**SWP RFA Pathway Navigation Consultation Process**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**DRAFT – updated November 6, 2018**

1. **How does this Pathway Navigation effort fit in with Guided Pathways and its goals?**

The Strong Workforce Pathway Navigation work is intended to integrate fully with the Guided Pathways efforts at each college. The aim is to bolster each college’s work in the area of “entering the path” and spotlight opportunities to strengthen intake processes for all students, referrals to pathways as well as to services, and early career exploration as a foundation for education planning—all to support students’ success as they embark on their college experience.

1. **What if we don’t know where to start?**

Begin with completing the Self-Assessment to help determine priorities, focus areas, and opportunities for attainable successes. The first year may be used for planning. Ideally, the college would also test some ideas in order to make planning more action-oriented. College teams will have the opportunity to learn from other teams about “best practices” or strategies being tested elsewhere.

1. **Should we address one of the three goals in a specific year, or tackle three goals in one year? Should we address the goals in sequential order or simultaneously?**
Through the life of the project, all three goals would be addressed, but it is not required to tackle all three goals in one year, or to take on one at a time. A college may wish to focus on planning in Year 1—either across the board or in one or two areas. Regardless of when each goal is addressed, plans should align with each college’s Self-Assessment.
2. **What is the definition of *orientation*?**

The intention is to let each college define what orientation consists of at its college, but it would include both online and in-person activities; information about specific departments or pathways in addition to information about the campus as a whole; and information about both academic programs and a full array of student services.

1. **What is the definition of *comprehensive intake*?**

Comprehensive intake encompasses the multiple needs and interests of students, including logistical and financial needs (child care, transportation, restrictions based on existing employment, etc.) as well as academic and career goals. The intention is to know students well enough to proactively refer them to programs and services or to anticipate what programs and services may be needed, in order to support student success from the outset.

1. **What is the definition of *differentiated orientation*?**

Differentiated orientation refers to the customization of orientation services based on the wide diversity of students’ needs and interests. It may suggest offering online orientation for students who work during the day and can’t attend a daytime event. Conversely, it may mean offering in-person orientations to students who could benefit from meeting their peers on campus. Similarly, students with varying career goals might receive distinct orientations to pathways of interest. A comprehensive intake process would support differentiated orientation.

1. **What is the definition of *onboarding*?**

For this work, onboarding is the general term for all the steps required to get students through from outreach to entering the path (including pre-enrollment/engagement, matriculation and assessment, and career & education planning).

1. **Since this is not a competitive process, what are the expected outcomes?**

The outcomes are based on the results of your Self-Assessment and priorities. Use the review checklist as a guide for fleshing out the application.

1. **Can plans be modified in Year 2 or Year 3?**

Yes, modification is possible. This is intended to be a dynamic process; progress or challenges in Year 1 may suggest the need for changes in Years 2 and 3.

1. **Can budgets be modified in Year 2 or Year 3?**

The Years 2 and 3 budgets should be crafted thoughtfully but, yes, modification is possible. The overall amount per year will not change, but the use of funds in Years 2 and 3 may change in alignment with any changes in plans, personnel, etc.

1. **Are there restrictions on what the funds can be spent on?**

There are no firm restrictions on the use of funds. However, given the limited resources, and existing investments in regional infrastructure, it is suggested that colleges invest in release time, salaries, or stipends for activities such as planning, development work, or professional learning, rather than in tools or technology.

1. **How do we plan for sustainability after the three years of funds are over?**

These funds are intended to launch change processes that will *reshape* the way colleges engage and support students—using existing resources more strategically—with the aim of achieving greater retention and other positive outcomes for students. In addition, colleges are encouraged to leverage such initiatives as the Student Equity and Achievement Program and other efforts that build internal capacity to continue the work after the funding is expired.

1. **What is an example of a *comprehensive intake form*? Can it be online and paper form?**

The RFA does not specify if intake should be handled online or in person; the use of the word “form” also applies to an online survey. One example of a simple, but well-vetted intake survey was provided by Northeast Wisconsin Technical college. Link to a sample form: [Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC)](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1I0TbxNUCoUf82RL2MSGRNuux6DwPLeyn)

1. **Are career exploration tools and assessments appropriate use of funds?**

Yes, adoption of career exploration tools such as career assessments based on the Holland codes *could* be an appropriate use of the resources, depending on needs identified in the Self-Assessment. However, it may be equally important to invest resources in establishing career assessment and exploration as a process step that precedes education planning, or in providing faculty and staff with professional learning opportunities to better understand career development theory and practice; any number of readily available tools could then be adopted.

1. **Could we consider Year 1 to be a pilot year?**

Yes, as long as the piloting process is dynamic and leads to sustained action. This funding is intended to support a continuous improvement effort that may have a “first phase”.

1. **Can we use the Year 1 funds to do professional development?**

Yes, colleges may use Year 1 funds for professional development if, through the Self-Assessment, the college determines that professional development is needed and would be a good way to get started. Professional Development can help build commitment to the work.