



Frequently Asked Questions

General Questions

Q: What is the role of the partnering organization in regards to services provided to students?

A: The role of the partnering organization may look different across campuses and project categories. We ask that there is an element of collaboration in the design and implementation of the project, but are not dictating the nature of that relationship in order to provide some flexibility to applicants.

Q: If the institution has multiple partnering organizations in our service area, how should we address this?

A: You must partner with at least one Tennessee Promise partnering organization but may partner with multiple organizations to implement the project.

Q: Can institutions submit a joint proposal?

A: While THEC does encourage institutions to collaborate as they explore how best to serve Tennessee Promise students, institutions may not submit joint proposals.

Q: When will awards be announced?

A: THEC modified the timeline to announce the winning grant awards. The grant awards will now be announced on May 13th. The mandatory project director's workshop will be held on June 3.

Proposal Requirement Questions

Q: How should we calculate the graduation rate?

A: THEC defines the graduation rate as postsecondary completion within 150% of time. If your institution uses a different definition, you may report both the THEC definition and your institution's definition along with a description of how it is calculated.

Q: Our institution has enrolled tnAchieves students prior to the Tennessee Promise initiative. Should the baseline data include the whole campus or tnAchieves students only?

A: If your institution has prior cohorts of tnAchieves students, please include baseline data on tnAchieves students. If the upcoming cohort of TN Promise will be the first to enroll on your campus, please include data on first-time, full-time students. Please provide a description of the data presented.

Q: The grant references tnAchieves success with high school students. Are you looking for a similar model in this project?

A: We are looking for evidence-based initiatives that fall within one of the three project categories detailed in the request for proposal. Projects do not need to replicate the tnAchieves model.

Q: The RFP references scalability. Should the project serve the entire campus or only focus on TN Promise students?

A: The project funds need to be directed towards Tennessee Promise students. We are looking for projects that, if successful, have elements that could be modified to benefit a larger population.

Q: May applicants include appendices with additional data and bibliography pages as part of their proposal? Would these documents count toward the 15 pages?

A: Yes, applicants may include a bibliography and additional data as appendices within reason. These items will not count toward the 15 page limit.

Budget Questions

Q: Are benefits included in the 20% cap on salaries?

A: Yes. Salaries and benefits may not exceed 20% of the proposed budget.

Q: Do stipends to students who serve as tutors count toward the 20% cap on salaries and benefits?

A: No. Stipends to student students who serve as tutors would be categorized as a professional fee and do not count toward the salary and benefit cap.

Q: Do honorariums to outside speakers count toward the salary and benefit cap?

A: No. honorariums for speakers would be considered a professional fee as outlined in Appendix D - Budget Line-Item Descriptions of the request for proposal packet.

Q: Should we use our institution's negotiated indirect cost rate or THEC's indirect cost rate?

A: You should use your institution's indirect cost unless it exceeds 8%. THEC caps indirect cost at 8%, so if your institution's negotiated rate is higher, please use 8%.

Q: May grant funds be used for student incentives (i.e., small gift cards to the campus bookstore)?

A: The purchase and dissemination of small incentives (i.e., small gift cards to the campus bookstore) are allowable Tennessee Promise Forward Grant expenditures within reason. As a general rule, all expenditures, including incentives, must prove both prudent and reasonable.

Q: Will grant funds be distributed on a reimbursement basis?

A: Yes, Tennessee Promise Forward Grant funds will be disseminated through monthly reimbursements.