETEP Nursing Program Grant funds:

- Costs incurred prior to the Grant Period
- Costs already budgeted, encumbered, or incurred with other funds available to the Applicant or partners
- Salaries or other forms of personnel compensation that are calculated at a higher pay rate than that which an individual normally receives in a position (or in a similar position) at the Applicant institution or collaborating partners
- Direct payments and compensations for preceptors providing licensed supervision at hospital partner sites
- Incentive payments, including but not limited to gift cards or gas cards
- Support for nursing students subsidized by the military, Public Health Service, or other federal agencies
- Capital equipment
- Warranties, protection plans, and service contracts beyond the standard coverage period that is included in the purchase price of approved non-capital equipment
- Construction, remodeling, or renovations of facilities, architect's fees, and feasibility studies
- Fees for facility rental at the Applicant institution
- Application fees and costs related to institutional or programmatic accreditation
- Food and beverages not considered as per diem for travel
- Alcohol
- Foreign travel
- Travel not consistent with state of Texas guidelines as established by the Texas Comptroller relating to type (transportation, lodging, meals), funding basis (as actual cost, per diem, mileage), reasonableness, and cost-effectiveness
- Tips or gratuity

- Indirect costs

6.2.3 Budget Changes

Submission of a Budget Change Request to ETEP@highered.texas.gov and prior written approval from the THECB are required to allow (1) changes to the Final Award Budget, (2) adjustments to ETEP-supported expenditures, or (3) charge of the following costs to the grant:

- Equipment, software, licenses, memberships, or subscriptions not specifically identified and itemized in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application
 - The THECB will not pay for any equipment purchased with ETEP funds that is not in use and serving its intended purposes as specified by Applicant, and Awarded Applicant will be required to return any funds it has received from the THECB for any such equipment.
- Domestic travel not specifically itemized in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application
- Salaries, compensation, fringe benefits, or positions not specifically identified and justified in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application
- Nursing student support in a format or structure not specifically described and itemized in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application
- Transfer of budgeted funds from *Nursing Student Support*, as approved in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application, into another budget category
- Expenditures in *Other Direct Costs* that are not specifically identified and justified in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application
- Transfer of budgeted funds, as approved in the Final Award Budget in the awarded Application, across allowable budget categories listed in Subsection 6.2.1 that cumulatively exceed 10 percent (10%) of the total Grant Award during the Grant Period

Budget Change Request approval must be received in writing from the THECB Point of Contact for ETEP.

7. AWARD SELECTION CRITERIA

Each Applicant shall satisfy Section 3, Eligibility Requirements, to be considered during the award selection process. Applicants shall be selected for an Award on a competitive basis.

This RFA is designed to issue Grant Awards that provide the best overall value to the state and in accordance with the goals of the RFA. General selection criteria shall be based on the number of nurses trained, state and regional needs and priorities, educational program quality, cost of the project, ability to continue the project after the Grant Period, and past performance on THECB grants.

7.1 APPLICATION SCREENING

THECB staff shall review Applications to determine if they adhere to the ETEP Nursing Program requirements contained in the RFA. An Application must meet the RFA requirements and be submitted with proper authorization on or before the day specified by the THECB to qualify for further consideration.

All incomplete, ineligible, or otherwise non-compliant applications will not be considered for funding. It is anticipated that THECB staff will notify Applicants eliminated through the screening process within 30 days of the Application submission deadline.

Each Application that passes the initial screening for completeness and eligibility will be further considered for award selection according to the funding priority categories and general selection criteria described in Sections 7.2 and 7.3.

7.2 PRIORITY CRITERIA FOR AWARD SELECTION

To ensure increases in the number of registered nurses trained in emergency and trauma care in the state, this RFA gives funding priority to proposed ETEP Nursing Programs that include an eligible graduate professional nursing program providing existing established educational opportunities in emergency and/or trauma care. The existing established educational opportunities must lead to a graduate-level nursing degree or a post-master's certificate upon student completion. This RFA also gives funding priority to proposed ETEP Nursing Programs that demonstrate a collaborative and replicable educational model among program partners; increase student enrollment, retention, completion, and faculty involvement; indicate availability of additional funding or in-kind resources to support program operation; and include sustainability plans for the proposed program partnership.

7.3 GENERAL CRITERIA FOR AWARD SELECTION

THECB staff will review the Applications based on the program elements and the review criteria presented in this section, which are designed to enable the reviewers to assess the quality of a proposed project and determine the likelihood of its success. THECB staff may seek consultation with experts in the field to assist in the evaluation of submitted Applications.

The proposed ETEP Nursing Program:

- increases the number of nurses receiving graduate-level training in emergency and trauma care during the grant period;
- includes a reasonably ambitious number of nurses to be trained during the grant period;
- addresses state and regional needs and priorities concerning the provision of emergency and trauma care;
- demonstrates strong leadership commitment and involves appropriately qualified key personnel and partners, including hospitals;
- will utilize existing facilities and expertise, and includes estimated costs that are reasonable and explained adequately;
- will likely continue after the Grant Period ends;
- overall demonstrates a focus on training in emergency/trauma care nursing;
- outlines a reasonable and sound plan for student progression through the program;
- has educational contents, including the didactic and clinical components, that ensure students will acquire the competencies required for providing emergency/trauma care; and
- includes objectives and an evaluation plan that address the goals of the RFA and the state's needs concerning emergency and trauma care.

Reviewers will use the general selection criteria to score applications. The Application Evaluation Form is in Appendix C.

7.4 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUNDING

THECB staff shall make a recommendation of selected Applicants to be funded to the Commissioner of Higher Education or designee, who will submit the funding recommendation for approval to the appropriate person or persons as required under 19 Texas Administrative Code § 1.16.

8. APPLICATION FORMAT AND CONTENT

Each ETEP grant Application must include the elements described in Sections 8.1 through 8.7 of this RFA, which correspond to the headings in the Application Form. The Application Form is

available on the THECB website: www.highered.texas.gov/ETEP. Do not alter the Application Form; such alterations may result in the disqualification of the Applicant.

In completing the Application, Applicants should thoroughly review the RFA to ensure that the Application fully comply with the requirements specified in the RFA. In addition, Applicants should provide complete and accurate information to allow reviewers to clearly evaluate the Application based on the selection criteria described in Sections 7.2 and 7.3 of this RFA. The completed Application Form shall be submitted with signatures as one file in PDF format; the file name shall read as the initials of the Applicant institution.Application.pdf (e.g., *Institution Initials.Application.pdf*).

As a separate file, submit with the completed Application Form all applicable Attachments prepared according to the guidelines in Section 8.8. The file name for the Attachments shall read as the initials of the Applicant institution.Attachment.pdf (e.g., *Institution Initials.Attachment.pdf*). Note that any Attachments designated in Section 8.8 as required will be considered a part of the ETEP grant Application.

In order to be accepted and considered by the THECB, the completed Application and any applicable Attachments must be submitted by an agent of the Applicant institution, who is authorized to make the submission on behalf of the Applicant, and must be received by the established deadline of **October 14, 2021, 11:59 p.m. CDT**.

8.1 CERTIFICATION OF APPLICATION INFORMATION

The certification page provides a signature by an authorized institutional representative to certify the accuracy and completeness of information submitted in the Application, which includes required Attachments (see Section 8.8). The signatory must be an individual who is legally authorized to bind the Applicant institution in a contract. An Applicant's failure to provide true and accurate information will be cause for disqualification of an Application or termination of a Contract resulting from this RFA.

8.2 PROJECT NARRATIVE

8.2.1 Contact Information

Provide contact information for the ETEP Nursing Program Applicant, including:

- Name of the emergency/trauma care nursing education program
- Name of the institution and college/school of nursing
- Contact information for the program director and one additional contact person
- Names of hospital partner(s) and types of clinical experience provided
 - List up to six hospital partners that are the most crucial to the ETEP Nursing Program and with whom the program has fully executed agreements. If there are more than six hospitals with fully executed agreements, a complete list of all participating hospitals should be included as an Attachment (see Section 8.8).

8.2.2 Project Summary

- Provide a brief description of the proposed ETEP Nursing Program. The description should be suitable for public release.
- Describe how the proposed ETEP Nursing Program will increase the number of nurses receiving graduate-level training in emergency and trauma care and how it will address the state's needs regarding the provision of emergency and trauma care. Describe the characteristics of expected nurse applicants, including the required level of nursing experience.

- Specify qualifications of key personnel and the type of emergency/trauma care training provided to students. Detail how applicable institutional and regulatory approval for the ETEP Nursing Program has been secured, and include information regarding student demand for the program.
- Provide the types of emergency/trauma care program/track offered in the proposed ETEP Nursing Program in the table included in the Application Form. For each program/track, specify:
 1. if it has concurrently enrolled students;
 2. if the didactic component is delivered online;
 3. if it confers a graduate-level nursing degree or a post-master's certificate upon student completion;
 4. if it focuses on emergency and/or trauma care; and
 5. the program length in months, semesters, and semester credit hours.
- As an Attachment to the Application, provide (1) a list of course descriptions of the didactic and clinical courses sequenced and presented in the timeline(s) under Section 8.3 regarding students' progression through the program, (2) a comprehensive description of the clinical experiences participating hospitals will offer to meet the program requirements, and (3) student competencies required at program entry and acquired upon program completion. The description may be presented separately for each type of program/track offered. The Attachment must not exceed 10 pages in length.
- As an Attachment to the Application, provide the most recent programmatic accreditation letter for each participating graduate professional nursing program from an agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and/or by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

8.2.3 Description of Applicant and Partners

- Provide information on how the Applicant and the ETEP Nursing Program partnership participants (both hospitals and graduate professional nursing programs) are expected to participate in the project, including information of their roles and contributions and information relevant to the RFA requirement regarding the use of existing expertise and facilities. Clearly describe participants' level of commitment to the project, including percentage of work allocated to the project, if applicable. Provide clear explanation of the relationship between Applicant and partners, including whether Applicant would delegate authority or responsibilities. Provide a statement that Applicant will not diminish or eliminate existing clinical agreements between hospitals and graduate professional nursing programs not participating in the proposed ETEP Nursing Program.
- Describe the provision for a student cohort admitted under the ETEP Nursing Program to be guaranteed program completion if the funded period ends before the cohort's graduation date. Explain how the program or similar activities would continue after the Grant Period ends. Describe potential program replication.

