

DOI, Office of the Assistant Secretary Policy, Management and Budget

**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

HOIHI Grant Program for Native Hawaiian Organizations

Funding Opportunity Number

D26AS00098

## Table of Contents

BASIC INFORMATION.....	1
ELIGIBILITY .....	2
Cost Sharing Requirement .....	3
GET READY TO APPLY .....	3
Required System Registrations .....	3
PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....	3
Program Goals.....	3
Program Description .....	4
Legislative Authority .....	5
Type of Award .....	5
PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION .....	5
Application Content and Format.....	5
Application Documents.....	6
SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES .....	12
Address to Request Application Package .....	13
Submission Dates and Times .....	13
Submission Instructions .....	13
APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION.....	14
Eligibility Review .....	14
Merit Review.....	15
Review and Selection Process.....	17
Risk Review .....	19
AWARD NOTICES .....	19
POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION .....	19
Administration and National Policy Requirements .....	19
Reporting.....	20

### BASIC INFORMATION

**Announcement Type:** Initial

**Funding Opportunity Number:** D26AS00098

**Assistance Listing Number(s):** 15.068

**Estimated Total Program Funding:** \$1,200,000

**Expected Number of Awards:** 10

**Award Ceiling:** \$200,000

**Award Floor:** \$75,000

**Cost Sharing Required?**

No

**Closing Date Explanation**

Applications must be submitted electronically to the Grants.gov website no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), thus 5:59 pm Hawaii Standard Time (HST), on the application due date listed.

**OMB Control Number:**

**Have Questions?**

For more information, visit the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations website at: [www.doi.gov/hawaiian](http://www.doi.gov/hawaiian) or contact Brad Kaaleleo Wong, Program Manager at: [bradley\\_wong@ios.doi.gov](mailto:bradley_wong@ios.doi.gov).

**Executive Summary**

This notice of funding opportunity is administered by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary, Interior Business Center, Acquisition Services Directorate (AQD) as part of the U.S. Government Interagency Agreement between the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations (ONHR) and AQD.

The Office of Native Hawaiian Relations' (ONHR) Heritage (Tourism) Opportunities in Hawaii (HOIHI) Grant Program aims to implement the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act (NATIVE Act), 25 U.S.C. 4351 et seq., grounded in the Hawaiian value of ho'ihi – to treat with reverence and respect. Through this ethic, visitors are welcomed not merely as tourists, but as guests who share in the kuleana (responsibility) to care for Hawaii's natural resources and sacred sites. In advancing this model of culturally grounded tourism, HOIHI seeks to strengthen Native Hawaiian organizations' capacity to steward and share traditional knowledge in ways that create jobs, elevate living standards, and expand economic opportunity.

In concert with the requirements of the NATIVE Act, every successful HOIHI grant application must also support implementation of one or more of the Administration priorities listed under the Program Priorities for 2026.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

**Eligible Applicants**

Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)

Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

Nonprofits without 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education

Others (see text field entitled "Additional Information on Eligibility" for clarification)

**Additional Information on Eligibility**

Applications are welcome from organizations that meet the following criteria:

Eligible applicants are Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs). NHO means a nonprofit organization: (A) that serves the interests of Native Hawaiians; (B) in which Native Hawaiians serve in substantive and policymaking positions, and; (C) that are recognized for having expertise in Native Hawaiian culture and heritage, including tourism. Only one (1) application can be submitted under this announcement per organization and/or program director.

## Cost Sharing Requirement

**Cost Sharing Required?**

No

## GET READY TO APPLY

### Required System Registrations

#### Unique Entity Identifier and SAM.gov Registration

Before applying, all **applicants** except individuals applying as a natural person **must be registered in SAM.gov**. During the SAM.gov registration the entity will obtain their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

**The SAM.gov registration process can take several months. If your organization is not already registered in SAM.gov, begin the registration process as soon as possible.**

**To register in SAM.gov**, go to the [SAM.gov website](#) and use the available resources to complete registration.

- **Financial assistance registrants** must review and certify compliance with the SAM.gov “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications”.
- **Already registered?** You already have a Unique Entity ID. Before applying, check that your “Financial Assistance General Representations and Certifications” on SAM.gov is complete. Remember to renew your registration every year to keep it active while you have an award or application in progress. You can update your registration whenever you need, including during renewal.
- **Need help?** For additional information and contact information on the [SAM.gov Help page](#).

**Refer to Attachment – Submission Instructions & Tips.**

### GRANTS.GOV

This program accepts applications through [Grants.gov](#) so once you receive your UEI return to Grants.gov to [register](#) with Grants.gov. Please allow 30 days to register and set up a Workspace in Grants.gov. See [Submission Instructions](#) section below for additional details.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Program Goals

- The Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act (NATIVE Act), 25 U.S.C. 4351 et seq., enacted in 2016, centers the Native Hawaiian Community (NHC) to

expand heritage and cultural tourism opportunities to spur job creation, elevate living standards, and expand economic opportunities.

