

# Advanced Technological Education (ATE) Grant Development and STEM Capacity Building Mentoring Initiatives



**Mentor-Connect** is the largest and one of the longest-running mentoring services supported by the NSF ATE Program. Mentor-Connect exists to help educators, especially at two-year technical and community colleges, effectively engage with and benefit from the National Science Foundation Advanced Technological Education (NSF ATE)

funding program. Comprehensive, year-round, real-time, and interactive support and mentoring is provided for STEM faculty, grant writers, and administrators in writing competitive grant proposals to secure funding for the improvement of STEM programs that prepare highly skilled technicians essential to the U.S. economy. Based at Florence-Darlington Technical College, Florence, SC, Mentor-Connect provides unique support for prospective grantees that extends beyond successful proposal development to include navigating the NSF funding process and project implementation. Mentor-Connect covers \$1,200 travel costs/person/event for participants to attend two workshops and provides registration for faculty to attend the annual High Impact Technology Exchange Conference (HI-TEC). Applications are accepted annually and open in the early summer. For more information, see [www.Mentor-Connect.org](http://www.Mentor-Connect.org).



**Project Vision** is a National Science Foundation (NSF) funded initiative to help colleges discover and match innovative ideas with NSF funding opportunities. Launched in 2020, Project Vision's mission is to provide two-year diverse, small, rural colleges and/or colleges with newer presidents the expertise to generate innovative ideas that produce award-worthy NSF proposals. It will also offer support at all levels of a college ecosystem including board of trustees, presidents, administrators, and faculty. The project provides each college the support needed to build their capacity to regularly submit NSF grant proposals. Applications are accepted annually. Cohorts of 10 are selected each December for services the following year. Each college is provided with a mentor team, a \$6,000 stipend, introductions through Project Vision's network, and access to the NSF ATE Principal Investigators Conference. For more information, see [www.projectvis.org](http://www.projectvis.org).



The **MentorLinks** program, supported by the National Science Foundation, is designed

to help community colleges develop or strengthen technician education programs in STEM fields through mentoring, professional development opportunities, and technical assistance; to establish connections for colleges to identify new ideas and relationships through networking opportunities at program meetings and Advanced Technological Education (ATE) National Conferences; and to help colleges gain insight about support for building and sustaining new programs. Colleges should be interested in working with an experienced community college mentor who has successfully planned and implemented a major change in a high-technology program. A Request for Proposals will be available in early 2021. Ten teams are selected per cohort and matched with an experienced mentor. MentorLinks colleges receive \$20,000 for the two-year grant period and travel support for the project director to attend three project meetings. For more information, see [www.aacc.nche.edu/programs/mentorlinks/](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/programs/mentorlinks/).



## ATE Centers

The National Science Foundation (NSF) supports a network of Advanced Technological Education (ATE) Centers as part of an integrated approach to STEM technician education that defines and disseminates the critical knowledge and skills required to support the high technology industries in the U.S. To advance the NSF ATE program's mission of educating the skilled technical workforce, ATE Centers

provide mentoring to prospective PIs to broaden the impact of the ATE program as well as provide faculty professional development opportunities within their area of expertise. For more information about ATE Centers, please see the *ATE Impacts* publication <https://ateimpacts.net/book>.



**Mentor Up** is a proven mentoring model that combines a three-day workshop with one-on-one mentoring and supplementary webinars to help community college faculty write and submit a successful NSF ATE proposal. Applications open in

October with the program beginning in January. Up to 18 teams of three are selected; two faculty are paid by the grant including travel and stipends for participation and grant submission. The three-day workshop is held in the summer. All ATE program tracks are eligible to participate, but the Mentor Up has mainly focused on small and regular projects plus instrumentation grants. For more information, see <http://www.nextgenmfg.org/mentor-up/application>.



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