HBCU Center for Excellence

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How many research projects should be presented in the application?

Multiple research projects should be presented in the application with three projects at minimum. As the rating factors indicate, applications will be rated on the quality, depth and variety of the research projects presented.

1. What are the components expected in the research projects?

1. Specific research questions and hypotheses that will be investigated by the proposed research.

2. Discussion of data sources required, the reliability and availability of those data sources,

3. Strategies for obtaining required data, and methods for analyzing the data to address the research questions and hypotheses.

1. How is a “partnership” with another HBCU defined? Does it need to be a sub-recipient relationship or something less formal like an MOU?

Typically, partnerships between organizational entities should be a sub-recipient relationship which will also include an MOU. Only partnerships with other eligible HBCU institutions will receive bonus points.

1. Can the funds be used for travel? Equipment (computers/printers)? Data/software?

Yes.

1. For the HBCU preference points, what certification do we present?

Typically a letter of commitment from partnering HBCU Institution is required.

1. Research projects versus research questions—are these terms in the NOFO used synonymously are do they denote two different things?

They are synonymous.

1. We are clear that this is an opportunity exclusively for HBCU’s. Is it permissible to include advisors, letters of support, etc. from non-HBCU institutions with experience with centers of this magnitude?

It is permissible to use other centers as advisors. Most of the efforts, however, should be undertaken by the applicant organization.

1. Can applications propose a regional scope?

Yes

1. Are you open to collaborators being a mix from industry/practice/academy?

Yes, but most of the effort, once again, must come from academic sources.

1. It seems that a final report is due in three years. There is also discussion of 5 years of activity. Can you explain what needs to be accomplished in 3 years and what should be accomplished in 5 years?

There are interim quarterly reports required throughout activity period (36-month). At the end of the three-year activity period, a final report is due at the close of the award. As the NOFO indicates, the expectation is that the center’s activities will continue long after the award with support from other entities.

1. The organizational chart (supporting materials page 17 (of 33) – for what ‘organization’ – the proposed center or the University?

The Organizational chart is for the proposed center only.

1. Academic consortia are encouraged, what about collaborative research partnerships with nonprofit or other private research entities that are non-academic? Might funding also be used to cover shared expenses - salaries, administrative, etc.?

Yes, through sub-recipient agreements etc. as stated earlier.

1. Is it permitted to establish endowed and distinguished chairs as well as professorships using the funds?

No. the funds available through this award are restricted to center activities only.

1. Are materials and equipment allowable or only: Travel, Staff and Administration?

Yes, all expenditures must comply with federal guidelines.

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Yes.

1. While cost sharing and match are not required, would letters of commitment or evidence of long grant awards suffice to prove 5+ year sustainability?

Yes

1. When would an expense be considered a sub-grantee - whether academic partner, community partner, third party independent contractors or consultants? What stipulations are imposed?

If an entity is an organization participating in center research, it is considered a sub-recipient. Consultants are individual participants.

1. Is the idea that the “draft research design” is for the overall vision of the COE itself, or for individual projects?

The draft research design is for both the individual projects and the overall vision of the center.