The Hawaiian value of hoihi, which means to treat with reverence or respect, is captured in the olelo noeau (Hawaiian proverb) "E hoihi aku, e hoihi mai," translating to "show respect, get respect". This core principle guides ONHR's implementation of the NATIVE Act through the Heritage (Tourism) Opportunities in Hawaii (HOIHI) Grant Program. Through showing respect, visitors (tourists) can then be welcomed as guests with a shared kuleana (responsibility) in perpetuating the values and importance of Hawaiian traditional knowledge and cultural practices.

## **Program Description**

For over a century, tourism in Hawaii has predominantly focused on Hawaiian culture as its overarching theme and draw. However, this industry has often been exploitative, depleting natural and cultural resources and displacing the NHC from their ancestral lands, homes, and sacred sites. The resulting deterioration of these resources has prompted urgent calls to reconsider priorities and transform tourism into a regenerative industry. This transformation involves investing in the restoration and care of Hawaii's natural and cultural resources and centering the NHC to enhance self-determination and self-governance, perpetuate cultural traditions, and strengthen their economy.

The HOIHI Grant Program is an innovative initiative aimed at leveraging Hawaiian traditional knowledge to support economic development within the NHC, promote economic growth in the State of Hawaii, and provide Native Hawaiian organizations (NHO) with the needed resources to transform tourism into a regenerative and collaborative industry. Through the HOIHI Grant Program, NHOs lead the way in creating authentic experiences that reflect their values, knowledge, and practices, ensuring that cultural traditions are honored and transmitted in ways that are meaningful to the Community itself. By restoring decision-making regarding hookipa (hospitality) practices to the Native Hawaiian Community, this program fosters a future where tourism serves as a platform for integrity and self-determination, rather than simply commodification.

The HOIHI Grant Program additionally seeks to increase economic development within the NHC by expanding opportunities for entrepreneurship among members, increasing innovation potential on the usage and incorporation of traditional knowledge, and ultimately increasing growth of new businesses within the Community. This, in turn, broadens the ability of Native businesses to flourish and contribute to lowering unemployment and expanding economic growth.

### Program Priorities for 2026

For fiscal year 2026, ONHR will fulfill the core principles of the HOIHI Program by providing grant funding to successful NHO applicants who meet the criteria for **one or more** of the following priorities:

- Enhance the entrepreneurial capacity of the NHC by developing business opportunities in the visitor industry, providing business development training, or stimulating economic activity;

- Uplift, perpetuate, and in some cases revive, traditional Hawaiian practices (e.g., olelo Hawaii, kapa making, lauhala and kaula weaving, hula, amongst many others, including lesser-known practices) by creating opportunities for demonstrations, visitor education on history, usage, and protocols, or hands-on visitor participation experiences in the cultural practice;
- Undertake related activities with visitors that convey respect and reaffirm the principle of reciprocity to the place, resources, and traditional knowledge holders and practitioners; AND/OR
- Support the maintenance, enhancement, and protection of Hawaii’s natural resources, wahi kupuna (ancestral places), and wahi pana (sacred sites) at areas impacted by tourism while enhancing visitor services to promote respect and reciprocity.

For fiscal year 2026, ONHR will also fulfill the core principles of the HOIHI Program by providing grant funding to successful NHO applicants whose projects also support the implementation or intent of **one or more** of the following Administration Priorities:

- [E.O. 14308](#): Empowering Commonsense Wildfire Prevention and Response;
- [E.O. 14225](#): Immediate Expansion of American Timber Production;
- [E.O. 14276](#): Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness;
- [E.O. 14212](#): Make America Healthy Again Commission;
- [E.O. 14313](#): Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission;
- [S.O. 3491](#): Delivering Emergency Price Relief for American Families and Defeating the Cost-of-Living Crisis;
- [S.O. 3434](#): Strengthening Coordination with Gateway Communities;
- [S.O. 3435](#): Implementation of the Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experience Act;
- [National Agriculture Day](#), 2025 Proclamation; and
- [National Small Business Week](#), 2025 Proclamation.

### **Legislative Authority**

Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act or the “NATIVE Act”, 130 Stat. 847, codified at 25 U.S.C. 4351 et seq.

### **Type of Award**

Projects will be funded through G (Grant).

## **PREPARE YOUR APPLICATION**

### **Application Content and Format**

#### **Pre-Application Requirements**

Prior to applying, applicants should review presidential actions found at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/> and DOI Secretary’s Orders found at: <https://www.doi.gov/document-library/secretary-order>. By applying in response to this Notice of Funding Opportunity, the applicant certifies awareness and compliance with all currently

effective and applicable Executive Orders and Secretary’s Orders, including but not limited to the Executive Order titled Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing as well as the Executive Order and Secretary’s order titled Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History. Applicants are responsible for ensuring their proposed activities are consistent with the intent and requirements of these directives.

