



TCU Building Bridges FAQs

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Q. IF I AM LISTED AS THE PI ON A CURRENT TCU BUILDING BRIDGES FUNDED PROJECT, CAN I SUBMIT A PROPOSAL AS THE CO-PI ON ANOTHER TCU BUILDING BRIDGES RFP?

A. No, each project must have a unique PI AND CO-PI.

Q. IS NASA COLLABORATION OR PARTNERSHIP A REQUIRED ELEMENT OF MY PROPOSAL?

A. While NASA would welcome collaboration with your TCU, it is not a required element of your proposal.

Q. AM I REQUIRED TO SUBMIT A PRE-APPLICATION?

A. While we do encourage a pre-application submission, it is not a requirement.

Q. AM I REQUIRED TO SUBMIT MY PROPOSAL ON TCU OR NASA LETTERHEAD?

A. No, you are not.

Q. IS ATTENDANCE AT BUILDING BRIDGES WORKSHOPS A REQUIREMENT FOR THIS RFP?

A. No, it is not.

Q. ARE THE RFP's 'PRIORITY AREAS FOR SUPPORT' RANKED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE?

A. No, they are not.

Q. DOES MY BIOSKETCH (CV) COUNT AS PART OF THE 10 PAGE PROPOSAL LIMIT?

A. No, it does not.

Q. I SUBMITTED A PRE-APPLICATION. DOES MY PROPOSAL SUBMISSION HAVE TO BE THE SAME AS MY PRE-APPLICATION, OR CAN I SUBMIT AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PROPOSAL?

A. You do not have to stay with your pre-application project. If you have a new and better idea for your project, you can submit that as your proposal. The sole purpose of the pre-application is to allow for feedback from the review team.

Q. DOES MY REFERENCE PAGE COUNT IN MY 10 PAGE LIMIT?

A. No, your reference page does not count as part of your 10-page limit.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Q. DOES MY PROJECT HAVE TO BE A RESEARCH-BASED PROJECT?

A. No, it does not.

Q. IF MY PROJECT IS A TWO-YEAR PROJECT, DOES MY BUDGET NARRATIVE AND BUDGET TABLE NEED TO INCLUDE BOTH YEARS 1 AND 2?

A. Yes, it does. Include a separate Budget Table and Budget Narrative for each year.
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Q. CAN MY PROJECT BE DESIGNED TO SUPPORT STEM EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES INSTEAD OF STEM COURSE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT OR STRENGTHENING?

A. Yes, it can; but recommend student involvement, STEM supporting activities, and how this project may lead to STEM course curriculum development and/or strengthening.

Q. CAN I USE THE FUNDS TO REBUILD/RE-EQUIP MY NATURAL SCIENCES LAB?

A. Yes, if you stay within the 'no more than 20% of total budget' guidelines for infrastructure/equipment, then yes, you can; but it is recommended to involve students in your statement of work.

Q. CAN I USE THIS GRANT TO SUPPORT A STEM CODING CAMP?

A. Yes, you can - refer to the RFP's 'Priority Areas for Support', and 'Programmatic and Strategic Goals'. It is recommended to involve students (as interns), to strengthen the proposal.

BUDGET QUESTIONS

Q. DOES THE 15% CAP ON PI SALARY ALSO APPLY TO THE PROJECT'S CO-PI OR CAN THE PROJECT ALSO BUDGET AN ADDITIONAL 15% FOR THE CO-PI?

A. Your proposal's budget should not exceed a total of 20% total for combined PI and CO-PI salaries, including fringe benefits.

Q. WHAT EXPENSES CAN BE INCLUDED IN OUR INDIRECT COST RATE CALCULATION?

A. Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) can be included in your Indirect Cost Rate calculation, e.g., Salary, fringe, materials and supplies, services, and travel. These expenses are defined here: [MTDC definition as outlined in '2 CFR 200.1, Definitions'](#).

