

Research on Advancing Rural Postsecondary Education

Request for Proposal FAQ

Deadline: July 14, 2024

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Q: Can for-profit policy research firms qualify to submit RFPs and receive funding with your organization?

A: Only non-profits registered as a U.S. 501(c)(3) or a 509(a)(1), (2), or (3) of the Internal Revenue Code are eligible for the research RFP. If you intend to submit an LOI, you'd have to have the institution/nonprofit you are partnering with submit.

Q: Where do I access the LOI form?

A: The [full RFP](#) has the link to the [LOI form](#) on page 8.

Q: My institution is eligible to apply. Will technical assistance be available to prepare our proposal?

A: ECMC Foundation will not provide any technical assistance. We are looking for projects that institutions feel are most valuable to their students and communities. Therefore, the research design, questions, and methodology should be based on what is essential in that rural context.

Q: Will you take calls to discuss different project ideas that might be aligned with the goals of the rural research RFP?

A: Given the high level of interest in the research RFP and to ensure an equitable process, we are not scheduling calls specifically about the RFP or potential research projects.

Q: Can research projects leverage existing survey instruments and datasets rather than create new ones?

A: Yes. We are not requiring applicants to create a new instrument or collect new data.

Q: Is it acceptable at the LOI stage to name potential rural educational partners rather than having formalized partnerships?

A: Please use the LOI to describe the conversations your organization has engaged with potential partners and whether there is an existing relationship. ECMC Foundation wants to focus on projects where there is already rural community buy-in because trust and rapport are so important, and we want to be mindful that with research, rural communities have been places of knowledge extraction.

Q: Our research-practice partnership comprises a university and a professional association. Which should we describe for the Leadership Composition question?

A: The board and executive leadership composition section should refer to the organization receiving the grant from ECMC Foundation.

Q: Can my organization submit more than one proposal at a time?

A: Yes, as long as the proposals are for different projects and there are different principal investigators, it is acceptable for an organization to submit multiple applications simultaneously.

Q: Do you have guidelines for the preferred percentage of grant funds to be allocated for project evaluation and technical assistance?

A: We do not have a preferred percentage of grant funds. Feel free to include whatever you believe is necessary to complete the project.

Q: A partner we have identified is not listed as eligible under your eligibility guidelines (e.g., employee-owned S-Corp, for-profit). Is this partnership permissible?

A: Applicants are welcome to subgrant or contract with any organization that best suits their needs. We just require that the grantee organization meet the eligibility guidelines.

Q: Do you anticipate another round of funding will be available next year for this initiative?

A: At this time, we don't anticipate doing another research RFP, but we will still consider research proposals next year, though limited.

Q: Do you provide feedback to applicants whose proposals are not funded?

A: Yes, we will provide feedback to applicants whose proposals are not been funded.

Q: Our organization is currently running a project funded by ECMC Foundation. Would a different team at our organization be eligible to apply for this funding opportunity?

A: Yes, because a different team at your organization will lead this project and your existing grant is outside the rural initiative, you can apply for this funding opportunity.

Q: Are letters of support from our partner institutions where the research will be conducted required at this stage?

A: There is no need to include a formal letter of support - describing the partnership and indicating you have their support is just fine.

Q: Should internal letters of support (e.g., dean, vice president, etc) be included at this stage?

A: You do not need to include any internal letters of support.

Q: I'm the project PI and have a conflict with the in-person convening before ASHE. Are there ways around this requirement?

A: If you cannot attend, it would be best that another member of your research team attend the in-person convening before ASHE.

Q: Where is the link to the informational video?

A: You can watch the Rural Impact Initiative Request for Proposal video [here](#).

Q: Does the Foundation want any sort of narrative to accompany the budget breakdown?

A: We don't require a budget narrative—just line item breakdowns over the project's course. If the LOI is advanced to the proposal stage, we will ask for the budget narrative then.

Q: Does the 10% indirect cost limit also apply to sub-contractor budgets?

A: The 10% indirect applies only to the organization receiving the funding from ECMC Foundation.