

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

2017 Technology Seal of Approval Solicitation

Introduction and Program Information

Complete College America

Established in 2009, Complete College America (CCA) is a national nonprofit with a single mission: to work with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations.

The need for this work is compelling. Between 1970 and 2009, undergraduate enrollment in the United States more than doubled, while the completion rate has been virtually unchanged. We've made progress in giving students from all backgrounds access to college – but we haven't finished the all-important job of helping them achieve a degree. Counting the success of all students is an essential first step. And then we must move with urgency to reinvent American higher education to meet the needs of the new majority of students on our campuses, delicately balancing the jobs they need with the education they desire.

Complete College America believes there is great reason for optimism ... and a clear path forward. With a little more support – and a lot of common sense – we can ensure that many more young people get the high-quality college education that will help them live productive and fulfilling lives. All Americans will share in the benefits of their success.

GPS Seal of Approval Program

CCA developed the Guided Pathways to Success (GPS) to encourage higher education institutions to develop best practices for improved success, academic progress and degree attainment for students. The essential elements depend upon institutions defining and offering clearly organized pathways supported by the availability of courses. Both institutions and students should rely on technology to track progress and effectively manage resources for current and future planning.

The GPS Seal of Approval program signaled to American higher education institutions that implementation of GPS strategies can now be fully supported by technology. More than that, deployment of the right technology can also speed the shift in culture, policy and practice to ensure every student can choose their path, enter their path, maintain steady progress on their path and graduate on time.

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

The 2017 program expands the award scope for Guided Pathways to include support for Informed Choice and Proactive Advising. The award process will be based on a review of solutions evaluated against a defined set of best practices, effective implementations and aspirational standards. The Seal of Approval advisory board will again oversee the program evaluation and award process.

The GPS Seal of Approval program will recognize industry tools and practices that facilitate institutional effectiveness to achieve the goals of GPS. The award process is based on a review of solutions evaluated against a defined set of best practices, effective implementations and aspirational standards. In order to achieve the award, solution providers must demonstrate the features offered in their software solutions and strategies to develop policies and business processes during implementation. Any number of solution providers may receive the award.

Guided Pathways

Students choose coherent academic majors or programs, not random, individual courses. In this way, a clear path to on-time completion is prepared for students, semester by semester, all the way to graduation day. Students remain on their chosen path unless given approval to change by an adviser. Exploration outside one's major is still allowed and enabled as intentional investigation, replacing aimless wandering. Students stay on track for graduation — and fully understand the time and money consequences of making a change.

Informed Choice

Colleges use a range of information such as past performance in high school to provide recommendations to students about programs of study that match their skills and interests. With this information, students can make more informed choices among a set of initial broad academic pathways that lead to academic programs.

Proactive Advising

Innovations in technology now allow student support to be targeted and customized to meet the needs of individual students as colleges can more effectively monitor student progress. Early warning systems make it easy for institutions to track student performance in required courses and target interventions when they are most needed. Academic advisers can focus attention almost exclusively on students most in need of services instead of spreading themselves thinly over burdensome caseloads.

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

Submission Guidelines

General Information

Proposals should be emailed to sealofapproval@completecollege.org by 5:00 pm ET on July 14, 2017. Submissions must be submitted electronically along with a signed cover letter. Please note that it is the solution provider's responsibility to ensure that the submissions and all other required documents are received at the address named above by the closing date specified above.

The solution provider shall bear all costs associated with the preparation and submission of the solution provider's response to this program and the subsequent evaluation phase. CCA will in no case be responsible for these costs, regardless of the conduct or outcome of the evaluation process.

Questions and Clarifications

An online meeting will be conducted on Tuesday June 13, 2017 at 2:00p ET to describe the process and answer questions. The details for the meeting are below:

Join from your computer, tablet or smartphone.
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/188279061>

You can also dial in using your phone.
United States: +1 (872) 240-3412

Access Code: 188-279-061

First GoToMeeting? Try a test session: <https://care.citrixonline.com/g2m/getready>

For all other questions, solution providers should aggregate their requests for clarification and submit them via email to sealofapproval@completecollege.org. Such requests for clarification and responses will be posted to the program web-site without identifying the source of the inquiry. All questions must be received by 5:00 pm ET on July 14, 2017.

