Award Information

1. *What is the range of awards?*

   The estimated range of awards is $700,000-$1,000,000 per year. The max amount is $1M per year and any applicant requesting above the range will be designated ineligible and will not be reviewed.

2. *May an applicant request less than the average award size?*

   Yes.

3. *Do annual amounts have to be same or within the range of allowable awards?*

   No, annual budget amounts may vary but should not exceed the maximum award amount.

4. *Is the $1M a cap for direct and indirect total costs per year or are indirect costs above and beyond the $1M in direct costs?*

   The $1M cap includes both the direct and indirect costs per year.

5. *Is there a cost matching requirement? If so, are in-kind contributions acceptable as part of the grantee's match?*

   If a grantee institution plans to fund an endowment as part of the approved grant activities, a dollar-for-dollar match is required for each federal dollar used for that purpose. No other cost matching is required.

6. *What is the maximum endowment allowable?*

   The maximum endowment allowable is 20% of the total budget per year.

7. *If my institution proposes an endowment, how specific does language around the endowment description have to be?*

   The description of your proposed endowment is at your discretion; however, the purpose of the endowment must align with the HSI STEM program priorities.

Indirect Cost Rate

8. *Do we have the option of using 8% (restricted rate) if we have a higher DHSS indirect rate?*

   Yes, the grantee or subrecipient should budget the lower rate and annotate the voluntarily choice to waive indirect costs or charge less than the negotiated indirect cost rate, HSI STEM staff will allow this.

9. *May we use a 10% de minimis indirect cost rate if our institution does not have a federally negotiated rate?*

   Yes, any non-Federal entity that has never received a negotiated indirect cost rate, except for those non-Federal entities described in Appendix VII to Part 200—States and Local Government and Indian Tribe Indirect Cost Proposals, paragraph D.1.b, may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely. As described in 2 CFR § 200.403 Factors affecting allowability of costs, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology once elected must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.

10. *Can we get a link to any summary information on Indirect costs?*

    The cognizant agency for indirect cost for Institutions of Higher Education(IHEs) is the Department of Health and Human Services(https://rates.psc.gov/fms/dca/map1.html) or the Office of Naval Research (https://www.onr.navy.mil/en/work-with-us/manage-your-award/manage-grant-award#idc) as designated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). You may also find more information about Indirect Cost rates here: Indirect Cost Overview (ed.gov) and the OMB FAQs (https://www.cfo.gov/assets/files/2CRF-FrequentlyAskedQuestions_2021050321.pdf.)

11. *Can sub awardees take their institutional indirect cost rate on their subaward in addition to the indirect the lead institution can take on subawards--based on amounts up to $25K (Subaward is over $200K.)?*

    The passthrough entity (direct Federal award recipient) may utilize their indirect cost rate on the first $25,000 or below of subawards if utilizing the Modified Total Direct Cost base as stated in 2 § CFR 200.1 Definitions.

    Whereas, the subrecipient (sub awardees) may utilize their indirect cost rate on the subaward in compliance with 2 § C.F.R. 200.332 Requirements for pass-through entities.

12. *How are indirect costs classified?*

    Budget Classification

    Indirect costs are classified within the project budget line item for indirect costs by applying the applicable indirect cost rate to the allowable budget line items per the approved indirect cost rate agreement or de minimis indirect cost rate. For example, a grantee with a Modified Total Direct Cost base would apply their indirect cost rate to the allowable budget line items of direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first $25,000 of each subaward.

    Cost Classification

    There is not a universal rule for classifying costs, but the Cost Principles in 2 § CFR 200 Subpart E provide the basis for cost allowability for both direct and indirect costs. Program statutes and regulations also provide guidelines for classification of costs.

13. ***In the budget sheet there's a separate line, after direct and indirect costs have been calculated, for "training stipends." Is this where student stipends should be reflected?***

Yes, training stipends for students should be recorded in that budget line item, otherwise known as participant support costs. The line item is still a part of the budget, but the Modified Total Direct Cost base excludes these costs from recover from indirect costs. Please double check with your Grants Policy and Training Division liaison about other program specific line items within your grantee budgets.

14. ***If we are budgeting stipends, would these go under "other"?***

Often times there are terminology differences, if payments are being made to individuals other than students you would need to make a determination jointly with the Grants, Policy, and Training Division liaison to discuss the appropriate classification.

Programmatic

15. ***Could you clarify the eligible majors included as "STEM" in the HSI STEM, Title III Part F program?***

    For the HSI STEM and Articulation (HSI STEM) program, "STEM" is an acronym for the following academic disciplines: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. The HSI STEM program recognizes that there are integrated disciplines of STEM. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the applicant institution to clarify in the application how the proposed courses, majors, programs, etc. align with an academic discipline of STEM, as well as the HSI STEM program and priorities.

16. ***What are the allowable activities under this program?***

    Please refer to 34 CFR 606.10 for a list of allowable and unallowable activities.

17. ***Can a 4-year HSI institution partner with a non-HSI 2-year institution?***

    Yes, however the lead institution must be an HSI.

18. ***Can an institution be the lead in more than one application?***

    An institution may only receive one award as the lead applicant.

19. ***Is it possible to receive this HSI award and a Title III Strengthening Institutions award?***

    Yes.

20. ***Can an institution hold two HSI STEM grants simultaneously?***

    Yes.

21. ***Does this grant allow a transfer model to occur between different campuses of the same system?***

    Yes.

