**TOPIC:**  **APPROVAL OF INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS FOR 2022-23 OER GRANT PROGRAM**

**PREPARED BY:** **CHEALSYE BOWLEY, DIRECTOR OF OPEN EDUCATION**  **AND LEARNING INNOVATION**

**SUMMARY**

This consent item seeks approval of grants identified through the comprehensive review process conducted by the Open Educational Resources (OER) Council and department staff for the 2022-23 OER Grant Program award year.

**BACKGROUND**

The OER grant program is now in its fifth year. For the 2022/23 Cohort 5 grant cycle, the request for proposals (RFP) was structured to encourage proposals ranging from professional exploration and development (with a focus on OER) to creation, adaptation, and/or adoption incentives of OER by faculty, staff, or administrators. For this grant cycle, there are three levels of grants:

* **Individual or Small Group Grants** ranging from **$250-$10,000** to support the review, creation, adaptation, or adoption of OER by faculty and/or staff, especially at institutions without an existing OER initiative or associated incentive funding.
* **Institutional Grants** ranging from **$10,001-$75,000** to support deploying and sustaining existing institution-wide OER initiatives, including through the use of incentive funding for faculty and staff.
* **Collaborative or Partnership Grants** ranging from **$10,000-$75,000** to support creation, adaption, or adoption of OER across multi-institutional or K-12 partners.

**Applicant Pool**

The RFP resulted in 17 new submissions, along with 10 requests for continuation of two-year projects that were initially funded in the prior grant cycle, totaling over $1.2 million in proposed projects. The number of proposals decreased from the previous year, but the quality and impact potential remained strong from 22 institutions across the state. One institution, which had previously been awarded single-year grants, submitted a new two-year proposal in the 2022/23 cycle. Additionally, two collaborative or partnership proposals were received for the first time in the history of the grant program. This indicates the initiative’s continued growth and impact throughout Colorado and mirrors the department’s and OER Council’s goal of 100% OER awareness across the state.

Among the 17 submitted new proposals, 65% (11) were from institutions of higher education for institutional level grants, 36% (4) were for small groups or individuals, and 18% (2) were collaborative or partnership grants. The proposals were from 22 different institutions, both urban and rural, and from the community college system. The OER Council and staff completed a month-long comprehensive review. OER Council members recused themselves from proposals associated with their home institutions and systems. As a result of the review, the OER council and staff recommend funding 25 proposals – 22 institutional grants, 2 individual or small group grants, and 1 collaborative or partnership grant. The department staff provided pre-notifications of shortlisted proposals to applicants in February 2023. This afforded institutions an opportunity for future planning and to provide revised budgets to CDHE based on the recommended funding with the understanding that final approval of their grant status would take place at the March 2023 CCHE meeting.

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

As articulated in previous Commission presentations, one of the goals of the OER Grant Program is to encourage as much participation throughout the state as possible. This is to strengthen the widescale potential and collective impact of OER work. Receiving collaborative and partnership proposals during this grant cycle is an indicator that we are continuing to achieve state-wide participation. The selected collaborative grant is a partnership across 5 Colorado higher education institutions. Awards in the 2022/23 cycle 5 were granted to as many qualified proposals as possible. Additionally, professional development funding and opportunities will be available to institutions and individuals who did not receive funding. This approach allows campuses to begin the work of selected proposals while providing further support for those not selected to attend the annual statewide OER Conference and/or to pursue related professional development opportunities.

By awarding grants to institutions from across the state, as well as providing support for several individuals to attend the statewide OER conference and/or other OER focused training in 2023, the next round of grant funding should help to continue the momentum toward the goals of student savings and success through OER. In addition to the grant funding, multiple institutions have created Open Education Librarian or OER Coordinator roles, indicating long-term, institutional commitments for supporting OER and open education initiatives.

The total recommended award amount is for grants totaling $960,018 to campuses, educators, faculty and staff for their OER initiatives. The recommended projects are listed in Attachment A.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommend approval of grants to advance the OER initiative in Colorado.

**STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

Pursuant to [HB 18-1331](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb18-1331), which added Article 4.5 to Title 23, Colorado Revised Statutes, the Commission shall award grants through the grant program and shall take into account, but is not bound by, the recommendations of the council and staff in doing so. [SB 21-215](https://leg.colorado.gov/bills/sb21-215) expanded and extended the grant program with revisions and additions to §23-4.5-101 to §23-4.5-104, C.R.S.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

Attachment A: Colorado OER Grant Program Recommended Award Recipients for OER Grant Program Year Five