

General FAQs

1. What is a Grant Award Notification (GAN) and who receives it?

The Grant Award Notification (GAN) is the official document that states the terms, conditions, and funding amount of the grant award. It also contains programmatic and fiscal data, as well as the names and contact information of the respective program officers. For multi-year awards (such as the National Resource Centers and Foreign Language and Area Studies programs), the GAN includes information on the anticipated funding levels for each subsequent budget period. The included attachments provide guidelines and additional terms and conditions regarding administrative procedures.

The grantee will receive two copies of the GAN: one copy is sent to the certifying official, i.e., the authorized representative on the Application for Federal Education Assistance Form (SF 424); the second is sent to the project director.

2. What is the role of the HSI Division program officer?

The primary role of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) Division program officer is to provide technical assistance relating to programmatic and fiscal management of the federally-funded grant to ensure that project goals and objectives identified in the original grant application are met successfully. Program officer responsibilities include reviewing performance reports; external evaluation reports; monitoring projects to assess compliance; and responding to requests such as travel approvals, administrative actions, and staff changes. External outreach and project monitoring are achieved through site visits that provide the opportunity to interact with administrators, staff, and students.

3. When MUST you communicate with your HSI Division program officer?

Contact should be made immediately if you:

Want to make a change in scope;

Want to make a significant budget adjustment (more than 10 percent of budget or over \$100,000);

Want to contract-out any of the project activities described in the application;

Need to change the project director (and key personnel) listed on the grant

Grantees should communicate promptly with the HSI Division whenever significant issues arise in connection with project activities and staff.

4. How often should you communicate with your HSI Division program officer?

Please communicate with your program officer regularly and in a timely manner. It can be beneficial for new grantees to speak with your program officer and often to help address start-up questions, problems, and concerns.

Please do not hesitate to e-mail or call your program officer. Regular communication throughout the duration of the grant helps build a greater understanding between the HSI Division and the

activities happening on campus. If you are in Washington, D.C., please feel free to make an appointment to visit our office. For easy reference, always include the grant award number when communicating with your program officer.

5. How do we determine if a particular cost is allowable?

Please see program regulations 34 CFR 606 and OMB Circular A-21. If you still have questions, contact your program officer.

6. What is the duration of the average grant?

The grant is awarded for a period of five years. The first year is awarded via a competitive process. Four additional years are provided as non-competitive continuation grants.

7. 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, dollar-for-dollar match is required for each federal dollar used for that purpose. No other cost matching is required.

8. What are the requirements for auditing and/or evaluation of funded projects?

A grantee institution is required to undertake an institutional audit as directed under OMB Circular A-133. An annual project evaluation is also required.

9. Can DHSI funds be used to pay for relocation costs?

The DHSI regulations do not allow transportation costs (34 CFR 606.10(c)(12)), and that would prohibit costs associated with transporting the employee and household members as well as the cost of transporting household and personal items. However, the other permissible relocation costs listed in 2 CFR 200.464(b) are allowable for this program. In addition, paying for relocation costs with grant funds is only permissible where consistent with the grantee's own policies and procedures. If the grantee doesn't otherwise pay relocation costs, then they may not use grant funds to do so.

Please contact your assigned Program Officer if you have additional questions pertaining to your grant.

FY 2025 DHSI Competition FAQs

06/18/2025

Eligibility Questions

1) How does an institution of higher education (IHE) verify its eligibility for the DHSI program?

Your eligibility letter may be downloaded via the [Higher Education Program Institutional Service \(HEPIS\)](#) system. You must meet the programmatic requirements for the particular program(s) that you wish to apply for in order for your grant application to be reviewed. You may also may verify your eligibility on [the Eligibility Matrix](#) or you may reach out to Nemeka.Mason@ed.gov.

2) If an IHE has several branch campuses, how does one know if the branch campuses are eligible?

Branch campuses must meet eligibility requirements on their own. You should check in with your IHE's Office of Sponsored Programs or the Grants Office to determine if eligibility has been established for the branch campuses. In addition, we recommend reviewing the resources available on [the Title III/V Eligibility website](#), especially the Application Booklet. You may reach out to Nemeka.Mason@ed.gov who oversees the eligibility process if you have additional questions about the eligibility of your branch campuses.