8.2.4 Assessment of Need

Describe the resources required for the operation of the proposed ETEP Nursing Program. Explain the students' typical employment status during program enrollment and typical need for financial or academic support. Summarize the planned use of ETEP funds to increase graduate nursing education opportunities in emergency/trauma care.

8.3 PROJECT WORK PLAN OR TIMELINE

8.3.1 Project Goal Statement

The Project Goal Statement shall identify the ultimate outcome of the project.

8.3.2 Major Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes

- Identify major project objectives that measure the progress toward the project goal named in Section 8.3.1 and specify expected project outcomes. Objectives should be specific and measurable, and must include tracking participating students' employment information. Expected outcomes should be clearly articulated and relate to the project objectives.
- As an Attachment to the Application, submit a timeline for students' progression through the ETEP Nursing Program. At a minimum, include the program entry date, didactic and clinical course sequence, student support start and end dates, and program completion date. Create a separate timeline for each type of program/track listed under Subsection 8.2.2, Project Summary.
- Provide student enrollment numbers for each cohort having entered or projected to enter the program during each of the academic semesters specified in the Application Form. The information should exclude duplicate counts of continuing students and should be listed separately for each type of program/track listed under Subsection 8.2.2, Project Summary.

8.4 PROJECT EVALUATION

In the Application Form, describe the general timeline and methods for data collection, including data sources, to measure the project's progress and assess the specified project objectives. Explain how the data will be analyzed and how the Applicant will ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in completing the project evaluation.

Awarded Applicants must document status of expected outcomes during required project reporting. After the end of the funding period, Awarded Applicants must report on the final outcomes of project objectives. Section 10 provides detail on grant reporting requirements.

The THECB may conduct an evaluation to assess the statewide effectiveness of the ETEP program, and participation is expected from ETEP Nursing Programs funded as a result of this RFA.

8.5 BUDGET

There is no matching fund requirement for applications submitted under this RFA. However, Awarded Applicants and collaborating partners shall share in the cost of supporting the ETEP Nursing Program.

The ETEP Nursing Program budget to be specified in the Application Form must (1) include a summary amount (rounded up to the nearest dollar) of grant funding expenditures in each Allowable Cost Category (see Subsection 6.2.1) per year over the 24-month Grant Period, (2) list other sources of funding support, and (3) provide itemized detail and justification for the total ETEP grant amount budgeted for each cost category for the 24-month Grant Period.

The THECB shall negotiate a Final Award Budget with each Awarded Applicant.

8.6 FINANCIAL VIABILITY

A separate document is not required under this RFA.

8.7 EVIDENCE OF LEADERSHIP COMMITMENT

As an Attachment to the Application, provide documentation as evidence of leadership commitment to the project. Such documentation should be in the form of letters of commitment from Applicant's senior management. Applicant, required to include hospital partners with whom the nursing program has fully executed agreements, may choose to include additional letters of commitment from the hospital partners' leadership in the Attachment. Letters of commitment from senior management of partnering graduate professional nursing programs may also be included. The required and additional letters should be on official letterhead addressed to the program director of the proposed ETEP Nursing Program.

8.8 ATTACHMENTS

The following Attachments are allowed under this RFA and, if applicable, should be submitted with the completed Application Form as a single separate file via email to ETEP@highered.texas.gov no later than the Application deadline of **October 14, 2021, 11:59 p.m. CDT**. The file name for the Attachments shall read as the initials of the Applicant institution.Attachment.pdf (e.g., *Institution Initials.Attachment.pdf*). Applicant shall not include documents as attachments or appendices that are not specified in this section; such documents will be discarded and will not be reviewed during application evaluation.

The following required and optional Attachments may be submitted. **Attachments that are not submitted with the completed Application Form by the established deadline will not be accepted or considered. Any Application submitted without the required Attachments listed below will be deemed incomplete and will not be considered.**

Required:

- A complete list of all hospital partners if the proposed ETEP Nursing Program includes more than six participating hospital partners with whom the program has fully executed agreements (see Section 8.2.1)
- A file not to exceed 10 pages in length including (1) a list of course descriptions of the didactic and clinical courses, (2) a description of the clinical experiences participating hospitals will offer, and (3) student competencies required at program entry and acquired upon program completion (see Section 8.2.2)
- The most recent official programmatic accreditation letter for each participating graduate professional nursing program from an agency recognized by the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education and/or by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (see Section 8.2.2)
- Timelines for students' progression through the programs/tracks in the ETEP Nursing Program that include the following required items: program entry dates, didactic and clinical course sequences, student support start and end dates, and program completion dates (see Section 8.3.2)
- Letters indicating leadership commitment from Applicant's senior management on official letterhead addressed to the program director of the proposed ETEP Nursing Program (see Section 8.7)

Optional:

- Letters indicating commitment from hospital partners' leadership and from senior management of partnering graduate professional nursing programs on official letterhead addressed to the program director of the proposed ETEP Nursing Program (see Section 8.7)
- Letter from Applicant requesting the THECB's consideration of exceptions, if applicable, to specific terms and conditions described in the RFA. Any exceptions must be clearly identified by section, and the Applicant's proposed alternative and rationale must be provided. Applicants cannot take a "blanket exception" to this entire RFA. If any Applicant

takes a "blanket exception" to this entire RFA or does not provide alternative language, the Applicant's Application may be disqualified from further consideration. Any terms and conditions attached to an Application will not be considered unless specifically referred to in this RFA, and the Applicant's attachment of such terms and conditions to an Application may disqualify the Application. The letter must be signed by an individual legally authorized to bind the Applicant institution.

9. DISTRIBUTION OF AWARD FUNDS

9.1 ISSUANCE OF GRANT AWARD

Following all negotiations between the THECB and each Applicant and the announcement of awards, the Awarded Applicants will receive an electronic copy of the THECB's ETEP Notice of Grant Award (NOGA, Appendix E), which will take effect on the day the NOGA is fully executed, or on January 1, 2022, whichever is later. Throughout this RFA, the terms "NOGA," "Award," "Contract," and "Grant" are used interchangeably.

The Contract must be executed by an individual authorized to enter into a contract on behalf of the Applicant institution. The THECB may require Applicant to provide documentation demonstrating that the individual signing the Contract has authority to sign on behalf of the Applicant institution. Upon execution of a Contract resulting from this RFA, the term "Applicant" shall have the same meaning as "Awarded Applicant" or "Grantee." The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, a state agency, may also be referred to as the "THECB," "Board," or "Agency." At times, THECB or "Board" and Grantee are referred to singularly as "Party" and collectively as "Parties." Likewise, the terms "Request for Applications" and "Application" shall have the same meaning as the term "Contract" or "Agreement."

9.2 "DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTED PARTIES" REQUIREMENT

The THECB may not execute a contract/grant requiring approval of the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Chair until a non-state business entity has presented a certificate disclosing interested parties. Any for-profit organizations, not-for-profit organizations, or private institutions selected for a THECB grant award must complete this requirement before a grant award contract can be executed. For this RFA, private institutions of higher education awarded a grant will be required to complete the requirement. Hospital partners in an awarded ETEP Nursing Program are not subject to this requirement. Further information relating to Disclosure of Interested Parties is provided in Section 11.25 of this RFA.

9.3 FUNDS DISBURSEMENT AND PAYMENT TERMS

ETEP Grant Award funds will be disbursed according to the following provisions of this RFA.

ETEP Grants are funded through state general appropriations. Awarded Applicant shall receive payments through the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

Funding to Awarded Applicants will be disbursed in two installments. To enable each Awarded Applicant to fully perform the services described in its Application, the THECB will disburse funding for Fiscal Year 2022 of 50 percent (50%) of the total award amount, on or about January 1, 2022. The THECB shall not disburse awarded funds until the NOGA has been fully executed, the Grant Period has started, and, if applicable, the Disclosure of Interested Parties has been received and acknowledged by the THECB, as described in Section 9.2.

To receive funds for Fiscal Year 2023, Awarded Applicant must submit an interim project update on or before September 1, 2022 (see Section 10.2), and submit a completed Request for Funds form, which will include interim project expenditure information, to the THECB by October 1, 2022 (see Section 10.3). The THECB will disburse Fiscal Year 2023 funds on or about December 1, 2022, after approval and acceptance of the required information by THECB staff. At the THECB's sole discretion, the second year of grant funding is contingent upon the

Awarded Applicant using grant funds appropriately, meeting project benchmarks, and producing expected outcomes in the first year of the Grant Period.

The THECB is not bound by any award estimates in the RFA. Funding may be reduced or terminated if funds allocated to the THECB should become reduced, depleted, or unavailable during the Grant Period. As consistent with the Uniform Grant Management Standards ("UGMS"), after making a finding that an Awarded Applicant has failed to perform or failed to conform to grant contract terms and conditions, the THECB may reduce or terminate the grant for the Awarded Applicant.

Awarded Applicant shall not expend awarded funds until the NOGA has been fully executed and the Grant Period has started.

9.4 LAST DAY OF EXPENDITURES

All allowable grant-related expenses must be incurred on or before December 31, 2023, the end of the Grant Period. Expenses incurred after this date cannot be charged to ETEP.

9.5 RETURN OF UNEXPENDED FUNDS

Grantee shall return any unexpended funds to the THECB within ninety (90) days after the end of the Grant Period per THECB instructions, unless otherwise agreed by the THECB and Grantee.

If an Award is terminated, Awarded Applicant shall return any remaining funds per THECB instructions within ninety (90) days upon award termination.