Additionally, it is highly recommended that applicants contact the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations’ Brad Kaaleleo Wong, Program Manager at: [bradley\\_wong@ios.doi.gov](mailto:bradley_wong@ios.doi.gov) for further info regarding HOIHI and Administration priorities.

**Application Documents**

Applicants must submit the following forms with their application as specified below. Instructions for accessing and submitting application forms are provided in the [Submission Instructions](#) section of this document below. For instructions on completing form fields, see the form instructions on the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#).

Forms/Assurances/Certifications	Submission Requirement
SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance  Note: For applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Representative’s signature (or electronic equivalent) on the Application for Federal Assistance form also represents their certification of the statements in <a href="#">Appendix A to 43 CFR 18-Certification Regarding Lobbying</a>	Required from all applicants
SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs	Required for non-construction projects
SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	Required if requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funds <u>and</u> the applicant has used or plans to use funds other than Federal appropriated funds for lobbying related to the proposed project.
Certification Regarding Lobbying	Required from all applicants
Conflict of Interest Disclosure	Required from all applicants
Project Abstract Summary (OMB 4040-0019). Must include, in plain language: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Award purpose,</li> <li>• Activities to be performed,</li> <li>• Expected deliverables or outcomes,</li> <li>• Intended beneficiaries,</li> </ul> Subrecipient activities (if known or specified at time of award)	Required from all applicants
Project Narrative (Max 10 pages)	Required from all applicants

<b>Forms/Assurances/Certifications</b>	<b>Submission Requirement</b>
Budget Justification and Narrative	Required from all applicants
Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement	If applicable
Single Audit Reporting Statement	If applicable
Attestation or Documentation Confirming Eligibility as an NHO	Required from all applicants
Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement	Required from all applicants
Key Contacts Form	Required from all applicants
Letters of Support	If applicable
Site Access/Control and Federal Environmental & Historic Preservation Compliance	If applicable

**Project Narrative**

**Project Background Information**

**1. Project Location, Audience, and Need:**

Describe the project location(s) in Hawaii and identify the audience the project seeks to assist. Demonstrate the specific needs for that area or community. If applicable, share any relevant visitor related impacts that the project aims to address. If the proposed project is location dependent or focused on traditional cultural practices at a particular site, a location address, and tax map key (TMK) or site map should be included that clearly delineates the project area and includes a legend or notations large enough to be legible. Any maps can be included as attachments.

**2. Project Purpose and Goals:**

Summarize the purpose of the project and state its overall goal. Summarize any previous or on-going efforts by your NHO (or other organizations or individuals associated with your NHO) that are relevant to the proposed work, such as work done under a previous HOIHI Grant. Explain the successes or challenges of past efforts and how your proposed project builds on or overcomes them.

**3. Project Objectives:**

Describe the project’s specific objectives to achieve the overall goal, explaining how they align with the chosen HOIHI Program Priority. Additionally provide any Administration Priorities that the project aligns with. Ensure that the objectives are specific, measurable, and realistic, making them attainable within the project’s proposed period.

**4. Economic Sustainability:**

Explain how the project addresses capacity building efforts to enhance economic sustainability and/or workforce development and training for the organization or the

NHC. Describe any project activities that lay the groundwork for potential sustainable funding mechanisms that extend beyond the duration of the grant award.

#### **4. Visitor Engagement:**

Describe project activities that involve visitor engagement. Include any details on how visitors will develop respect and reciprocity for the place, resources, traditional knowledge holders, and practitioners.

### **Work Plan and Project Activities**

1. Create a timeline that outlines the proposed project activities that are conducted to achieve each project objective.
2. This timeline should include relevant milestones and final outcomes to facilitate program monitoring and evaluation.
3. The descriptions of the proposed project activities must be detailed enough for reviewers to clearly connect these activities to the associated project costs within the budget.
4. The timetable does not necessarily need to propose specific dates, since the actual awarding of the grant and potential federal regulation compliance may alter the planned start time.
5. As a reminder, the project duration may not exceed 36 months. Activities are defined as the specific actions taken to achieve the project objectives.

### **Project Monitoring and Evaluation**

Project Evaluation here is defined as the systematic collection and documentation of information about your project's outcomes to improve the project's effectiveness, guide judgments about its impact, and/or inform decisions about future programming or funding.

1. Create a monitoring and evaluation plan to assess project effectiveness, ensure accountability, and support decision-making throughout the award period. The plan must include the stated project objectives and any relevant milestones and outcomes. Monitoring should be connected to the stated project schedule and budget information when appropriate.
2. Some suggestions include identifying the products/services to be delivered and how/to whom they will be delivered. Detail the expected direct effect(s) of the project on visitors or others. Include any available instruments of data collection including questionnaires, surveys, sign-in sheets or other participant logs, visitor products/take homes, awareness information, or other assessment tools to be used for project evaluation.
3. If applicable, describe how visitors will participate in monitoring and evaluation activities. Describe how findings will inform decision making and project activities throughout the project period and potentially into the future.