Q. CAN I INCLUDE PARTICIPANT COSTS AND EQUIPMENT IN MY INDIRECT COST CALCULATION?

A. If your TCU's approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement allows for participant and equipment costs, you may include them in your Indirect Cost calculation. If you are using a De minimis rate of 10% (which would mean your TCU does not have an approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement), then participant and equipment costs are not eligible to be included in your Indirect Cost calculation.

Q. REGARDING THE RFP BUDGET RESTRICTION OF 5% TOTAL BUDGET ALLOWED TO BE DISTRIBUTED TO NASA CENTERS THAT ARE PARTNERING WITH TCUS, WHAT EXPENSES DOES THIS INCLUDE? WHAT TYPES OF COSTS ARE RELATED TO NASA CENTER VISITS?

A. These expenses are a small subset of expenditures, e.g., purchase and ship NASA printed materials, participant meals; the money cannot support NASA civil servant salaries or travel. Please refer specific questions to Kathy DePalma (kdepalma@aihec.org).



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Q. MY TCU IS CURRENTLY NEGOTIATING ITS INDIRECT RATE WITH A FEDERAL AGENCY. DO I NEED TO WAIT UNTIL THAT NEGOTIATION IS COMPLETE TO USE THE NEW RATE IN THIS PROPOSAL?

A. Yes, you will need to wait until the negotiations are complete and an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement has been issued to your TCU. The RFP requires the submission of an approved Indirect Cost Rate agreement.

Q. WHAT IS THE DURATION OF NASA INTERSHIPS?

A. NASA Summer internships: 10 weeks and Fall/Spring internships: 16 weeks.

Q. IF A SUPPLIES EXPENSE IS MORE THAN \$5k IS IT CONSIDERED SUPPLIES OR EQUIPMENT, EVEN IF IT'S A PRINTER, FIELD EQUIPMENT, ETC.?

A. Yes, if a supplies purchase is less than \$5K, it is considered supplies. If the 'supply' purchase is more than \$5K, it is an 'equipment' purchase.

REAPPLYING FOR FUNDING

Q. IS THIS A SUBAWARD?

A. Yes, if awarded, AIHEC will contract directly with your TCU as a Subrecipient.

Q. IF MY TWO-YEAR PROJECT IS FUNDED, WILL I NEED TO APPLY AGAIN FOR YEAR 2?

A. No, you will not. If you are funded for a two-year project, you do not need to apply again in Year 2. Your Statement of Work and Budget has already been approved for the two years.

Q. IF I AM AWARDED IN THIS ROUND, CAN I APPLY AGAIN IN ANOTHER ROUND?

A. Yes, you can. You may apply for another round of funding during the period of performance of an awarded Building Bridges project; however, the new project's Statement of Work and Principal Investigator must be different from the current one. You can apply for up to a two-year project in the *Year 1 Solicitation 2* (Solicitation Release - October 2024) and/or *Year 2 Solicitation 1* (Solicitation Release - January 2025) rounds of funding.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q. IS THERE A COMMON AREA TO ACCESS DOCUMENTS?

A. Yes, [HERE](#) is the link, located on AIHEC's TCU Building Bridges webpage.

Q. HOW DO WE SUBMIT REVISIONS OR AMENDMENTS IN YEAR 2?

A. Email the Program Director – Kathy DePalma at kdepalma@aihec.org



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- Q. ARE THERE NEARBY REGIONAL TCUs WHO HAVE HAD SIMILAR GRANT OPPORTUNITIES WITH NASA WHO COULD OFFER ADVICE ABOUT THE PROCESS (GRANT AND COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH NASA) AND WOULD BE WILLING TO MENTOR OTHER TCUs NEW TO THE EXPERIENCE?**
- A. In lieu of this, we will schedule collaboration meetings for project staff interested in discussing their projects, lessons learned, best practices, etc. and invite previous awardees to future workshops to share insight into the process and their project.
- Q. CAN I PARTICIPATE IN THE COHORT 1 MEETINGS IF I WASN'T AWARDED?**
- A. Yes, if you would like to be included, you will be invited to the meetings. Please reach out to Kathy DePalma (kdepalma@aihec.org) to communicate your interest in participating in these meetings.