9.6 GRANT EXTENSION

An extension of the Grant Period for the ETEP Nursing Program may be granted at the sole discretion of the THECB. An Awarded Applicant that shows success in project outcomes may be eligible to request a maximum 12-month grant extension to fully complete grant project activities and objectives. Extensions are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to the eligibility requirements.

Awarded Applicant must notify the THECB Point of Contact for ETEP via email at ETEP@highered.texas.gov of its intention to request an extension no later than June 1, 2023, and submit a formal extension request using the provided template for the request by a deadline that will be established by the THECB. The submitted extension request must be signed by an authorized institutional representative who is legally authorized to bind the grantee institution in a contract.

10. MONITORING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

10.1 MONITORING

The THECB staff shall monitor and oversee ETEP Nursing Program progress and compliance through required reporting to ensure that grant commitments are fulfilled and that the financial matters related to the grant award are accurate and appropriate. Awarded Applicant shall be required to complete the reports listed in Sections 10.2 and 10.3 for an ETEP Nursing Program funded as a result of this RFA. The THECB will provide a template and instructions for electronic submission for required reports.

When a report submission date falls on a weekend or a holiday, the submission deadline is automatically extended to the next state of Texas business day (see Appendix A, RFA Definitions). If Awarded Applicant does not submit the required reports detailed in Sections 10.2 and 10.3 by the established deadlines, and the Awarded Applicant has not been granted a submission extension, the THECB reserves the right to require that funds already disbursed to the Grantee be returned and the awarded funding be reduced. If a required report is not

accepted by the THECB, return of funds already disbursed to the Grantee and reduction of the awarded funding may be required. Delinquent and unaccepted reports may affect Awarded Applicant's eligibility to receive the second year of ETEP funding or to apply for future THECB grant awards and Awarded Applicant may be deemed non-compliant and subject to termination per Section 11.1.

10.2 PROJECT/PROGRAM NARRATIVE REPORTS

Awarded Applicant must submit via email an interim project update by September 1, 2022, summarizing progress of the ETEP Nursing Program. The update is required prior to the THECB's disbursement of grant funds for Fiscal Year 2023. The THECB will provide information for the specific format and content required for the interim project update. Grantee will report information in the aggregate without FERPA-sensitive information.

An Annual Project Report containing FERPA-sensitive data, for the purpose of program audit and evaluation, shall be submitted electronically via a secure server to the THECB in a format specified by the THECB. The first annual report shall be submitted no later than February 1, 2023, and the second report shall be submitted no later than February 1, 2024. The annual reports, which must be certified by the program director of the funded ETEP Nursing Program, will include, but may not be limited to, the following elements:

- a. *Annual Roster of Enrolled Students.* The data that must be submitted for each participating student enrolled as of the 12th class day include: name, Social Security number, Texas nursing license number, gender, and race/ethnicity. Additional data fields will be specified by the THECB in the student roster report template.
- b. *Roster of Faculty and Staff.* The report will include a roster of faculty and staff compensated with ETEP funds.
- c. *Program Summary and Update.* The report will provide an update on the aggregate number of students participating or projected to participate in the ETEP Nursing Program, the number completing the ETEP Nursing Program, and information on employment placement of students after graduation.

10.3 FINANCIAL REPORTS

No later than October 1, 2022, Awarded Applicant must submit a Request for Funds form that includes interim project expenditure information prior to receiving funds for Fiscal Year 2023.

No later than February 1, 2023, an Interim Financial Report shall be submitted electronically to the THECB in a format specified by the THECB. The report will include total expenditures by budget category and information about the unexpended balance as of December 31, 2022. Awarded Applicant must include supporting documentation with itemized descriptions for the reported actual expenditures. The report must be certified by an authorized institutional representative who provides independent oversight of the funded program's financial management.

No later than March 1, 2024, Awarded Applicant shall submit electronically a Final Financial Report to the THECB. The Final Financial Report shall (1) detail the actual expenditures for the grant period by purpose and amount, (2) document the unexpended balance of ETEP funds as of December 31, 2023, the end of the grant period, and (3) include a statement by the authorized institutional representative certifying the expenditures and unexpended balance. The same requirements regarding supporting documentation and independent financial oversight shall apply.

11. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

11.1 TERMINATION

Notwithstanding the termination or expiration of this Contract, the provisions of this Contract regarding confidentiality, indemnification, transition, records, right to audit and independent audit, property rights, dispute resolution, invoice and fees verification, provision of services, and default shall survive the termination or expiration dates of this Contract.

11.1.1. Convenience of the State

THECB, in its sole discretion, may terminate this Grant Award/Agreement upon one (1) calendar day's written notice to Grantee. Such notice will be provided in accordance with Section 11.36, Notice, of this Grant Award/Agreement. In the event of such termination, the Grantee shall, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon in writing, cease all work immediately upon the effective date of termination. THECB will be liable only for payments for any deliverables received from or services performed by the Grantee before the termination date.

11.1.2. Termination for Cause

THECB may, by written notice to Grantee, immediately terminate this Grant Award/Agreement for cause if: (a) THECB is not reasonably satisfied with Grantee's Services; (b) default or abandonment by Grantee occurs; or (c) Grantee fails to comply fully with any term or condition of this Grant Award/Agreement, through no material fault of THECB. If THECB deems it appropriate under the circumstances, THECB will provide a three (3) business day advance written notice of intent to terminate to Grantee, and THECB will provide Grantee with an opportunity for consultation with THECB prior to termination during that three (3) business day period.

If Grantee fails or refuses to perform its obligations under this Grant Award/Agreement, THECB may exercise any and all rights as may be available to it by law or in equity. In the event THECB exercises its right to terminate for cause, Grantee is responsible for paying damages to THECB including but not limited to re-procurement costs (if applicable), and any other consequential damages to the State of Texas and THECB resulting from Grantee's non-performance.

11.1.3. Abandonment or Default

If the Grantee Abandons or Defaults on the Grant Award/Agreement, THECB reserves the right to terminate the Grant Award/Agreement without notice and either re-solicit or re-award the Grant Award/Agreement to the next best responsive and responsible Grant Applicant. The defaulting Grantee will not be considered in the re-solicitation and may not be considered in future solicitations for the same type of work, unless the specification or scope of work significantly changed. The period of suspension will be determined by THECB based on the seriousness of the default.

11.1.4. Applicable Law and Conforming Amendments

THECB may terminate this Grant Award/Agreement immediately upon notice to Grantee in the event federal or state law is enacted, amended, or judicially interpreted so as to render continued fulfillment of the Grant Award/Agreement, on the part of THECB, wholly unreasonable or impossible. THECB reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to unilaterally amend this Grant Award/Agreement throughout the

Grant Award/Agreement Term to incorporate any modifications necessary for THECB's compliance, as an agency of the State of Texas, with all applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, requirements, and guidelines.

11.1.5. Excess Obligations (Non-Appropriation)

The Grant Award/Agreement is subject to termination or cancellation, without penalty to THECB, either in whole or in part, subject to the availability of state funds.

11.1.6. Effect of Termination

Upon any termination, all indemnities, including without limitation those set forth in this Grant Award/Agreement, as well as Grant Award/Agreement provisions regarding confidentiality, records retention, right to audit, ownership, and dispute resolution, shall survive the termination of this Grant Award/Agreement for any reason whatsoever and shall remain in full force and effect. In the event of any termination, Grantee shall, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon in writing, cease all Services immediately upon the effective date of termination, except such Services that THECB deems are necessary to wind-up in a cost-effective manner. For any termination by THECB other than termination for non-appropriation, THECB shall be liable to Grantee for only that portion of the Services authorized by THECB and which have been completed prior to the effective date of termination, provided that THECB shall not be liable for any work performed that is not acceptable to THECB and/or does not meet Grant Award/Agreement requirements, plus any necessary work deemed appropriate by THECB to cost-effectively wind-up.

11.1.7. Transfer of Duties

In the event of termination, Grantee will provide reasonable cooperation to transfer its duties under the Grant Award/Agreement to another entity without disruption, if applicable.

11.2 AMENDMENT

This Grant Award/Agreement may be modified only by written amendment executed by the Parties hereto; however, any amendment of this Grant Award/Agreement that conflicts with the laws of the State of Texas shall be void ab initio.

11.3 INDEMNIFICATION

(THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO STATE AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, OR POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS)

Acts or Omissions: GRANTEE SHALL INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE STATE OF TEXAS AND THECB AND THEIR OFFICERS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES, OTHER CONTRACTORS, ASSIGNEES, AND/OR DESIGNEES FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY, ACTIONS, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, OR SUITS, AND ALL RELATED COSTS, ATTORNEY FEES, AND EXPENSES ARISING OUT OF, OR RESULTING FROM, ANY ACTS OR OMISSIONS OF THE GRANTEE OR ITS AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, SUBCONTRACTORS, ORDER FULFILLERS, OR SUPPLIERS OF SUBCONTRACTORS IN EXECUTION OR PERFORMANCE OF THE GRANT AWARD/AGREEMENT AND ANY PURCHASE ORDERS ISSUED UNDER THE GRANT AWARD/AGREEMENT. THE DEFENSE SHALL BE COORDINATED BY GRANTEE WITH THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF TEXAS IF THECB AND/OR THE STATE OF TEXAS AND/OR THEIR OFFICERS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES, OTHER CONTRACTORS, ASSIGNEES, AND DESIGNEES ARE A NAMED DEFENDANT IN ANY LAWSUIT AND THE GRANTEE MAY NOT AGREE TO ANY SETTLEMENT WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING THE CONCURRENCE OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. GRANTEE

AND THECB AGREE TO FURNISH TIMELY WRITTEN NOTICE TO EACH OTHER OF ANY SUCH CLAIM.

