



## **The Eastern Oregon Regional Action Initiative**

### ***Improving Youth Education through Mentoring and Enrichment Programs***

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. *What is the Regional Action Initiative?***

The Oregon Community Foundation's Regional Action Initiative is designed to engage Oregonians in a new level of civic leadership to improve communities in a significant and lasting way. One of seven regions in the state, the Eastern Oregon Regional Action Initiative will provide up to \$1 million in funding for youth mentoring and enrichment programs.

### **2. *Why is the Eastern Oregon Leadership Council focusing on mentoring and enrichment programs for youth?***

The Leadership Council spent the past year interviewing community leaders and key stakeholders to investigate the needs of communities across the nine county region of Eastern Oregon. Based upon the information gathered and other county level data, the Council decided to focus on improving education for youth by investing in mentoring and enrichment programs.

Access to high quality mentoring and enrichment programs can produce positive outcomes such as improved school attendance, academic performance, and self esteem. This initiative seeks to offer Eastern Oregon youth opportunities outside of the regular academic day to experience enrichment activities such as art, music, world cultures, career opportunities and sports and recreation to which they might not otherwise have access, and to improve relationships between youth and adults.

### **3. *Who is eligible for funding?***

Organizations serving Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union and Wallowa Counties are eligible to apply. Applicants wishing to implement or support an existing mentoring or enrichment program must be a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization or school district located within the eligible counties and, further, must be classified as a public entity rather than a private foundation as defined by section 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. Alternatively, the applicant must have a qualified fiscal sponsor (a sponsoring organization that is tax-exempt).

### **4. *Are religious organizations eligible to apply?***

Religious organizations may apply for funding as long as two elements are present: (1) the services they will be providing are not limited to their own congregation and (2) they do

not proselytize (i.e., persons are not required to listen to a sermon in order to receive assistance).

**5. What are the funding objectives?**

- Improve student achievement
- Create opportunities for long term, beneficial change for youth in the region
- Encourage community partnerships
- Foster creativity and innovation
- Leverage funds and other resources
- Build community engagement through broad community support
- Support sustainable mentoring and enrichment programs

**6. What are some examples of desired outcomes or results for a program funded through the Eastern Oregon Regional Action Initiative?**

The Eastern Oregon Leadership Council seeks to improve student achievement, decrease risk-taking behaviors, and build community engagement with the implementation and support of mentoring and enrichment programs. Successful outcomes may include:

- Increased community coordination
- Increased volunteer engagement
- Improved academic achievement for students
- Improved student attendance
- Improved attitude toward school and higher educational aspirations
- Decreased behavioral problems
- Improved student relationships with adults
- Increased parent involvement and level of engagement
- Improved social and connection skills
- Improved self-confidence and self-esteem
- Avoidance of drug and alcohol use
- Increased financial and in-kind resources

**7. What are some examples of how grant funds can be used?**

Proposals may request funding for:

- Building community support
- Program activities and supplies
- Planning
- Volunteer training, recruitment, and incentives
- Training for key staff
- Transporting students to and from program activities
- Program evaluation
- Staffing, background checks
- Internships
- Nutritious snacks for participants
- Other reasonable requests necessary to implement and sustain a high quality program

**8. For what amount of grant funding can organizations apply?**

The Eastern Oregon RAI would like to invest funds in each of the region's nine counties if competitive proposals are received. Grants will range in size depending upon community need, level of community support, and a clear plan and ability to demonstrate outcomes.

**9. Will multiple year requests be considered?**

Yes. The Regional Action Initiative committee will consider proposals requesting funding for up to three years maximum.

**10. What is the process for evaluating grant proposals?**

The Eastern Oregon Regional Action committee will read and evaluate all proposals. Those that are competitive will undergo a thorough evaluation, including a site visit. Proposals will be evaluated on their strengths, weaknesses and alignment with the Eastern Oregon Regional Action Initiative's funding objectives.

**11. When will funding decisions be announced?**

Funding decisions will be announced in May 2010.

**12. Is it a requirement that applicants attend one of the RAI Workshops?**

Interested applicants are *strongly encouraged* to attend one of the four workshops planned this winter throughout the region. All workshops are scheduled from 10am to 12pm. Registration for workshops is required. The registration deadline is one week prior to the date of each workshop.

**12/09/09 Burns** - Harney ESD Regional Services Center, 1225 S. Rock Ave.

**12/10/09 Ontario** - Treasure Valley Comm. College, Weese Bldg., 650 College Blvd.

**1/13/10 La Grande** - La Grande Public Library, 2006 Fourth St.

**1/14/10 Pendleton** - Umatilla-Morrow ESD, Lodgepole Room, 2001 SW Nye Ave.

**13. What is the mileage reimbursement policy for attendees of the RAI Workshops?**

Reimbursement for mileage is available, upon request, at a rate of .55/mile for those traveling more than 50 miles round trip. Funding is limited and carpooling is strongly encouraged. Mileage reimbursement requests are subject to a first come, first serve basis.

**14. Where can I learn more about best practices in mentoring and enrichment programs?**

Oregon Mentors	<a href="http://www.oregonmentors.org">www.oregonmentors.org</a>
Oregon Ask	<a href="http://www.oregonask.org">www.oregonask.org</a>
Search Institute	<a href="http://www.search-institute.org">www.search-institute.org</a>
Afterschool Alliance	<a href="http://www.afterschoolalliance.org">www.afterschoolalliance.org</a>
MENTORS	<a href="http://www.mentoring.org">www.mentoring.org</a>

***15. Where can I learn more about The Oregon Community Foundation's funding opportunity for mentoring and enrichment programs through the Eastern Oregon Regional Action Initiative?***

The Oregon Community Foundation's website has information on the Eastern Oregon Regional Action Initiative. To access this information go to:  
<http://www.oregoncf.org/resources/regional-map/eastern-oregon-rai>.

**For more information, please contact Tiffany Hegarty, Eastern Oregon Regional Action Initiative Coordinator, [t.hegarty@q.com](mailto:t.hegarty@q.com) or 541.276.1898**