3) Is an IHE with an active DHSI, PPOHA, or HSI-STEM grant eligible to apply?

Yes. IHEs with active Title V, Parts A & B, and Title III, Part F program grants are eligible to apply for the DHSI 2025 competition. Institutions that have a grant under Title III parts A or B are prohibited from receiving additional grant awards under any other provision of Title III part A, Title III part B, or Title V. If you have a current Title III or Title V grant that will end during this fiscal year, you may be eligible to apply for additional programs. However, you will not be allowed to accept funds from both a Title III part A or B grant and a Title V grant.

4) Is an IHE with a DHSI, PPOHA, or HSI-STEM grant in a no-cost extension eligible to apply?

Yes. If you have a current Title III or Title V grant that will end during this fiscal year, you may be eligible to apply for additional programs which would, if awarded, start in the next fiscal year.

5) Is an IHE with an active SIP grant eligible to apply?

No. While IHEs with active Title III, Parts A & B program grants that end by 9/30/2025 are eligible to apply for the DHSI 2025 competition for new awards, grantees with those grants that end after 9/30/2025 are not eligible to apply for the DHSI 2025 competition.

6) Where does one find a list of eligible IHEs by state for the DHSI program?

A complete list of eligible IHEs is available on the Eligibility Matrix (EM) at [the Title III/V Eligibility website](#). If your IHE is not on the EM, reach out to Nemeka.Mason@ed.gov.

Priority Questions

CPP1

1) Who qualifies as a “rural applicant” for CPP1?

All IHEs participating in the grant project must be designated HSI. In order to qualify for the points for CPP1, the applicant must be an HSI with a rural campus setting, or the applicant must propose to serve an HSI campus with a rural setting. Rural settings include six locale codes as defined by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES): Town-Fringe, Town-Distant, Town-Remote, Rural Fringe, Rural-Distant, and Rural-Remote. More information about locale codes can be found by using [the NCES College Navigator search tool](#).

The applicant must provide evidence of its rural classification in both (1) its response to the priority in the Project Narrative and (2) in the proposed abstract. In the response, be sure to label the response as a separate section and indicate [the campus’ NCES locale codes](#) in your response. If the lead applicant is not a rural HSI and is proposing to serve a rural HSI, it must provide in its application documentation for the rural institution’s status as an HSI (by including a separate eligibility letter for that campus) and appropriate rural classification (NCES locale code).

2) If an IHE’s main campus is not a rural campus but one of its branch campuses is rural, is it eligible for CPP1?

If the rural campus is both an HSI and has a rural locale code (as specified in the NIA), the main campus may serve as the lead applicant and propose to serve the rural HSI campus. The main campus must also be an HSI.

3) May an applicant who proposes to serve a rural high school that serves predominantly Hispanic students qualify for CPP1?

No. In order to receive points under CPP1, either the applicant must be an HSI with a rural campus setting, or the applicant must propose to serve an HSI campus with a rural setting. In order to be an HSI, an entity must first be an institution of higher education (IHE). An applicant may still propose to serve students in a rural high school, but that arrangement does not qualify for CPP1 points.

CPP2

Who qualifies as a “new” potential grantee for CPP2?

A “new” potential grantee is an applicant who has not had an active grant either individually or as part of a consortium or group application under the DHSI program within the last 5 years before the

deadline date for submission of applications. For purposes of this competition, an applicant may not have served as a lead applicant, a fiscal agent, or as a member of a group application, including as a branch campus, nor as a subgrantee, that was funded under the DHSI program.

With respect to “the last 5 years,” an applicant that has had an active grant on or after July 3, 2020 (since the deadline date for submission of applications is July 3, 2025), are not eligible for CPP points. This includes applicants with grant projects on a no-cost extension(NCE) in which their budget period extended on or beyond July 3, 2020.

An applicant must include a statement indicating their compliance with the criteria from this CPP as part of your response to the priority in the Project Narrative and in the abstract in order to be eligible to earn the CPP points.

Evidence Standards

Must an applicant’s evidence come from the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), or can it just meet the standards of the WWC?

Applicants should cite the supporting study or studies that meet the definition of “promising evidence” from the WWC. While the cited study does not need to come from the WWC, it must meet the “promising evidence” standard as established by the WWC (promising evidence “means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome”). See the NIA for the full definition of “promising evidence.”