### **Description of Qualifications and Entities Undertaking the Project**

1. **Past Work** - Provide a brief description of your NHO's current or past activities that demonstrate the NHO's capacity for conducting the activities or tasks identified in the proposed work plan.
2. **Key Personnel** - Identify (name and title/position) all key NHO personnel who will be conducting work on the proposed project and their respective roles and responsibilities. Include a description of their expertise in conducting the activities.
3. **Partner Organizations** - Identify any partner organizations and/or outside subject matter experts (not part of your NHO) who will be working with your NHO on this project and describe their respective roles and responsibilities to enhance the project. Include any relevant letters of support or agreements.

### **Budget Narrative**

Applicants must describe and justify items and costs listed in their budget. The budget narrative must identify the following cost items: total estimated costs, non-Federal cost share, third-party contributions, and any pre-award costs. Total project cost is the sum of all allowable costs, including required and voluntary cost share and third-party contributions.

Budget items must be:

- Reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary
- Compliant with [2 CFR §200 Subpart E](#) cost principles

Indirect Costs: Applicants must indicate in their budget narrative how they will charge indirect costs, including the rate to be applied:

- De Minimis Rate: If eligible, state if your organization is opting to use the de minimis rate of up to 15% of total modified direct costs. Entities that do not have a current Federal negotiated indirect cost rate (including provisional rate) may propose to use the de minimis rate. For more information, refer to [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).
- Negotiated Rate: State if you will negotiate with your cognizant agency. If your organization has previously negotiated a rate, attach a copy of the most recently negotiated rate agreement (active or expired).

### **Itemized Budget Narrative Proposal**

Provide an itemized budget narrative (preferably in an Excel spreadsheet) on all cost categories outlined in the SF 424A, clearly identifying all estimated project costs. The budget narrative should describe the total funding needed to accomplish the objectives described in the project narrative, accounting for all costs within the entire award period. These budget items should further align with the Work Plan tasks and other project activities identified in the Project Narrative. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors, partner organizations, or sub-recipients. The budget narrative submitted with the final application should match the dollar amounts included on all required standard forms. Cost categories for the budget are described below in the following sections.

### **Budget Justification**

Alongside the budget narrative, applicants must include a budget justification that explains how each categorical cost is derived. This justification should provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers to determine if costs are 'allowable and reasonable' according to the cost principles

referenced in 2 CFR 200, Subpart E. Each cost category will include a clear rationale, detailing the basis for the estimated amounts and how they align with the project's activities.

Budget items must be:

- Reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary
- Compliant with [2 CFR §200 Subpart E](#) cost principles

### Cost Categories

The budget is organized into the following cost categories, as per the budget categories listed on the SF-424A. Unit costs will be provided for all budget items, including those related to contractors, partner organizations, or sub-recipients:

- **Personnel** – Description of roles and responsibilities. Estimated costs based on hourly or salary rates and time commitment (estimated quantity of hours).
- **Fringe Benefits** – Breakdown of benefits provided to personnel, calculated as a percentage of salaries.
- **Travel** – Estimated costs for travel, including transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by employees who are in travel status on official business of the recipient or subrecipient. Justification for travel should provide an estimation methodology. For typical government travel rates, visit [GSA.gov](#).
- **Equipment** – List of equipment purchases, generally items exceeding \$10,000. Justification for the necessity of each item.
- **Supplies** – Detailed list of supplies required for the project and their use, including unit costs and quantities.
- **Contractual Costs** – Description of services to be procured, including the procurement method (e.g., competitive bidding). Basis/justification for the selection of contractors or partners. Itemized estimated cost breakdown for the contractual work proposed.
- **Other** – Any additional costs not covered in the above categories, with explanations.
- **Total Direct Costs** – The total funding requested under these budget categories will be summarized as Total Direct Costs.
- **Indirect Costs** – If indirect costs are included, applicants must indicate in their budget narrative how they will be charged, including the rate to be applied:
  - De Minimis Rate: If eligible, state if your organization is opting to use the de minimis rate of up to 15% of total modified direct costs. Entities that do not have a current Federal negotiated indirect cost rate (including provisional rate) may propose to use the de minimis rate. For more information, refer to [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).
  - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate: If your organization has a previously negotiated rate, attach a copy of the most recently negotiated rate agreement (active or expired). If your rate agreement has expired, state if you are currently in the process of, or will be negotiating a new rate with your cognizant agency.
- **Total Project Cost** – The total project cost encompasses all allowable expenses. This comprehensive approach ensures that all financial aspects of the project are accounted for and transparent.

\*Cost sharing is not required for this opportunity. However, if voluntary cost-sharing or third-party contributions are included, this information should be included in the total project cost.

