

**Guidelines for the Submission of Applications to
Enhance Work-Based Learning Experiences (*WBLE*⁺)
for Postsecondary Degree Programs**



BOARD *of* REGENTS
STATE OF LOUISIANA

[Applications Due: May 31, 2024, 11:59 p.m. Central Time](#)

Request for Applications to Enhance Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE⁺) for Postsecondary Degree Programs

A. Purpose of Application

The Louisiana Board of Regents (BOR) invites academic department heads from Louisiana public postsecondary institutions to submit an application to participate in the Enhancing Work-Based Learning Experiences (WBLE⁺) project funded by The Strada Education Foundation (Strada). The project will work with 20 degree programs selected from applicants at Louisiana public postsecondary institutions to develop WBLE⁺ opportunities as graduation requirements for their degree programs and study short and long term outcomes for students who participate in the program.

The Louisiana WBLE⁺ Study

Strada has awarded the Louisiana Board of Regents a grant to conduct The Louisiana WBLE⁺ Study. The study is a multi-year research project that will provide proof of concept for WBLE⁺ best practices that lead to student success and prosperity. The goal of the study is to better understand how various WBLE⁺ practices impact the ongoing success of students after graduation. The study will seek to confirm existing research on how effective implementation of WBLE⁺ results in long-term benefits to students in terms of job placement, earnings, and increased prosperity. In addition, the study will seek to understand how the design of WBLE⁺ impacts access and success in WBLE⁺. Design elements to be examined include compensation to students for work-based learning, level of campus support from faculty and advisors, curriculum alignment, exposure to networking opportunities, and the impact of faculty and staff roles on student outcomes.

B. Program Administrator and Questions About this Request for Applications (RFA)

Specific questions shall be submitted via email to the BOR Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs, Louisiana Board of Regents, Janet.Newhall@laregents.edu with the subject line “WBLE+ RFA inquiry.”

C. Eligibility and Project Requirements

To be eligible for the study, the program applicants must be a degree program at a Louisiana public undergraduate degree-granting institution (2- and 4-year institutions). Eligible programs should not have an existing work-based learning requirement as part of the curriculum, including those experiences required for licensure or certification (eg. Nursing, Education, etc.).

Selected academic programs must adopt a credit bearing WBLE⁺ requirement for all students enrolled in the identified academic program. The WBLE⁺ design must include all of the following five elements:

- CURRICULUM. Embed WBLE⁺ into the academic credit curriculum.
- EVERYONE. Design employer pathways and partnerships that result in paid professional opportunities that are available to every student in the program of study.
- HIGH QUALITY. Incorporate evidence-based approaches where faculty, students, and prospective employers understand and are committed to implementing strategies that achieve intended student outcomes.
- REAL-WORLD. Offer substantive real-world experiences that connect learning to the needs of potential future employers.

- NETWORK. Provide opportunities for students to network with *WBLE*⁺ employers in the workplace and at hosted campus-level events in order to build relationships that lead to high-paying job opportunities in their chosen field.

Selected programs will be required to submit data describing the program model and measuring its impact, which will include but is not limited to:

- Structure of *WBLE*⁺ strategies to be employed by the program.
- Student enrollment in the program of study
- Relevant student outcome data
- Student satisfaction
- Learning mindset
- Employment outcomes

Applications will be evaluated by Louisiana Board of Regents staff. The Louisiana Board of Regents will select up to 20 academic degree programs to participate in the study. Project proposals should include evidence that they:

- Possess the institutional capacity and commitment to scale *WBLE*⁺ for all credential seeking students.
- Have strong leadership from key stakeholders important to the design and implementation of *WBLE*⁺.
- Demonstrate a commitment to achieving access and success for every student.
- Demonstrate the program's commitment and capacity to sustain and continuously improve *WBLE*⁺ offerings to maximize access and success for all students.

Selected programs will receive \$12,000 to support the development and implementation of *WBLE*⁺. Programs will be invited to attend two convenings to support the development and continuous improvement of *WBLE*⁺ and receive assistance from external technical assistance providers with deep experience in the design and implementation of *WBLE*⁺ in programs of study.

Regents may choose to reject any applications that do not appropriately meet program requirements and project goals.

Disallowed Budget Items: *WBLE*⁺ monies cannot be used for ongoing operational costs of existing or proposed programs, entities, or projects. Indirect costs may not be requested from this program.

D. Submission Requirements

The academic program submitting an application must respond no later than 11:59 PM Central time on May 31, 2024. Submissions should be emailed to Janet Newhall at the following email address janet.newhall@laregents.edu.

The application shall include the following information:

1. Institution Name
2. Academic Degree Program Name (eg. BA Philosophy, AA Criminal Justice, etc.)

3. Faculty member from the applying academic program who will lead the program's participation in the study.
4. Proposed roster for a *WBLE*⁺ design team. This may include program faculty, program advisors, career services/workforce development staff, appropriate academic affairs administrator, and representative from partner employer(s). Include name, title, and up to 100-word bio for each team member.
5. Full time equivalent (FTE) enrollment and completer data for the applicant academic program during the past five academic years; disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, and age. Please provide this information in a table.
6. Responses to the following (2000-word max total):
 - How do you envision increasing access and participation in *WBLE*⁺ for every student enrolled in the selected program of study?
 - Describe any current or past *WBLE*⁺ offered by the program.
 - Explain why the academic program is well-positioned to develop high-quality *WBLE*⁺.
 - Why do you believe your program is a strong candidate for the *WBLE*⁺ study?
 - Outline any challenges to developing high-quality *WBLE*⁺ within the institution and/or academic program.
 - Explain where you need technical assistance to realize your vision.
7. Explain how the academic program and/or institution proposes to utilize the \$12,000 provided for participating in the study. What resources is your institution and/or academic department willing to commit to the effort? (500-word limit)
8. Letter of commitment from the CAO or appropriate academic affairs administrator articulating how *WBLE*⁺ will be included in the institution's Meauxmentum Plan. The letter should also explain how the study will inform future efforts to scale *WBLE*⁺ requirements to other academic programs at the institution.

Interested entities may be required to participate in preliminary discussions with representatives from the Regents Staff to fully explore the requirements and expectations of the proposed program.

E. Application Requirements and Format

All narrative sections of the application should be presented in a single PDF document with pages numbered, 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and each side. In addition, the font should be no smaller than 12 point. Forms must be completed, and applications submitted via email to janet.newhall@laregents.edu with the subject line "WBLE+ RFA Documents" by May 31, 2024, 11:59 p.m. Central Time.

F. Academic Program Selection and Timeline

Applications will be reviewed by the Louisiana Board of Regents staff.

Once selected, the Board of Regents and the selected institution where the academic program resides will complete an Interagency Transfer Agreement (ITA). The institution must expend the funds by December 1, 2026, report how the funds were spent, and explain how the expenditure contributed to the design and implementation of their *WBLE+* strategy.

The following schedule for submission, assessment, and approval of funding will apply:

Applications Open	Friday, April 26, 2024
Deadline for Submission of Questions	Friday, May 24, 2024
Applications Due	Friday, May 31, 2024
Program Selections Made	Friday, June 28, 2024
Informational Webinar for Selected Programs	July, 2024
<i>WBLE+</i> Convening	September, 2024
<i>WBLE+</i> Program Launch	Fall, 2025
Final Study Report Complete	December, 2026