11.4 SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY

The Parties stipulate and agree that no provision of, or any part of this Grant Award/Agreement between THECB and Grantee, or any subsequent amendment shall be construed: (1) as a waiver of the doctrine of sovereign immunity or immunity from suit as provided for in the Texas Constitution and the Laws of the State of Texas; (2) to extend liability to THECB beyond such liability provided for in the Texas Constitution and the Laws of the State of Texas; or (3) as a waiver of any immunity provided by the 11th Amendment or any other provision of the United States Constitution or any immunity recognized by the Courts and the laws of the State of Texas and the United States. The State of Texas and THECB do not waive sovereign immunity by entering into this Grant Award/Agreement and specifically retain such immunity and all defenses available to them under the laws of the State of Texas or the common law.

11.5 ASSIGNMENT

Grantee shall not assign its rights under the contract or delegate the performance of its duties under the Grant Award/Agreement without prior written approval from the THECB. Any attempted assignment in violation of this provision is void and without effect.

11.6 DELEGATION OR SUBCONTRACTING

Unless as otherwise provided for in this Grant Award/Agreement, no contractual rights, interest, or obligation shall be delegated or subcontracted by Grantee without prior written approval of THECB. No delegation or subcontract approved by THECB shall relieve Grantee of any obligation or responsibility under this Grant Award/Agreement. It is the Parties' intent that to the extent subcontracting is approved by THECB, Grantee shall make a good faith effort to subcontract with Historically Underutilized Business(es) (HUB), as defined in Texas Government Code §2161.001(2), during the performance of this Grant Award/Agreement. The goal of the HUB program is to promote full and equal business opportunities for all businesses contracting with the State of Texas.

11.7 RIGHT TO AUDIT AND RECORDS RETENTION

Grantee understands that acceptance of funds under this Grant Award/Agreement, or indirectly through a subcontract under this Grant Award/Agreement, acts as acceptance of the authority of the State Auditor's office, THECB or any successor agency, as well as any external auditors selected by the State Auditor's office, THECB or, in agreements involving federal funds, any auditors selected by the United States, including, but not limited to the cognizant federal agencies and/or federal Offices of the Inspector General (collectively referred to as "Audit Entities"), to conduct an audit or investigation in connection with those funds. Grantee further agrees to cooperate fully with the above parties in the conduct of the audit or investigation, including promptly providing all records requested. Grantee will ensure that this clause concerning the authority to audit funds received indirectly by subcontractors through Grantee and the requirements to cooperate is included in any subcontract it awards.

Grantee shall maintain its records and accounts in a manner which shall assure a full accounting for all funds received and expended by Grantee in connection with the Grant Project. These records and accounts (which includes all receipts of expenses incurred by Grantee) shall be retained by Grantee and made available for inspecting, monitoring, programmatic or financial auditing, or evaluation by THECB and by others authorized by law or regulation to do so for a period of not less than seven (7) years from the date of completion of the Grant Award/Agreement or the date of receipt by THECB of Grantee's

final claim for payment or final expenditure report or until any litigation/billing issues are resolved, whichever is later. If an audit has been announced, the records shall be retained until such audit has been completed. Grantee shall make available at reasonable times and upon reasonable notice, and for reasonable periods, all documents and other information related to the Services provided in this Grant Award/Agreement. Grantee and any subcontractors shall provide any Audit Entities with any information such entity deems relevant to any monitoring, investigation, evaluation, or audit.

Grantee's failure to comply with this subsection (Right to Audit and Records Retention) shall constitute a material breach of this Grant Award/Agreement and shall authorize THECB and the State of Texas to immediately assess appropriate damages for such failure. THECB reserves the right to require the reimbursement of any over-payments determined as a result of any audit or inspection of records on work performed under this Grant Award/Agreement. Grantee shall reimburse THECB for any over-payments within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of THECB's written notice.

Awarded Applicant shall have an accounting system that accounts for cost in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. Awarded Applicant's accounting system must include an accurate and organized file/records system for accounting and financial purposes for providing backup materials for billings.

11.8 TIME AND EFFORT RECORDKEEPING

For those personnel whose salaries are prorated between or among different funding sources, time and effort records will be maintained by Awarded Applicant that confirm the project work provided within each funding source. Awarded Applicant must adjust payroll records and expenditures based on this documentation. This requirement applies to all projects, regardless of funding sources, unless otherwise specified.

11.9 UNIFORM GRANT MANAGEMENT STANDARDS (UGMS)

Grantee agrees to follow the UGMS, including all of its applicable conditions and State Assurances ("UGMS"). UGMS is herein incorporated for all purposes into this Agreement. All applicable conditions and uniform assurances can be found at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/grant-management/>.

11.10 FORMS, ASSURANCES, AND REPORTS

Awarded Applicant shall timely file with the proper authorities all forms, assurances and reports required by state laws and regulations. The THECB shall be responsible for reporting to the proper authorities any failure by Awarded Applicant to comply with the foregoing laws and regulations coming to the THECB's attention and may deny reimbursements or recover payments made by the THECB to Awarded Applicant in the event of Awarded Applicant's failure to so comply.

11.11 SITE VISITS

Throughout the Grant Period, the THECB and/or its representatives shall have the right to make site visits to review the ETEP project's operations and accomplishments.

11.12 SUPPLANTING PROHIBITION

A Grant Award may not be used to replace federal, state, or local funds.

11.13 CARRYOVER OF FUNDS

At the THECB's discretion, unencumbered funds may carry over from each year of the Grant Period.

11.14 APPLICABLE CONDITIONS AND UNIFORM ASSURANCES

The standard financial management conditions and uniform assurances set out in the RFA are applicable to all grants, cooperative agreements, contracts and other financial assistance arrangements executed between state agencies, local governments, and any other sub-recipient not specifically excluded by state or federal law. All applicable conditions and uniform assurances can be found at <https://comptroller.texas.gov/purchasing/grant-management/>.

11.15 STATE AUDITOR'S RIGHT TO AUDIT

The state auditor may conduct an audit or investigation of any entity receiving funds from the state directly under the agreement or indirectly through a subcontract under the Grant Award/Agreement. The acceptance of funds directly under the Grant Award/Agreement or indirectly through a subcontract under the Grant Award/Agreement acts as acceptance of the authority of the state auditor, under the direction of the legislative audit committee, to conduct an audit or investigation in connection with those funds. Under the direction of the legislative audit committee, an entity that is the subject of an audit or investigation by the state auditor must provide the state auditor with access to any information the state auditor considers relevant to the investigation or audit.

11.16 CHILD SUPPORT OBLIGATION FAMILY CODE (IF APPLICABLE)

By signing this Grant Award/Agreement, Grantee certifies that under Section 231.006, Family Code, Grantee is not ineligible to receive payment under this Grant Award and acknowledges that this Grant Award/Agreement may be terminated and payment may be withheld or recouped if this certification is inaccurate. If this certification is shown to be false, Grantee is liable to THECB for attorneys' fees, the costs necessary to complete the Grant, including the cost of advertising and awarding a second grant award/agreement, and any other damages provided by law or Grant Award/Agreement. Under Section 231.006 of the Family Code, the vendor or applicant certifies that the individual or business entity named in this Grant Award/Agreement, bid or application is not ineligible to receive the specified grant, loan, or payment and acknowledges that this Grant Award/Agreement may be terminated and payment may be withheld if this certification is inaccurate.

11.17 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If THECB determines that any work product is not acceptable, THECB shall notify Grantee of the specific deficiencies in writing. Grantee shall then undertake all steps necessary to correct any deficiencies at no additional cost to THECB. In the event any issues cannot be resolved, the dispute resolution process provided for in Texas Government Code, Chapter 2260 shall be used by THECB and Grantee to attempt to resolve any claim for breach of Contract. The dispute resolution process provided for in Chapter 2260 of the Texas Government Code must be used to attempt to resolve any dispute arising under the Grant Award/Agreement.

11.18 PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Prior Notification. Publication, including presentations, is encouraged; however, Awarded Applicant agrees to notify the THECB prior to the publication of any information, including results, findings or reports, regarding the activities being conducted under any Contract/Grant resulting from this RFA. Awarded Applicant shall ensure the following statements are included in any published work:

This work was supported in whole or in part by a grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The opinions and conclusions expressed in this

document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the opinions or policy of the THECB.

Potential Publication in News Media of any Type. Should Awarded Applicant be contacted by any news media about any information, including results, findings, or reports regarding activities being conducted under any Contract/Grant resulting from this RFA, Awarded Applicant shall notify its THECB Point of Contact, when possible, before communicating with news media. When not possible, Awarded Applicant shall notify its THECB Point of Contact immediately after concluding the communication with the news media.

Should Awarded Applicant desire to contact any news media about any information, including results, findings, or reports regarding activities being conducted under any Contract/Grant resulting from this RFA, Awarded Applicant shall notify its THECB Point of Contact before communicating with news media.

Any written publication shall be sent electronically to the THECB Point of Contact.

11.19 CONFIDENTIALITY, PUBLIC INFORMATION ACT, AND FERPA

Notwithstanding any provisions of this Grant Award/Agreement to the contrary, Grantee understands that as a Texas state agency, THECB is subject to and will comply with the Texas Public Information Act, Government Code, Chapter 552 as interpreted by judicial opinions and opinions of the Attorney General of the State of Texas. Grantee will cooperate with THECB in the production of documents responsive to any such requests under the Public Information Act at no additional charge to THECB.

11.19.1. Public Information Act

THECB will make a determination whether to submit a Public Information Act request to the Attorney General. This Grant Award/Agreement and all data and other information generated or otherwise obtained in its performance may be subject to the Texas Public Information Act. Grantee will notify THECB's contact within 24 hours of receipt of any third-party requests for information it receives relating to this Grant Award/Agreement. In accordance with Section 2252.907 of the Texas Government Code, Grantee is required to make any information created or exchanged with the State pursuant to this Grant Award/Agreement, and not otherwise excepted from disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, available in a format that is accessible by the public at no additional charge to the State and shall cooperate with THECB in doing so. Grantee agrees to maintain the confidentiality of information received from THECB and the State of Texas during the performance of this Grant Award/Agreement, including information which discloses confidential personal information particularly, but not limited to, social security numbers. Grantee will not disclose any information to which it is privy under this Grant Award/Agreement without the prior written consent of THECB. To the extent permitted under law, grantee will indemnify and hold harmless the State of Texas, its officers and employees, and THECB, its officers and employees for any claims for damages that arise from the disclosure by Grantee of information also held by the State of Texas or THECB to which Grantee is privy under this Grant Award/Agreement.