### **Alignment with Standard Forms**

The budget narrative and justification submitted with the final application will match the dollar amounts listed on all required standard forms (e.g. SF 424 and SF 424A) to ensure consistency and clarity.

### **SF-424A - Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs**

In addition to the Budget Narrative and Justification information, applicants must submit a completed SF-424A, “Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs” form.

### **Conflict of Interest and Unresolved Matters Disclosures:**

If any actual or potential conflict of interest exists related to this project at the time of application, the applicant must provide sufficient information to support a program determination of significance per [2 CFR 1402.112](#). Refer to [2 CFR 200.112](#) Conflict of Interest and [2 CFR 200.113](#).

### **Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement:**

Applicants must state in their application if the activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel proposed in this application overlap with those in any other Federal proposal or award or not. If no overlap exists, include a statement to that effect. If any overlap exists, provide:

- Activities: Description any overlapping activities.
- Costs: Description of any overlapping costs.
- Time: Description of any overlapping key personnel time.
- A copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity.
- Details on when any overlapping proposal was submitted, to whom, and the expected date of the funding decision.

### **Other Required Information**

#### **Site Access/Control and Federal Environmental Compliance (If applicable)**

1. If the proposed project is location dependent or focused on traditional cultural practices at a particular site, provide relevant information and supporting documentation to demonstrate your NHO’s property ownership, lease, permit, or authorization from the property owner to provide visitor access and conduct project activities.
2. If applicable, and to comply with federal regulations such as the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), please answer the following questions. Indicate if any federal compliance actions have been completed or attained previously. Attach any supporting documentation if available. **These questions will not be scored, and are for information and planning purposes only.**

### Federal Natural and Cultural Resource Compliance Questions:

- a. Additional information on project location: Please provide Moku, ahupuaa, address, TMKs, current landowner(s)
- b. Is this project currently funded by another federal award? If yes, provide any relevant information
- c. Will the project directly involve environmental restoration, cultural site restoration, and/or ground disturbing activities (e.g., excavation, land clearing, grubbing, grading, invasive plant removal, native planting, etc.)? If so:
  - i. Describe those locations, activities, and methods. Please be specific;
  - ii. Describe whether there is a potential to disturb endemic or native wildlife, habitats, or other important natural or cultural resources;
  - iii. Describe any best practices that have been taken to prevent or reduce disturbance or damage to resources. (Examples could include following an approved restoration plan, following specific best management practices, operating under supervision of a knowledgeable, trained leader, having only authorized people use power equipment, notifying experts of any special finds or circumstances that arise, etc.).
  - iv. Will project activities occur on federally-designated critical habitat for threatened or endangered species? Or are there known threatened or endangered species that frequent the project site?
  - v. If applicable, are there any Native Hawaiian burial plans associated with the site?
  - vi. Does the project involve activities at a known historic site(s) listed or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places or are there Hawaiian traditional cultural properties/wahi pana located within the project area or nearby? If so, are there any known archaeological studies or surveys that have been completed for the site?
  - vii. Are you aware of any previous correspondence with the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) regarding the land parcel(s)? (Yes, No, I don't know).

### **Attestation or Documentation Confirming Eligibility**

Applicants seeking financial assistance through this funding opportunity must submit a written attestation or certification from their governing body. This document should confirm that the applicant organization qualifies as a “Native Hawaiian Organization (NHO)” as defined in the “Eligibility” section above and that it is authorized to apply for financial assistance.

Additionally, the attestation must include supporting information that demonstrates how the organization meets the specified criteria.

*\*Registration or placement on the Department of the Interior's Native Hawaiian Organization List, maintained by ONHR, is not a prerequisite for submitting an application. Additionally, being listed should not be viewed as the sole justification for eligibility.*

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES**

## Address to Request Application Package

For questions or additional information, you may visit the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations website at: [www.doi.gov/hawaiian](http://www.doi.gov/hawaiian) or contact Brad Kaaleleo Wong, Program Manager at: [bradley\\_wong@ios.doi.gov](mailto:bradley_wong@ios.doi.gov).

### Pre-Submittal Information Session

ONHR will host a 60-minute video conference for interested applicants to receive an overview of the HOIHI Grant Program and 2026 priorities and to ask questions about the funding opportunity. The video conference will be held on **Wednesday, April 15, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time (HST)**. The video conference log-in information will be posted on the Office of Native Hawaiian Relations website at: [www.doi.gov/hawaiian/hoihi/apply](http://www.doi.gov/hawaiian/hoihi/apply) one week prior. Additional video conference opportunities may be held on an as-needed basis. Video conferences will be posted to the same ONHR site one week after they have been conducted.

