

WAESOL Project Funding Grant Application Letter

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I am applying for a WAESOL Project Funding Grant to help fund a research study that aims to give insight into student perspectives and motivations around retention and completion in academic or intensive English language programs at community colleges in Washington State. Specifically, this is an extension of work by faculty at Cascadia College this past year in a Faculty Learning Circle that completed a literature review on existing research around international student retention. While external factors beyond faculty control drive the enrollment numbers for new students, faculty and staff may have the ability to influence student motivation and drive to stay in a program and even transition to college level courses. Faculty at Cascadia College hope to complete a qualitative research study utilizing focus groups of students, including those who repeated levels or dropped out of the program, to identify supports and barriers that influence students' motivation, retention, and completion. As a result, we will be able to analyze what our program does well and identify areas for improved service to our ELL international students. This may also provide insight for other college IEPs in the area.

Our college professional development committee will provide a small amount of funding for faculty to work on this research; however, we anticipate that leading focus groups, transcribing recordings, and analyzing data will require several more hours than we can pay faculty to complete this work. Specifically, we estimate at least 30 hours of work, but our current funding will only cover a maximum of 15 hours. As a result, I am applying for the WAESOL Project Funding Grant to supplement our research project funding. In the current contract, faculty are reimbursed at \$44 per hour for additional duties. If awarded a \$500 Project Funding Grant, we would be able to pay for approximately 11 more hours of faculty work on this project.

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Thank you for your consideration!