All submitted Applications become the property of the THECB after the RFA submittal deadline date. Upon acceptance of the Contract, all information submitted with Applicant's Application becomes public record and all information submitted with Awarded Applicant's Application becomes part of the Contract. Therefore, such information is subject to disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act, unless an exception under the Texas Public Information Act is applicable.

Any proprietary information included in Applicant's Application shall be subject to disclosure unless such proprietary information was clearly identified by Applicant, and such identification was submitted concurrently with the original submission of the proprietary information. Such identification of proprietary information shall be clearly marked in the Application on each page it appears. Such markings shall be in boldface type at least 14-point font. Additionally, Applicant shall state the specific reason(s) an exception from the Texas Public Information Act is being claimed concurrently with the original submission of the proprietary information.

If Awarded Applicant fails to clearly identify proprietary information with the original submission of the proprietary information, then those Sections will be deemed non-proprietary and made available upon public request after the Grant is awarded. The production of any material under the Grant shall not have the effect of violating or causing the THECB to violate any law, including the Texas Public Information Act.

11.19.2. FERPA

Grantee agrees to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g, and the implementing federal regulations, 34 CFR Part 99.

11.19.3. Protection of Confidential Data (Covered Data and Information)

Grantee agrees to abide by the limitations on re-disclosure of personally identifiable information from education records set forth in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (34 CFR § 99.33 (a)(2)) and with the terms set forth in Section 11, TERMS and CONDITIONS. 34 CFR 99.33 (a)(2) states that the officers, employees, and agents of a party that receive education record information from THECB may use the information, but only for the purposes for which the disclosure was made.

11.19.4. Acknowledgment of Access to Covered Data and Information (CDI)

Grantee acknowledges that the Grant Award/Agreement allows the Grantee access to CDI.

11.19.5. Prohibition on Unauthorized Use or Disclosure of CDI

Grantee agrees to hold CDI in strict confidence. Grantee shall not use or disclose CDI received from or on behalf of THECB except as permitted or required by the Grant Award/Agreement, as required by law, or as otherwise authorized in writing by THECB. Grantee agrees not to use CDI for any purpose other than the purpose for which the disclosure was made.

11.19.6. Return or Destruction of CDI

Upon termination, cancellation, expiration or other conclusion of the Grant Award/Agreement, Grantee shall return all CDI to THECB or, if return is not feasible, destroy any and all CDI. If the Grantee destroys the information, the Grantee shall provide THECB with a certificate confirming the date of destruction of the data.

11.19.7. Breach

Any violation of these FERPA provisions by Grantee shall be deemed a material breach of the Grant Award/Agreement.

11.19.8. Maintenance of the Security of Electronic Information

Grantee shall develop, implement, maintain and use appropriate administrative, technical and physical security measures to preserve the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all electronically maintained or transmitted CDI received from, or on behalf of THECB. These measures will be extended by contract to all subcontractors used by Grantee.

11.19.9. Reporting of Unauthorized Disclosures or Misuse of Covered Data and Information

Grantee shall, within one hour of discovery, report to THECB any use or disclosure of CDI not authorized by this Grant Award/Agreement or in writing by THECB. Grantee's report shall identify: (i) the nature of the unauthorized use or disclosure, (ii) the CDI used or disclosed, (iii) who made the unauthorized use and who received the unauthorized disclosure, (iv) what Grantee has done or shall do to mitigate any deleterious effect of the unauthorized use or disclosure, and (v) what corrective action Grantee has taken or shall take to prevent future similar unauthorized use or disclosure. Grantee shall provide such other information, including a written report, as requested by THECB.

11.20 INFRINGEMENTS

(THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO STATE AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, OR POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS)

GRANTEE SHALL INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE STATE OF TEXAS, THECB AND THEIR EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, REPRESENTATIVES, OTHER CONTRACTORS, ASSIGNEES, OFFICERS, AND DESIGNEES FROM ANY AND ALL THIRD PARTY CLAIMS INVOLVING INFRINGEMENT OF UNITED STATES PATENTS, COPYRIGHTS, TRADE AND SERVICE MARKS, AND OTHER INTELLECTUAL OR INTANGIBLE PROPERTY RIGHTS IN CONNECTION WITH THE PERFORMANCES OR ACTIONS OF GRANTEE PURSUANT TO THIS GRANT/AWARD AGREEMENT. GRANTEE AND THECB AGREE TO FURNISH TIMELY WRITTEN NOTICE TO EACH OTHER OF ANY SUCH CLAIM. GRANTEE SHALL BE LIABLE TO PAY ALL COSTS OF DEFENSE INCLUDING ATTORNEYS' FEES. THE DEFENSE SHALL BE COORDINATED BY GRANTEE WITH THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF TEXAS IF THECB AND/OR THE STATE OF TEXAS AND/OR THEIR OFFICERS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES, OTHER CONTRACTORS, ASSIGNEES, AND DESIGNEES ARE A NAMED DEFENDANT IN ANY LAWSUIT AND THE GRANTEE MAY NOT AGREE TO ANY SETTLEMENT WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING THE CONCURRENCE OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. GRANTEE AND THECB AGREE TO FURNISH TIMELY WRITTEN NOTICE TO EACH OTHER OF ANY SUCH CLAIM.

Grantee shall have no liability under this section if the alleged infringement is caused in whole or in significant part by: (i) THECB's use of the product or service for a purpose or in a manner for which the product or service was not designed, (ii) any modification made to the product by THECB without Grantee's approval, (iii) any modifications made to the product by the Grantee pursuant to THECB's specific instructions, (iv) any intellectual property right owned by or licensed to THECB by a person or entity other than the Grantee, or (v) any use of the product or service by THECB that is not in substantial conformity with the terms of any applicable license agreement.

If Grantee becomes aware of an actual or potential claim, or THECB provides Grantee with notice of an actual or potential claim, Grantee may (or in the case of an injunction against THECB, shall), at Grantee's sole option and expense; (i) procure for THECB the right to continue to use the affected portion of the product or service, or (ii) modify or replace the affected portion of the product or service with functionally equivalent or superior product or service so that THECB's use is non-infringing.

11.21 OWNERSHIP/WORK MADE FOR HIRE

For purposes of this Grant Award, the term "Work" or "Work Product" is defined as all work papers, work products, materials, approaches, designs, specifications, systems, software, programs, source code, documentation methodologies, concepts, intellectual property or other property developed, produced or generated in connection with the services provided under the contract.

Copyright. When copyrightable material is developed in the course of or under this Grant, Awarded Applicant is free to copyright the materials or permit others to do so. The THECB shall have a royalty-free, non-exclusive, fully-paid up, no cost, transferable, worldwide, and irrevocable right and license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use and to authorize others to use for governmental and educational purposes: (1) the copyright in any work developed under the Grant and (2) any rights of copyright to which a Awarded Applicant (or any sub-grantee or subcontractor of the Grantee) purchases ownership with Grant funds. In no event shall the Awarded Applicant (or any sub-grantee or subcontractor to the Awarded Applicant) charge other Texas state agencies, institutions of higher education, or independent institutions of higher education (as the terms "institutions of higher education" and "independent institutions of higher education" are defined in the Texas Education Code) for any license to use any or all copyrights purchased with Grant funds or in any work developed under the Grant.

Data. The THECB has the right to: (1) obtain, reproduce, publish or otherwise use the data first produced under this Grant and (2) authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data for governmental and educational purposes. In no event shall the Awarded Applicant (or any sub-grantee or subcontractor to the Awarded Applicant) charge other Texas state agencies, institutions of higher education, or independent institutions of higher education (as the terms "institutions of higher education" and "independent institutions of higher education" are defined in the Texas Education Code) for any license to use any or all data first produced under this Grant.

Grantee shall ensure that this provision, "Ownership/Work Made for Hire," is contained in any subcontract Grantee is authorized by THECB to award. Grantee shall not use, willingly allow, or cause to have such Work used for any purpose other than the performance of Grantee's obligations under this Grant Award/Agreement without the prior written consent of THECB; provided, however, that Grantee shall be allowed to use non-confidential materials for writing samples in pursuit of work or for other governmental or educational purposes.

11.22 GOVERNING LAW AND VENUE

The Grant Award/Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas, without regard to the conflicts of law provisions. The venue of any suit arising under the contract is fixed in any court of competent jurisdiction of Travis County, Texas, unless the specific venue is otherwise identified in a statute which directly names or otherwise identifies its applicability to the Awarded Applicant.

11.23 ADDITIONAL GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Grantee shall comply with all federal, state and local laws, statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations and the orders and decrees of any court or administrative bodies or tribunals in any matter affecting the performance of this Grant Award/Agreement, including applicable workers compensation laws, compensation statutes and regulations, and licensing laws and regulations. When requested to do so by THECB, Grantee shall furnish THECB with satisfactory proof of its compliance. Grantee shall be responsible for damage to THECB's equipment, and/or the workplace and its contents, by its, or its subcontractors' work, negligence in work, personnel, and equipment. Grantee shall be responsible and liable for

the safety and health of its employees and contractors while they are performing work for THECB under this Grant Award/Agreement. Grantee shall provide all labor and equipment necessary to furnish the deliverables or perform the Services. All employees of Grantee shall be a minimum of 18 years of age and experienced in the type of work to be performed. Grantee shall permit no visitors or relatives of Grantee's employees and contractors on THECB's property unless they also are bona fide employees or subcontractors of Grantee.