22. ***To address to the absolute priority, can we build upon/strengthen existing articulation agreements or do we need to create new ones?***

    The proposed project can support either new or existing articulation agreements.

23. ***Can you tell if applications must increase Hispanic and low-income students participating in STEM and develop model transfer and articulation agreements, or if we can do one or the other?***

    Yes. Per the Notice, the absolute priority states you must address both: increase Hispanic and low-income students participating in STEM *and* develop model transfer and articulation agreements.

24. ***Do you consider Hispanic and Low Income as different/separate?***

    The program prioritizes both Hispanic *and* low income, and the proposed project should address both components**.**

25. ***Should I address whether my institution has an existing or had a pre-existing STEM project?***

    Within the narrative, perhaps under the selection criteria Significance, an applicant may choose to leverage positive outcomes from previous HSI STEM projects**.**

26. ***Do we have to address both competitive preference priorities?***

    You may address one or both Competitive Preference Priorities.

27. ***Where in the proposal do you address the priorities?***

    The priorities should be addressed in the project narrative. In responding to the selection criteria, clearly identify which priorities you are addressing.

28. ***Are we required to have outcomes associated with all GPRA indicators?***

    An applicant may not produce outcomes that give data for all performance indicators, however for assessing the effectiveness of the proposed project, the applicant should seek to address as many GPRA indicators as possible.

29. ***For the performance measure "The number and percentage of Hispanic and low-income students transferring successfully to a four-year institution from a two-year institution and retained in a STEM field major" does "retained" mean just initially enrolled in a STEM major at a 4-year institution, or enrolled in a STEM major at a 4-year institution and remained in a STEM major for their second year?***

    Retained, as it relates to this performance measure means retention within a STEM field.

30. ***In responding to the performance measures, can we include part-time students in our count?***

    No, performance measures are based off full time equivalent undergraduate students.

31. ***Is the bibliography a "required" attachment or can we use footnotes within our Project Narrative?***

    A bibliography is not a required attachment and footnotes are permitted.

32. ***Are we required to attach study(ies) addressing promising evidence if we don't have a URL? And if so, will the abstract be sufficient, or do you want the full study attached?***

    Per the application booklet, a bibliography of cited studies should be attached to the Other Attachments Form.

33. ***Can we use funds for student travel to STEM conferences and presentations?***

    Yes.

34. ***Do we need to upload studies whether from WWC or elsewhere?***

    No, you may cite the study or studies in the bibliography.

35. ***Can we use grant funds to cover student tuition and fees?***

    No, you cannot use grant funds to cover student tuition and fees.

36. ***Are transportation costs allowable?***

    Transportation costs must be aligned to both the goals of your proposed project and the HSI STEM program purpose and priorities.
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37. ***Are we now required to include letters of support and CVs?***

    No, letters of support and CVs are not required, however they can strengthen an application as it shows commitment to the project and expertise to implement the activities.

38. ***Do the CVs and letters of support count against page limits?***

    No.

39. ***Does the Project Director have to be a full-time position?***

No, the Project Director does not have to be full-time, however their level of effort should be proportionate to the project.

40. ***Are we expected to institutionalize positions and/or all activities?***

No, however projects should be developed that will increase the likelihood that the project will result in system change or improvement.

41. ***Can certificates be included as allowable outcomes?***

Certificates are permitted as an allowable outcome but ***not*** the final outcome; only degrees can be the final outcome.

42. ***Are student internships allowable?***

Yes.

43. ***Is there a minimum and/or maximum amount per year that is designated for an external evaluator? Additionally, does the external evaluator have to be identified in the application?***

No, the amount designated for an evaluator is determined by the applicant. Additionally, the external evaluator does not have to be identified in the application.

44. ***If an applicant proposes creating an endowment, does the language about the endowment need to explicitly state that it will benefit Hispanic or low-income students?***

No, however the proposal for the endowment should align to the program purpose.

45. ***Many of our STEM students transfer to our 4-years without an AA/AS degree. If a student transfers from a 2 year to 4 year without an AA/AS degree, is it considered a completion?***

No, completion is defined as attainment of a degree.

46. ***Can grant funds be used to develop Open Educational Resources through faculty stipends? Are there requirements for registering OER materials developed with this grant?***

Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded   competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements, please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

47. ***Is food and allowable expense when providing educational workshops/conferences?***

Yes. A conference is defined as a meeting, retreat, seminar, symposium, workshop, or event whose primary purpose is the dissemination of technical information beyond the non-Federal entity. Allowable conference costs paid by the non-Federal entity as a sponsor or host of the conference may include costs of meals and refreshments, unless further restricted by the terms and conditions of the Federal award. Please refer to 2 CFR 200.432 for additional information.

48. ***Is it possible to include some equipment for the community college we are partnering with in the budget?***

Yes, equipment costs are permissible and must align with the proposed project.

49. ***Can grant funds be used to fund student textbooks specific courses in STEM?***

No.

50. ***Can the CO-PI be a senior administrator and not be paid by the grant?***

Yes.

51. ***If the institution is doing cost-share -- for example, showing institutionalization of a position or activity, should those funds be in the Section B forms of the ED Form 524 or is that not necessary?***

If you are required to provide or volunteer to provide cost-sharing or matching funds or other non-Federal resources to the project, these should be shown for each applicable budget category on lines 1-11 of Section B.