In addressing “promising evidence,” applicants are encouraged to align the direct student services proposed in the application to evidence-based practices identified in the selected studies that meet the “promising evidence” definition.

Project Design

May an applicant offer non-credit programs that result in industry-validated credentials?

Please review the list of allowable and unallowable activities from the Title V program statute. It is the responsibility of the applicant to review this list and determine which proposed project activities meet the definition of allowable activities and make a compelling case in the application that the proposed activities meet program requirements.

Indirect costs and administrative costs

Are indirect costs or administrative costs allowed under the DHSI program?

As indicated in the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA), indirect costs are unallowable for the DHSI program. Regarding administrative costs, the DHSI program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses; however, all project costs must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable, in accordance with the Uniform Guidance Cost Principles (see [2 CFR part 200 subpart E](#)).

Subgrants and contracts/procurement

1) Are subgrants allowed under the DHSI program?

Yes, subgrants are allowed. A grantee under this competition may award subgrants—to directly carry out project activities described in its application—to the following types of entities: local educational agencies; State educational agencies; IHEs; nonprofit organizations.

The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application or that it selects through a competition under procedures established by the grantee.

See the definition of “subgrants” and the section on “subgrantees” in the NIA.

2) Are contracts allowed under the DHSI program?

Yes, contracts are allowed. Applicants must follow the Uniform Guidance, particularly 2 CFR §200.318-320, 322, and 327 and the exceptions for competition under [34 CFR 75.135](#), which require the use of the small purchase procedures described in [2 CFR 200.320\(a\)\(2\)](#). Grantees should document their contractual relationships and retain those records consistent with [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart D - Record Retention and Access](#)

General Questions

1) Are all HSIs participating in a proposed project required to submit the DHSI Program Profile Form?

No. Only the lead applicant is required to submit the DHSI Program Profile Form. This form should reflect data for the lead applicant only. If the applicant is including a rural HSI in its application, it must provide documentation for the rural institution’s status as an HSI (eligibility letter) and rural classification (NCES locale code) but is not required to submit a Program Profile Form for the partner institution.

2) For item 10a in the Program Profile Form, how does one report student data if the IHE’s data differ from the IPEDS data?

Report student enrollment data as provided to IPEDS in the IHE’s most recent certification of 2023-2024 data.

3) Where can one obtain additional resources for completing the DHSI Program Profile Form?

Resources for data reporting are available on the IPEDS site at <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data> and <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/glossary>. For IHE-specific data questions, reach out to Nemeka.Mason@ed.gov.

4) Where can one find the pre-application webinar slides and other resources for the DHSI competition?

The pre-application webinar slides, as well as additional resources and all required forms, are available on Grants.gov. Search for Grant Opportunity Number ED-GRANTS-060325-003. Technical assistance materials are in the Related Documents tab. Application forms are in the Package tab.

5) Are letters of institutional support needed?

Letters of institutional support are not required but may be included as evidence of institutional commitment to the grant.

6) How are the qualifications for a Project Director best described, and is documentation required?

When describing the qualifications of a Project Director, applicants must respond to the Selection Criterion: Quality of Key Personnel – The past experience and training of key professional personnel are directly related to the stated activity objectives. In its response, applicants should describe how the education, experience, and expertise of the Project Director aligns with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to manage the DHSI project. As part of this response, applicants should include CVs, résumés, or other documentation that provide evidence of the stated qualifications.

7) How may the funds from interest earned in an endowment be used?

During the period of the grant, under [34 CFR 606.10\(d\)](#) and [628.45\(a\)\(2\)](#), a grantee may spend up to one-half of the of the total aggregate income generated from an endowment on the following: (1) costs necessary to operate the institution, including general operating and maintenance costs, (2) costs to administer and manage the endowment fund, and (3) costs associated with buying and selling securities, such as stockbroker commissions and fees to “load” mutual funds.

After the end of the grant, the institution may use all of the endowment fund income for any educational purpose ([34 CFR 628.45\(d\)](#)).

8) Are scholarships allowed?

Generally, no. Under [2 CFR 200.466](#), costs of scholarships, fellowships, and student aid are generally not allowable except when the purpose of the Federal award is to provide training to participants, and the Federal agency approves the cost in advance.