Grantee hereby covenants, represents and warrants that Grantee (including, for purposes of this section, its employees, consultants, subcontractors, and agents) (1) has the technical expertise and general skills necessary to perform competently and professionally the Services in accordance with this Grant Award/Agreement, (2) is not a party to or bound by any agreement, obligation, or understanding which restricts or limits in any way Grantee's right to enter into this Grant Award/Agreement or Grantee's right or ability to perform Grantee's obligations under this Grant Award/Agreement, (3) shall not use the trade secrets, intellectual property rights, copyrights, or other proprietary rights of any third party in the performance of Grantee's obligations under this Grant Award/Agreement without having first lawfully obtained the right, in writing, to do so, and (4) has the necessary equipment, facilities and workers to perform Grantee's obligations under this Grant Award/Agreement.

11.24 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Grantee represents and warrants that Grantee, its principals, employees, or subcontractors have no potential conflict of interest in providing Services to THECB under this Grant Award/Agreement, and that the provision of Services under this Grant Award/Agreement does not create an appearance of impropriety. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest, at any time during the duration of this Grant Award/Agreement, shall be cause for termination of this Grant Award/Agreement. Grantee represents and warrants that the provision of deliverables and services or other performance under the Grant Award/Agreement will not constitute an actual or potential conflict of interest or reasonably create an appearance of impropriety.

11.25 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTED PARTIES

The THECB may not execute a contract/grant requiring approval of the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Chair until the Business Entity has presented a certificate disclosing interested parties. "Business Entity" is defined as an entity (other than a governmental entity or state agency) through which business is conducted, regardless of whether the entity is for-profit or nonprofit. The Texas Ethics Commission (TEC) has an online portal for vendors/grantees. Vendors/Grantees will need to create a username and password to complete the "Certificate of Interested Parties" form. After the form has been completed, print and sign before sending a final copy to the THECB at Contracts@THECB.state.tx.us. The TEC portal link can be found at:
https://www.ethics.state.tx.us/whatsnew/elf_info_form1295.htm.

11.26 FINANCIAL INTERESTS AND GIFTS

Grantee represents and warrants that neither Grantee nor any person or entity that will participate financially in this Grant Award/Agreement has received compensation from THECB or any agency of the State of Texas for participation in preparation of specifications for this Grant Award/Agreement.

11.27 ANTITRUST

The undersigned affirms under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of Texas that (1) in connection with this Grant Award/Agreement, neither I nor any representative of the

Grantee have violated any provision of the Texas Free Enterprise and Antitrust Act, Texas Business and Commerce Code Chapter 15; (2) in connection with this Grant Award/Agreement, neither I nor any representative of the Grantee have violated any federal antitrust law; and (3) neither I nor any representative of the Grantee have directly or indirectly communicated any of the contents of this Grant Award/Agreement to a competitor of the Grantee or any other company, corporation, firm, partnership or individual engaged in the same line of business as the Grantee.

11.28 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Grantee represents and warrants that it shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, political belief, sex, age, or disability in the performance of this Grant Award/Agreement.

11.29 INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

Grantee shall be an independent contractor in all matters relating to this Grant Award/Agreement. Grantee and its employees, agents, and subcontractors shall not be deemed or construed to be the employees or agents of THECB for any purposes whatsoever. Grantee agrees and acknowledges that Grantee, its employees and agents, and Grantee's subcontractors are independent contractors of THECB and/or the State of Texas and are not employees of THECB or the State of Texas, and Grantee agrees that it shall have complete responsibility in the area of employment law and relations regarding its own employees, contractors, and agents, including but not limited to: wrongful discharge lawsuits, unemployment issues, workers' compensation, employment taxes, any other benefits and reimbursement due to losses in these areas. Consistent therewith, Grantee agrees that it shall make its own arrangements to provide its employees with all necessary employee benefits, including unemployment and workers' compensation benefits, and THECB is, in no way, a party to such arrangements. Regarding its employees, Grantee shall have the sole authority to hire, fire, transfer, train, evaluate, discipline, pay and assign work.

Grantee agrees and acknowledges that Grantee and Grantee's employees or assistants shall not be entitled to any State of Texas benefit on account of the services provided hereunder. If THECB or the State of Texas shall nonetheless become liable for such payments or obligations, Grantee shall promptly pay or reimburse THECB or the State of Texas for such liability or obligation.

11.30 ELIGIBILITY/AUTHORIZATION TO WORK IN THE UNITED STATES

Grantee shall ensure that all personnel provided to perform work under this Grant Award/Agreement possess proof of eligibility/authorization to work in the United States in compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, the Immigration Act of 1990 including any amendments already adopted or as may be adopted hereafter, and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 including any amendments already adopted or as may be adopted hereafter. Grantee shall maintain written records on all personnel provided under the Grant Award/Agreement and shall provide such records to THECB upon request. Failure to maintain and provide records upon request shall represent a material breach of this Grant Award/Agreement and THECB shall have the right to terminate the Grant Award/Agreement for cause. Grantee shall ensure this section is included in all subcontracts it is authorized by THECB to enter.

11.31 TAXES/ WORKERS' COMPENSATION/UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE – INCLUDING INDEMNITY

(THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO STATE AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENTITIES, OR POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE OF TEXAS)

GRANTEE AGREES AND ACKNOWLEDGES THAT DURING THE EXISTENCE OF THIS GRANT AWARD/AGREEMENT, GRANTEE SHALL BE ENTIRELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIABILITY AND PAYMENT OF GRANTEE'S AND GRANTEE'S EMPLOYEES' TAXES OF WHATEVER KIND, ARISING OUT OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THIS GRANT AWARD/AGREEMENT. GRANTEE AGREES TO COMPLY WITH ALL STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS APPLICABLE TO ANY SUCH PERSONS, INCLUDING LAWS REGARDING WAGES, TAXES, INSURANCE, AND WORKERS' COMPENSATION. THECB AND/OR THE STATE OF TEXAS SHALL NOT BE LIABLE TO THE GRANTEE, ITS EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, OR OTHERS FOR THE PAYMENT OF TAXES OR THE PROVISION OF UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND/OR WORKERS' COMPENSATION OR ANY BENEFIT AVAILABLE TO A STATE EMPLOYEE OR EMPLOYEE OF ANOTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.

GRANTEE AGREES TO INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THECB, THE STATE OF TEXAS AND THEIR OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES, AGENTS, REPRESENTATIVES, CONTRACTORS, ASSIGNEES AND DESIGNEES FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITY, ACTIONS, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, OR SUITS, AND ALL RELATED COSTS, ATTORNEYS' FEES, AND EXPENSES, RELATING TO TAX LIABILITY, UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE AND/OR WORKERS' COMPENSATION IN ITS PERFORMANCE UNDER THIS GRANT AWARD/AGREEMENT. GRANTEE SHALL BE LIABLE TO PAY ALL COSTS OF DEFENSE INCLUDING ATTORNEYS' FEES. THE DEFENSE SHALL BE COORDINATED BY GRANTEE WITH THE OFFICE THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF TEXAS IF THECB AND/OR THE STATE OF TEXAS AND/OR THEIR OFFICERS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, REPRESENTATIVES, OTHER CONTRACTORS, ASSIGNEES, AND DESIGNEES ARE A NAMED DEFENDANT IN ANY LAWSUIT AND GRANTEE MAY NOT AGREE TO ANY SETTLEMENT WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING THE CONCURRENCE OF THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. GRANTEE AND THECB AGREE TO FURNISH TIMELY WRITTEN NOTICE TO EACH OTHER OF ANY SUCH CLAIM.

Applicant shall comply with all federal, state and local laws, statutes, ordinances, rules and regulations (including the THECB rules relating to ETEP as codified in Title 19, Part 1 of the Texas Administrative Code) and the orders and decrees of any court or administrative bodies or tribunals in any matter affecting the performance of the Contract, including, if applicable, workers compensation laws, compensation statutes and regulations, and licensing laws and regulations. When requested to do so by the THECB, Applicant shall furnish the THECB with satisfactory proof of its compliance.

11.32 PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR LOBBYING

Grantee represents and warrants that THECB's payments and Grantee's receipt of appropriated or other funds under this Grant Award/Agreement are not prohibited by Texas Government Code, Sections 556.005 or 556.008.

11.33 BUY TEXAS

In accordance with Section 2155.4441 of the Texas Government Code, Grantee agrees that during the performance of a Grant Award/Agreement for services it shall purchase products and materials produced in Texas when they are available at a price and time comparable to products and materials produced outside this state.

11.34 PROVISION OF SERVICES

If applicable, upon any request by THECB for the provision of any Services for which THECB has made payment, Grantee shall immediately provide such Services to THECB. Any failure to provide such Services immediately shall be considered a material breach of this Grant Award/Agreement.

11.35 FORCE MAJEURE

THECB may grant relief from performance of this Grant Award/Agreement if Grantee is prevented from performance by an act of war, order of legal authority, act of God, or other unavoidable cause not attributable to the fault or negligence of the Grantee. The burden of proof for the need of such relief shall rest upon the Grantee. Grantee shall notify THECB in writing if it believes that a force majeure may have occurred and THECB shall, in its sole discretion, determine if Force Majeure has occurred.

11.36 NOTICE

Form of Notice. All notices and other communications in connection with this Grant Award/Agreement shall be in writing.

Method of Notice. All notices must be given (i) by personal delivery, (ii) by an express courier (with confirmation), (iii) mailed by registered or certified mail (return receipt requested), (iv) facsimile, or (v) electronic mail to the parties at the address specified in this Grant Award/Agreement, or to the address that a party has notified to be that party's address for the purposes of this section.

Receipt of Notice. A notice in accordance with this Grant Award/Agreement will be effective upon receipt by the party to which it is given or, if mailed by registered or certified mail, upon the earlier of receipt or the third business day following mailing.