Applications must be submitted through the Grants.gov portal. For new applicants, please be sure to register with SAM.gov prior to submitting your application as applications will **not be complete** without SAM registration information. Consideration may be made to submit via email in extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

## Submission Dates and Times

**Closing Date for Applications:** 06/08/2026

### Closing Date Explanation

Applications must be submitted electronically to the Grants.gov website no later than 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), thus 5:59 pm Hawaii Standard Time (HST), on the application due date listed.

## Submission Instructions

### Apply Through Grants.gov

To apply through [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov), please follow the instructions in the [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#). Before applying, ensure that at least one person at your organization is registered and has the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only the AOR can submit the application. If you need more users, they must create their own Grants.gov account. Follow these steps below to apply:

- *Create a Workspace:* Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- *Complete a Workspace:* Invite participants to the workspace so you can collaborate on the application. Required applications forms are included in the Grants.gov Funding Opportunity Package and can be completed in the Workspace, unless noted otherwise in the Required Forms table above. Check for errors before submission.
- *Submit a Workspace:* An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab
- *Track a Workspace Submission:* After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application.

The system generates a date and time stamp and sends it to the applicant's AOR via email as proof of submission. Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks. Do not encrypt, zip, or password-protect any files. Only registered individuals in SAM as both a user and an AOR can submit applications. Please allow 30 days to register in Grants.gov.

**Application System Technical Support:** For Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms, and application packages, contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or by email at [Support@grants.gov](mailto:Support@grants.gov).

## APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### Eligibility Review

During the eligibility review, the application is checked for timely submission, completed packages (see [Application Documents](#) above) and alignment with the requirements of this announcement. The Federal agency may remove an application if it does not pass the eligibility review.

Eligible Applications are welcome from:

- Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Native American tribal organizations (other than Federally recognized tribal governments)
- Nonprofits having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, other than institutions of higher education
- Additionally, applicants must meet the definition of and criteria for a “Native Hawaiian Organization” as defined in the [NATIVE Act, 130 STAT. 847, Section 3\(3\), codified at 25 U.S.C. §4352\(3\)](#). Criteria include:
  1. A nonprofit organization (Nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including Institutions of Higher Education, that: is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization. 2 CFR 200.1.);
  2. that serves the interests of Native Hawaiians;
  3. that is recognized for having expertise in Native Hawaiian culture and heritage, including tourism;
  4. and in which Native Hawaiians serve in substantive and policymaking positions. Applicants must include an attestation in their Project Narrative that they meet the definition of and criteria for a “Native Hawaiian Organization” as defined in the NATIVE Act, 130 STAT. 847, Section 3(3), codified at 25 U.S.C. §4352(3).

If an applicant selected for funding hasn't finished their SAM.gov registration (see [2 CFR 25.200](#) and [2 CFR 25.110](#)) when the federal agency is ready to make an award, we may decide that the applicant is ineligible for the award and choose to grant it to someone else. Please refer [2 CFR 25.205](#) for more information.

Prior to making an award, the DOI checks the anticipated recipient and their key project personnel against the current list of prohibited or restricted persons or entities in the System for

Award Management (SAM.gov) Exclusions database. We are prohibited from making an award if a recipient or any key personnel are found ineligible, prohibited, restricted, or otherwise excluded from receiving or participating in an award, as their ineligibility condition applies to this program.

If removed from consideration for ineligibility, the Federal agency will notify the applicant in writing.

## **Merit Review**

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following merit criteria, with the relative weights shown. Proposals may earn a maximum of 100 points.

<b><u>Evaluation Criteria</u></b>	<b><u>Point Breakdown</u></b>
<b><u>PASS/FAIL CRITERIA</u></b>	
Does the applicant include an attestation from its governing body that provides clear justification that the applicant meets the eligibility criteria for an NHO? This requires ONHR program manager verification.	<b>Yes / No</b>
Does the overall project goal (or goals) clearly align with and support the HOIHI Program and specific Program Priorities?	<b>Yes / No</b>
Is the proposal aligned with a specific Administration Priority (listed above in the NOFO for reference)?	<b>Yes / No</b>
<b><u>Project Background:</u></b>	<b>Total Points: 40</b>
How well does the overall project goal (or goals) align with and support the HOIHI Program and a specific Program Priority?	10
Are the proposed methods of visitor engagement, partner coordination, and reciprocity/sustainability well described and likely to be effective in achieving the described program goals and that of HOIHI?	8
How well does the proposal address economic impact and workforce development for the organization and the Native Hawaiian Community?	5
Do project objectives support the overall purpose and goal of the project?	4
Are there any activities or efforts put towards sustainable funding mechanisms for the organization that assists in extending services beyond the duration of the grant award?	4
Is the project location(s) and intended audience for the project accurately described?	3
Are the needs articulated and justifiable in the Narrative?	3