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Timeline

| Activity | Date(s) |
|---------------------------|--|
| June 6, 2017 | Solicitation Release |
| June 6-16, 2017 | Questions and Clarifications |
| June 13, 2017 | Solicitation Webinar |
| July 14, 2017 | Submission Due |
| July 14 - August 11, 2017 | Submission Review |
| August 11, 2017 | Finalist Announcements |
| September 5-8, 2017 | Finalist Presentations |
| Sept 11- Oct 6, 2017 | Reference Checks |
| October 27, 2017 | Award Announcements |
| Nov 30- Dec 1, 2017 | Award Presentation at annual Convening |

Submission Requirements

Cover Letter and Contact Information

The submission must be accompanied by a cover letter, signed by an individual authorized to bind the entity. Full contact information for the authorized individual must be provided and include; name, title, address, email address and phone number. Please include a complete company profile; financial information is not required.

Response to Feature List

The feature list contains fifty-six (56) features that promote best practice functionality in the areas of Informed Choice, Guided Pathways and Proactive Advising. Features 1-36 represent the core solution functionality to support GPS principles. The responses may take one of two forms.

1. A description of the features told in a narrative format. The description could be details of the features or user stories told from the perspective of the student or staff. Please

COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA

address as many of the features as possible in the narrative along with any functionality not listed that supports the GPS principles.

2. Detailed responses to each of the features in the list. Responses can be directly added to the spreadsheet. Solution providers are encouraged to address as many as possible and may add to the list to describe functionality not list that support the GPS principles.

Features 37-56 represent the technology and practices that promote successful implementation and use. Responses to each should be provided as direct responses in the feature spreadsheet.

For all responses the font should be 10pt. The entire response should not exceed fifteen (15) printed pages. Any information not provided will be assumed to be functionality not available from the solution provider. Any functionality that is currently in development must be so indicated.

CCA reserves the right to verify any information contained in the solution provider's submission or to request additional information after the submission has been received. Every affirmative answer to an item will be assumed to mean that the solution provider agrees the capability is currently available and supported within its product(s).

Attachment and Supplements

Submissions can include any material solution providers feels would enhance the response. Marketing brochures included as part of the main body of the submission shall not be considered. Such material must be submitted only as attachments and must not be used as a substitute for written responses. Identify the attachment file with the feature number from the spreadsheet. In case of any conflict between the content in the attachments and solution providers' answers in the body of the submission, the latter will prevail.

Confidential Information

CCA is aware that information contained in the proposals gives an indication of the solution provider's current operations. Therefore, use of this information from solution providers shall be confined to this request and will be treated as confidential.

Evaluation of Submissions and Awards

Evaluation Process

The evaluation process includes three steps to ensure the submissions are complete, contain acceptable responses to the requirements and verifiable as viable solutions in the market.

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- Preliminary Evaluation: The preliminary evaluation will determine if the submission is complete. Solution providers will be notified if any part of the submission is incomplete.
- Clarifications: The advisory board may have questions about the submission. Questions will be collected and provided to solution providers in July.
- Detailed Evaluation: A detailed evaluation will determine the conformity to the best practice requirements and identify finalists for the award.
- Demonstration and Reference Checks: Finalists will be asked to provide demonstrations of the solutions. CCA will conduct interviews with the reference implementations to explore the solutions in action.

Awards

The Seal of Approval will be awarded to solution providers who offer software solutions that promote and facilitate institutions to achieve GPS goals. To receive the seal of approval, solution providers must demonstrate solutions that satisfy the best practice requirements and measurements. Additionally, solution providers must make evident their strategies for promoting the policies and processes necessary for institutions to implement change.

CCA will be the sole judge of the qualifications of all prospective candidates and reserves the right to reject any and all submissions without recourse. CCA will not provide the evaluation or criteria to solution providers. The awards will be announced prior the annual convening and awarded during the convening in New Orleans, LA.