The THECB shall not be responsible for notices that are captured, blocked, filtered, quarantined, or otherwise prevented from reaching the proper destination server by THECB or Grantee's anti-virus or other security software.

11.37 FALSE STATEMENTS AND BREACH OF REPRESENTATIONS

Grantee represents and warrants that all statements and information prepared and submitted to the THECB are current, complete, true, and accurate. Submitting a false statement or material misrepresentations made during the performance of a Grant Award/Agreement is a material breach of contract and may void the Grant Award/Agreement.

11.38 SEVERABILITY AND WAIVER

The invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability of any provision of this Grant Award/Agreement shall in no way affect the validity, legality, or enforceability of any other provisions.

Each and every right granted to the Parties hereunder or under any other document delivered hereunder or in connection herewith, or allowed them by law or equity, shall be cumulative and may be exercised from time to time. Failure by THECB or Grantee at any time to require strict performance of any contractual provision or obligation contained herein shall not constitute a waiver or diminish the rights of either party thereafter to demand strict compliance. Neither THECB's review, approval, acceptance of, nor payment for any of the Services provided in this Grant Award/Agreement shall be construed to operate as a waiver of any rights under the Grant Award/Agreement, or of any cause of action arising out of the performance of the Services required by the Grant Award/Agreement.

11.39 HUMAN TRAFFICKING PROHIBITION

Under Section 2155.0061 of the Texas Government Code, Prohibition on Certain Bids and Contracts Related to Persons Involved in Human Trafficking, the Grantee certifies that the individual or business entity named in this Grant Award/Agreement is not ineligible to receive the specified contract and acknowledges that this Grant Award/Agreement may be terminated and payment withheld if this certification is inaccurate.

11.40 FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS

Grantee represents and warrants that it is not engaged in business with Iran, Sudan, or a foreign terrorist organization, as prohibited by Section 2252.152 of the Texas Government Code.

11.41 SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT

THECB is federally mandated to adhere to the directions provided in the President’s Executive Order 13224, Executive Order on Terrorist Financing – Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions With Persons Who Commit, Threaten to Commit, or Support Terrorism and any subsequent changes made to it. Grantee certifies that Grantee is in compliance with the State of Texas statutes and rules relating to procurement and that Grantee is not listed on the federal government’s terrorism watch list as described in Executive Order 13224. Entities ineligible for federal procurement are listed at <http://www.sam.gov>.

11.42 NOTIFICATION OF CONTRACT

(Only applies to Employees of a Texas state agency or any institution of higher education.)
 THECB will send notification to the key personnel’s employer, if the personnel are otherwise employed outside of their contracted work with THECB.

11.43 INSURANCE

If required by law, grantee agrees to maintain at its expense insurance as required for the work being performed under this Grant Award/Agreement. Such insurance will protect THECB from all claims for bodily injury, death, or property damage which may arise out of or result from the performance of the Grantee’s obligations under the Agreement. Grantee represents and warrants that it will, within ten (10) business days of award of contract, provide THECB with current certificates of insurance or other proof acceptable to THECB of the following insurance coverage:

Grantee must maintain Workers' Compensation insurance coverage in accordance with statutory limits.

Minimum Required Amounts of Insurance Coverage	
Type of Insurance	Each Occurrence/Aggregate
Workers’ Compensation	Statutory Limits
Employer’s Liability	
Bodily Injury by Accident	\$1,000,000 Each Accident
Bodily Injury by Disease	\$1,000,000 Each Employee
Bodily Injury by Disease	\$1,000,000 Policy Limit
Commercial General Liability (occurrence based)	Bodily Injury and Property Damage \$1,000,000 Each Occurrence Limit \$2,000,000 Aggregate Limit \$5,000 Medical Expense each person \$2,000,000 Products/Completed Operations Aggregate Limit \$1,000,000 Personal Injury and Advertising Liability \$50,000 Damage to Premises Rented
Automobile Liability All Owned, Hired and Non-Owned Vehicles	\$500,000 Combined Single Limit (for each accident)
Umbrella/Excess Liability	\$1,000,000 Per Occurrence

Note: The required insurance coverage must be issued from a company or companies that:

- (1) Have both a Financial Strength Rating of "A" or better from A.M. Best Company, Inc.; and
- (2) Have a Financial Size Category Class of "VII" or better from A.M. Best Company, Inc.

All insurance policies for required coverage must be issued by companies authorized to do business under the laws of the State of Texas and in a form satisfactory to THECB. All required insurance contracts must:

- (1) Be written on a primary and non-contributory basis with any other insurance coverages Grantee currently has in place; and
- (2) Include a Waiver of Subrogation Clause.

All certificates of insurance for required coverage other than workers compensation and professional liability must name the State of Texas and its Officers, Directors, and Employees as additional insureds.

Grantee shall:

- (1) Provide written notice to THECB by e-mail at Contracts@thecb.state.tx.us and by U.S. First Class Mail to 1200 E. Anderson Lane, Austin, TX 78752, at least 30 calendar days prior to any cancellation, non-renewal, or material change of a required policy;
- (2) Ensure all insurance policies and certificates of insurance for required coverage are written to include all products, services, and locations related to Grantee's performance under the Grant Award/Agreement; and
- (3) Deliver to THECB by e-mail at Contracts@thecb.state.tx.us and by U.S. First Class Mail to 1200 E. Anderson Lane, Austin, TX 78752, all renewal policies at least ten calendar days prior to any expiration of a required policy. All renewal policies and corresponding certificates of insurance must meet all terms set forth in the Grant Award/Agreement.

Grantee must ensure that all provisions of the Grant Award/Agreement concerning liability, duty, and standard of care, together with the indemnification provision, are underwritten by contractual liability coverage sufficient to include such Grantee's obligations under the Grant Award/Agreement.

11.44 KEY PERSONNEL

Grantee shall assign only qualified personnel to this Grant Award/Agreement. Grantee, in its reasonable discretion, reserves the right to substitute appropriate key personnel to accomplish its duties so long as the substituted personnel are equally qualified to accomplish the required Services. Grantee shall provide to THECB prior written notice and obtain written approval from THECB prior to any change in key personnel involved in providing Services under this Grant Award/Agreement. Subcontractors providing services under the Grant Award/Agreement shall meet the same requirements and level of experience as required of Grantee (see "Assignment, Delegation, or Subcontracting" provision for additional conditions regarding subcontracts). No subcontract under this Grant shall relieve Grantee of responsibility for ensuring the required Services are provided. THECB, in its sole discretion, may require Grantee to remove any employee, contractor, subcontractor, or vendor of the Grantee from providing work or services under the Grant Award/Agreement. Grantee shall replace such removed personnel expeditiously so that its services are performed on a timely basis.

Grantee represents and warrants that Grantee has not and Grantee's employees who will be participating in the funded project/program have not been convicted of a felony criminal offense, or that, if such a conviction has occurred, Grantee has fully advised THECB as to the facts and circumstances surrounding the conviction and has received THECB's prior written consent to proceed.

11.45 DEBTS AND DELINQUENCIES TO THE STATE

Grantee agrees that any payments due under the Grant Award/Agreement shall be applied towards any debt or delinquency that is owed to the State of Texas.

11.46 DECEPTIVE TRADE PRACTICES; UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES

Grantee represents and warrants that it has not been the subject of allegations of Deceptive Trade Practices violations under Texas Business and Commerce Code, Chapter 17, or allegations of any unfair business practice, in any administrative hearing or court suit, and further, that if it has been the subject of either or both such allegations, that Grantee has not been found to be liable for any such practices in such proceedings. Grantee certifies that it has no officers who have served as officers of other entities which have been the subject of allegations of Deceptive Trade Practices Act conduct, violations thereof, or allegations of any unfair business practices, in an administrative hearing or court suit and further, that if such officer(s) has been the subject of either or both such allegations, that such officers have not been found to be liable for any such practices in such proceedings.

11.47 SUSPENSION AND DEBARMENT

Grantee certifies that it and its principals are not suspended or debarred from doing business with the state or federal government as listed on the State of Texas Debarred Vendor List maintained by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts and the System for Award Management (SAM) maintained by the General Services Administration.

11.48 EXCLUDED PARTIES

Grantee certifies that it is not listed in the prohibited vendors list authorized by Executive Order No. 13224, "Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with Persons Who Commit, Threaten to Commit, or Support Terrorism", published by the United States Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control.

11.49 E-VERIFY

U.S. Department of Homeland Security's E-Verify System

By entering into this Grant Award/Agreement, the Grantee certifies and ensures that it utilizes and will continue to utilize, for the term of this Agreement, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's E-Verify system to determine the eligibility of:

All persons employed to perform duties within Texas, during the term of the Grant Award/Agreement; and

All persons (including subcontractors) assigned by the Grantee to perform work pursuant to the Grant Award/Agreement, within the United States of America.

11.50 DRUG FREE WORK PLACE

The Grantee shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Drug-Free Work Place Act of 1988 (Public Law 100-690, Title V, Subtitle D; 41 U.S.C. 701 et seq.) and maintain a drug-free work environment; and the final rule, government-wide requirements for drug-free work place (grants), issued by the Office of Management and Budget and the Department

of Defense (32 CFR Part 280, Subpart F) to implement the provisions of the Drug-Free Work Place Act of 1988 is incorporated by reference and the Grantee shall comply with the relevant provisions thereof, including any amendments to the final rule that may hereafter be issued.

11.51 NO COMMISSIONS

THECB shall not pay any commissions to Grantee under this Grant Award/Agreement.

11.52 APPLICABLE TAXES

This Grant Award/Agreement shall not be construed so as to supersede the laws of the United States or the State of Texas that accord the State of Texas, THECB, and all departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the State of Texas exemptions from payment(s) of all taxes of whatever kind. More specifically, to the extent permitted by applicable law, THECB shall not directly or indirectly be liable for taxes of any kind. Grantee represents and warrants that it shall pay all taxes or similar amounts resulting from this Grant Award/Agreement, including, but not limited to, any federal, State, or local income, sales or excise taxes of Grantee or its employees. To the extent permitted by applicable law, THECB shall provide all applicable tax exemption certificates upon the Grantee's request.