Are the proposed project objectives clear, specific, measurable, and realistic?	3
<b><u>Work Plan and Project Activities:</u></b>	<b>Maximum Points: 20</b>
Is the project work plan reasonable, realistic, and practical in relation to the overall purpose and priorities of the funding opportunity and given the proposed amount of work and coordination?	10
Are project activities clearly articulated and support the overall project objectives and the overall priorities of HOIHI?	10
<b><u>Monitoring and Evaluation:</u></b>	<b>Maximum Points: 10</b>
How well does the evaluation assist in improving project effectiveness and inform decisions about future programming or funding?	5
Does the monitoring and evaluation plan support the stated project objectives and evaluate project effectiveness in achieving the desired outcomes?	3
Are any relevant milestones and outcomes included as part of the evaluation plan?	2
<b><u>Qualifications:</u></b>	<b>Maximum Points: 10</b>
How well does the proposal document the NHO’s relevant current and past work, breadth of cultural knowledge and skill & abilities to successfully engage visitors to perform the proposed work?	5
Does the proposal detail the integration, leadership, governance, and organizational approach of the project team?	3
Does the proposal identify project partner organizations and their respective roles and responsibilities in achieving the overall project goals and objectives?	2
<b><u>Budget: (Cost sharing is not considered in the criterion)</u></b>	<b>Maximum Points: 20</b>
Does the budget request properly allocate funds, making good use of available resources to implement and achieve the stated project goals and objectives?	5
How well does the Budget Justification explain how each categorical cost in the Budget Narrative is derived? Is there sufficient detail to determine if costs are ‘appropriate for the work being proposed’?	5
Are there funds allocated for addressing organizational capacity building, such as staff training, workforce development, internships, or other initiatives that enhance economic sustainability and support the longevity of the organization and project?	3

Are funds allocated for non-contracted content experts, Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners, or other individuals who provide support to the project, considering their time commitment and contributions to the project's capacity?	3
Are there costs associated for shared learning, visitor engagement, and/or outreach with the NHC accounted for in the project's budget?	3
Are unit costs provided within the itemized budget?	1
<b>Factors that may be considered as a tiebreaker amongst equal scoring projects:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Project locations supporting rural communities</b></li> <li>• <b>An NHO that has not received a HOIHI grant in the prior fiscal year</b></li> </ul>	

## **Review and Selection Process**

This program reviews proposed budgets to ensure:

- figures are correct
- estimated costs are necessary and reasonable and clearly linked to project narratives
- avoid obviously unallowable costs
- identify costs requiring prior approval
- ensure indirect cost rates are applied correctly
- confirm cost sharing requirements are reflected in the budget.

This program reviews applications for potential overlap or duplication between the proposed project and any other funded or proposed project. Depending on the circumstances, DOI may choose to not make an award.

### **Initial Review:**

Prior to conducting the comprehensive merit review, an initial review will be performed to determine whether: (1) the applicant is eligible for an award; (2) the information required by the NOFO has been submitted; (3) all mandatory requirements of the NOFO are satisfied; (4) the proposed project is responsive to the program objectives of the NOFO (program determination); and (5) the proposed project is in compliance with all applicable Executive and Secretary's Orders, including the President's Executive Order on Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing as well as the Executive Order and Secretary's Order on Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History. If an applicant fails to meet the requirements or objectives of the NOFO, or does not provide sufficient information for review, the applicant will be considered non-responsive and eliminated from further review.

### **Review and Selection:**

Prior to participating in any review or evaluation process, all staff and peer reviewers, evaluators, panel members, and advisors must sign and return to the program office point of contact the "Department of the Interior Conflict of Interest Certification" form. For a copy of this form, contact the AQD point of contact identified in the Agency Contacts section below.

Project proposals will be evaluated as follows:

- Submissions will be screened upon receipt for eligibility and for conformance to the announcement provisions.
- Screened proposals will be independently reviewed and scored against the criteria by a panel of 8-10 individuals with relevant cultural, economic, and programmatic expertise. These reviewers may include Federal and State agency personnel, non-governmental organizations, and individuals with relevant subject matter expertise. Any reviewer with a real or perceived conflict of interest regarding one or more applicants will be asked not to score or participate in discussions of those proposals.
- Reviewer rankings and comments will be provided to the Merit Review Panel Chair, who will share the collective rankings with the full panel and promote discussion to develop a consensus.
- The review panel may additionally provide the Merit Review Panel Chair with follow-up questions and comments to clarify any aspects of a proposal with the submitter. This may include requesting an updated budget to reflect available funds or to verify the criteria mentioned below. Additionally, the review panel may make further scoring and ranking decisions at this stage.
- The list of ranked projects with the panel's preferred selection will be forwarded to AQD for evaluation and final selection. The successful applicants will be notified by ONHR of the IBC intent to award. Additional clarifications may be requested, if necessary, at this time with final awards being contingent upon all appropriate legal and administrative reviews and processing. Final discretion on funding decisions remains with the AQD at IBC. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified and if requested, provided with reviewer comments and scores on their proposal.

AQD reviewers will evaluate project costs by closely examining the budget narrative and justification provided. In addition to the previously described scoring criteria, this program reviews proposed budgets to ensure:

- figures are correct;
- estimated costs are necessary and reasonable and clearly linked to project narratives;
- there are no obvious unallowable costs;
- identification of costs requiring prior approval;
- indirect cost rates are applied correctly;
- cost sharing requirements are reflected in the budget (if applicable).

Prior to award, AQD will review any applicant statement regarding potential overlap or duplication between the project to be funded and any other funded or proposed project in terms of activities, funding, or time commitment of key personnel. Depending on the circumstances, AQD may request modification to the application, other pending applications, or an active award, as needed to eliminate any duplication of effort, or AQD may choose not to fund the selected project.

## **Risk Review**

Prior to making an award, the applicant will be assessed for their level of risk per [2 CFR 200.206](#). This assessment includes the applicant's financial management capabilities, project delivery experience, staffing resources, past award performance, administration and reporting

compliance records, and overall project complexity and potential for challenges. If an award will be made, special conditions may be applied to the award corresponding to the assessed risk. For awards over the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$350,000), a review of the applicant's eligibility and financial integrity information in the applicant's SAM.gov records will also be performed per [2 CFR 200.206](#).

## AWARD NOTICES

Notices of Federal Award are sent electronically via GrantSolutions or e-mail. These notices outline the terms, conditions, and payment instructions per [2 CFR 200.211](#). The Notice of Federal Award signed by an authorized Grants Officer is the legal instrument obligating financial assistance to a recipient. Any other prior notice is not an authorization to begin work. If the program allows pre-award costs per [2 CFR 200.458](#), beginning performance before receiving a Notice of Federal Award is at the applicant's own risk.

**Anticipated Project Start Date:** 10/01/2026

**Anticipated Project End Date:** 09/30/2029

Projects may end no later than 36 months after the project start date.

## POST AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND ADMINISTRATION

### Administration and National Policy Requirements

For award administration and national policy requirements, see the [DOI General Terms and Conditions](#). Infrastructure projects require the use of American iron, steel, manufacture products, and construction materials per [2 CFR 184](#).

### Geospatial Data

If you receive financial assistance from the Department of the Interior (DOI), recipient must follow these rules for geospatial data:

**Follow Federal Standards:** All geospatial data you collect or create must meet the standards set by the Federal Geospatial Data Committee (FGDC) or the Department of the Interior. This is required by the Geospatial Data Act of 2018, which is part of Public Law 115-254, specifically in Subtitle F (Geospatial Data), sections 751-759C (codified at [43 U.S.C. §§ 2801–2811](#)).

**Include Metadata:** Your Geographic Information Systems (GIS) files must include complete metadata. Metadata is information that describes the data, such as where it came from, how accurate it is, and how it should be used. This is to ensure that anyone using the data understands its context and quality.

**Check for Existing Data:** Before you start collecting new geospatial data, you need to check GeoPlatform.gov. This is to see if there is already existing geospatial data from federal, state, local, or private sources that can meet your needs and is available for free. If such data is available, you should use it instead of gathering new data.

These rules help ensure that geospatial data is reliable, high-quality, and that resources are used efficiently.

## Reporting

The recipient's Notice of Award will detail all reporting requirements, including frequency, due dates, and instructions for requesting extensions. In general, but not limited to, recipients must:

- Submit Federal Financial reports and Program Performance reports.
- Use the [Federal Financial Report \(SF-425\) form](#) for financial reporting,
- Monitor award activities and report on program performance per [2 CFR 200.329](#),
- Promptly notify the awarding program in writing of any issues, delays, or conditions impairing award objectives per [2 CFR 200.329\(e\)](#),
- Disclose any conflicts of interest related to their award that arise during the award period per [2 CFR 1402.112](#),
- Report on the status of real property acquired under the award in which the Federal government retains an interest per [2 CFR 200.330](#), and
- Report all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award per [2 CFR 200.113](#).
- Report any matters related to recipient integrity and performance to SAM.gov per [Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200](#).
- If the Federal share of the award is more than \$100,000 and the recipient makes or agrees to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection to the award, disclose those activities using the Disclosure of Lobbying (SF-LLL) form per [43 CFR 18.100](#).
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) and 2 CFR 170 requires certain recipients to report information on executive compensation, and information on all sub-awards, subcontracts and consortiums equal to or over \$30,000 to SAM.gov.
- Report on the status of Tangible Personal Property using SF-428, SF-428B, and SF-428S.
- Submit Release of Claims Form.

### Other Information

For additional information about NATIVE Act or ONHR, please visit [DOI.gov/hawaiian](https://www.doi.gov/hawaiian).

Applicants may be eligible for similar economic development and cultural programs grants offered by other federal departments. ONHR encourages interested parties to review [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) for other funding opportunities.

For assistance with navigating [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov), please visit [Grants.gov Online Help](#).