11.53 ELECTRONIC AND INFORMATION RESOURCES ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

Effective September 1, 2006, state agencies and institutions of higher education shall procure products which comply with the State of Texas Accessibility requirements for Electronic and Information Resources specified in 1 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 213 when such products are available in the commercial marketplace or when such products are developed in response to a procurement solicitation.

Grantee shall provide Department of Information Resources (DIR) with the URL to its Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) for reviewing compliance with the State of Texas Accessibility requirements (based on the federal standards established under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act), or indicate that the product/service accessibility information is available from the General Services Administration "Buy Accessible Wizard" (<http://www.buyaccessible.gov>). Grantees not listed with the "Buy Accessible Wizard" or supplying a URL to their VPAT must provide DIR with a report that addresses the same accessibility criteria in substantively the same format. Additional information regarding the "Buy Accessible Wizard" or obtaining a copy of the VPAT is located at <http://www.section508.gov/>.

11.54 SMOKING POLICY

THECB has a policy of being a smoke-free agency. The policy reflects THECB's commitment to providing a healthy environment for all THECB employees and visitors. This policy prohibits smoking within any state building. The Grantee, by acceptance of this Grant Award/Agreement, agrees to abide by this policy when on the property of THECB.

11.55 SUBSTITUTIONS

Substitutions are not permitted without the written approval of THECB.

11.56 DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

Upon request of THECB, Grantee shall provide the descriptions of its business continuity and disaster recovery plans.

11.57 ENTIRE AGREEMENT AND ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

This Grant Award/Agreement consists of the following documents: the final executed Grant Award/Agreement (including its Exhibits and any Amendments), THECB's Request for Applications (RFA), and the Grantee's response to the RFA.

In the event of conflicts, contradictions, or inconsistencies between or among these documents, such conflicts or inconsistencies shall be resolved by reference to the documents in the following order of precedence:

(1) the original Request for Application ("RFA") including any addenda issued, (2) addenda to the Grantee's Application (if any), and (3) Grantee's Application. This Grant Award/Agreement (including its Exhibits and any Amendments) contains the final, complete and exclusive understanding of the Parties, and supersedes all prior contemporaneous, oral or written understandings, representations, and negotiations between Parties relating to the subject matter of this Grant Award/Agreement. The Parties further agree that this Grant Award/Agreement may not in any way be explained or supplemented by a prior or existing course of dealings between the Parties, by usage of trade or custom, or by any prior performance between the Parties pursuant to this Grant Award/Agreement or otherwise.

If language contained in a particular Section of the RFA is found to be in conflict with language in another Section, the most stringent requirement(s) shall prevail.

APPENDIX A: RFA DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall apply:

1. **Applicant** – A Texas graduate professional nursing program, per eligibility defined in Section 3 of this RFA, submitting an Application in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFA.
2. **Application** – The final document, including any Attachments designated in Section 8.8 of this RFA as required, submitted by an Applicant to the THECB in response to and in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFA.
3. **Awarded Applicant** – The successful recipient ultimately awarded a Grant by the THECB and responsible for performing all activities required to fully comply with Grant performance requirements and all Grant terms and conditions.
4. **ETEP** – The Emergency and Trauma Care Education Partnership Program.
5. **FERPA** – The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g, and the federal regulations, 34 CFR Part 99, which is a federal law regarding the privacy of student records and the obligations of the institution, primarily in the areas of release of the records and the access provided to these records. Any educational agency or institution that receives funds under any program administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education is bound by FERPA requirements. Institutions that fail to comply with FERPA may have funds administered by the Secretary of Education withheld.
6. **Graduate Professional Nursing Program** – An educational program of a public or private institution of higher education that prepares students for a master's or doctoral degree in nursing.
7. **Hospital** – A Texas health care facility participating in the ETEP Nursing Program that provides students with clinical placements that allow the students to take part in providing or to observe, as appropriate, emergency and trauma care services offered by the hospital and meet the clinical education needs of the students.
8. **NOGA** – Notice of Grant Award, a term applied to the official document used by the THECB to notify grantees that funding has been approved. NOGAs include such information as the award amount, project and budget periods, and specific award terms and conditions. The NOGA creates a legally binding agreement between the parties and incorporates the RFA and the Application into the agreement. Throughout this RFA the terms "NOGA," "Contract," and "Grant" are used interchangeably.
9. **Public and Private Institutions of Higher Education** – The institutions that are defined in the Texas Education Code, Section 61.003.
10. **State Fiscal Year** – The period of time beginning September 1 and ending on the following August 31, both dates inclusive.
11. **State of Texas Business Days** – Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time, except for scheduled state of Texas and national holidays.
12. **THECB** – The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, an agency of the state of Texas.

APPENDIX B: CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 14, 2021	Notice of Intent Deadline
October 14, 2021	Application Deadline
December 2021	THECB Announces Grant Awards
January 1, 2022	Grant Period* and FY 2022 Funding Disbursement Begin
September 1, 2022	Interim Project Update Due
October 1, 2022	Request for Funds and Interim Expenditure Information Due
December 1, 2022	FY 2023 Funding Disbursement Begins
February 1, 2023	First Annual Project Report Due Interim Financial Report Due
December 31, 2023	Grant Period Ends - Last Day to Incur Grant Expenses
February 1, 2024	Second Annual Project Report Due
March 1, 2024	Final Financial Report Due
March 30, 2024	Last Day to Return Unexpended Grant Funds to THECB

*Grant Period begins January 1, 2022 or upon execution of Notice of Grant Award, whichever is later.

APPENDIX C: APPLICATION EVALUATION FORM

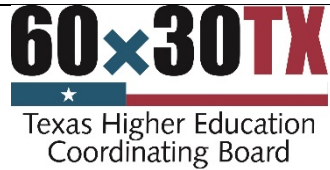
ETEP Evaluation Form
Graduate Nursing Education

PROGRAM SCOPE AND VIABILITY	Max. Points	Actual Points
<p>The proposed ETEP Nursing Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increases the number of nurses receiving graduate-level training in emergency and trauma care during the grant period. [20] • includes a reasonably ambitious number of nurses to be trained during the grant period. [10] • addresses state and regional needs and priorities concerning the provision of emergency and trauma care. [10] • demonstrates strong leadership commitment and involves appropriately qualified key personnel and partners, including hospitals. [10] • will utilize existing facilities and expertise, and includes estimated costs that are reasonable and explained adequately. [10] • will likely continue after the Grant Period ends. [5] 	65	
EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM QUALITY	Max. Points	Actual Points
<p>The proposed ETEP Nursing Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overall demonstrates a focus on training in emergency/trauma care nursing. [5] • outlines a reasonable and sound plan for student progression through the program. [10] • has educational contents, including the didactic and clinical components, that ensure students will acquire the competencies required for providing emergency/trauma care. [10] • includes objectives and an evaluation plan that address the goals of the RFA and the state’s needs concerning emergency and trauma care. [10] 	35	
REVIEWER COMMENTS		TOTAL

APPENDIX D: CHECKLIST OF REQUIRED FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS

Required Information (RFA Section)	Application Form / Attachment
Notice of Intent to Apply (3.5)	Available on www.highered.texas.gov/ETEP
Certification (8.1) Project Narrative (8.2) Project Work Plan/Timeline (8.3) Project Evaluation (8.4) Budget (8.5)	Application Form (Available on www.highered.texas.gov/ETEP)
Full list of hospital partners, if applicable (8.2)	Attachment
Descriptions of courses, clinical experiences, and student competencies (8.2)	Attachment
Official programmatic accreditation letters (8.2)	Attachment
Timeline for student progression through program (8.3)	Attachment
Letters of commitment (8.7)	Attachment
Letter requesting exceptions, if applicable (8.8)	Attachment

APPENDIX E: SAMPLE NOTICE OF GRANT AWARD



THECB Award Number: {XXXX}
Appropriation Year (AY): **2022**

Notice of State Grant Award to **{contracted_party}**

Grantee Name and Address: {contracted_party} {contractedPartyAddress} {contractedPartyCity}, {contractedPartyState} {contractedPartyZip}	Grant Title: Emergency and Trauma Care Education Partnership Program - Graduate Nursing Education Amount of Award: \$ {total_\$} Division: 070 Academic and Health Affairs Term of Grant: January 1, 2022 - December 31, 2023 All funds must be expended by December 31, 2023. Payment Method: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% in FY 2022 after contract execution, start of Grant Period, and, if applicable, THECB receipt of Disclosure of Interested Parties 50% in FY 2023 after THECB receipt and approval of required information as detailed in the RFA The advancement of funds is necessary to enable the Grantee to fully perform the services described in its Application.
Authority: Texas Education Code, Sections 61.9801 - 61.9807	
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's ("THECB") and the Grantee's (collectively, referred to as "the parties") execution of this Notice of Grant Award creates a legally binding agreement between the parties. The Program requirements (e.g., objectives, scope, budget, methodology) as stated in (1) the original Request for Application ("RFA") including any addenda issued, (2) addenda to the Grantee's Application (if any), and (3) Grantee's Application are incorporated into and made a part of this Notice of Grant Award for all purposes, supersede any prior or contemporaneous understandings between the parties pertaining to the subject matter herein whether oral or written, and collectively constitute the entire agreement between the parties. In the event of a conflict in the language contained in the incorporated documents, conflicts shall be resolved by reference to the language contained in the documents in the order listed above. Any changes in the approved Grant must follow THECB's amendment process as defined in the RFA. If not a strictly reimbursable award, any funds received by Grantee and not expended prior to the end of the grant term indicated above shall be returned to THECB within ninety (90) calendar days unless otherwise agreed by THECB and Grantee.	
Approving THECB Official:	Approving Grantee Official:
{signContact} {signContacttitle}	{signed_by} {signed_bytitle}
Date:	Date: