

**Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans
(PPOHA) Program FY 2024 Competition
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

I. GENERAL QUESTIONS

- 1. What is the purpose of the Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans Program (PPOHA) program?** The [purposes of the PPOHA program](#) are to (1) expand postbaccalaureate educational opportunities for, and improve the academic attainment of, Hispanic students; and (2) expand the postbaccalaureate academic offerings and enhance the program quality in the institutions of higher education that are educating the majority of Hispanic college students and helping large numbers of Hispanic and low-income students complete postsecondary degrees.
- 2. Who is eligible to apply for the PPOHA program?** Institutions of higher education (IHEs) that (a) qualify as an eligible HSI and (b) offer a postbaccalaureate certificate or postbaccalaureate degree program are eligible to apply for new grants under the PPOHA Program. See section 512(b) of the HEA ([20 U.S.C. 1102a\(b\)](#)). For additional information on eligibility requirements, review the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) and visit the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) [site for eligibility determination](#) for titles III and V grant programs.
- 3. Will pre-application technical assistance (TA) webinars be provided to potential applicants?** Yes. Please visit the [Applicant Information webpage](#) for more information.
- 4. What type of grants will be awarded in FY 2024?** Five-year Individual Development Grants and Cooperative Arrangement Development Grants.
- 5. What is a Cooperative Arrangement Development Grant?** A cooperative arrangement is an arrangement to carry out allowable grant activities between an institution eligible to receive a grant under this competition and another eligible or ineligible IHE, under which the resources of the cooperating institutions are combined and shared to better achieve the purpose of the program and avoid costly duplication of effort.
- 6. Can an IHE submit more than one application for a PPOHA grant?** No. An eligible IHE may not submit more than one Individual Development Grant application, be the lead applicant for more than one Cooperative Arrangement Development Grant or submit an Individual Development Grant application and be the lead applicant for a Cooperative Arrangement Development Grant application in this competition.
- 7. How do you submit an application for the FY 2024 competition?** All applications must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](#). In addition, applicants are required to follow the [Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education](#)

[Discretionary Grant Programs](#), published in the Federal Register on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045), which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

- 8. When is the deadline for submitting an application for the FY 2024 competition?**
The deadline for the FY 2024 competition is **Monday, May 13, 2024, at 11:59:59 PM Eastern Time.**
- 9. What is the estimated range of awards?** The estimated range for Individual Development Grants is \$500,000-\$600,000 per year and Cooperative Arrangement Development Grants is \$600,000-\$1,500,000 per year.
- 10. What is the total project period for an award?** Up to 60 months.
- 11. What are the funding priorities of the FY 2024 competition?** This competition includes an absolute priority focused on expanding the number of Hispanic and other underrepresented graduate and professional students served by the applicant institution, or the institutions that are part of the cooperative agreement application, through expanded courses and institutional resources. This competition also includes two competitive preference priorities focused on meeting students' holistic needs and providing flexible, high-quality, and accessible learning opportunities, and three invitational priorities that support increasing the number of Hispanic doctoral candidates and graduates through collaboration, increasing the number of Hispanic educators, and increasing the number of Hispanics prepared for the STEM workforce. Refer to the NIA for detailed information on the priorities.
- 12. What is the difference between an Absolute Priority, Competitive Preference Priority, and an Invitational Priority?** **Absolute priority** - the applicant must address the absolute priority in order to be considered for funding; **competitive preference priority** – the applicant has the option of choosing whether or not to address and for which they may receive additional points; and **invitational priority** - the applicant is encouraged but not required to address. Applications addressing invitational priorities receive no preference over applications that do not meet the priority.
- 13. For purposes of the PPOHA program, what fields are considered STEM fields?**
STEM stands for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and STEM fields include biological and biomedical sciences, computer and information sciences, engineering and engineering technologies, mathematics and statistics, and physical sciences and science technologies. The PPOHA program recognizes that there are integrated disciplines of STEM. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the applicant to clarify in the application how the proposed courses, majors, programs, etc., align with an academic discipline of STEM and, for purposes of meeting the requirements of Invitational Priority 3: Increasing Hispanics in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), it is also the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate that the proposed project is designed to increase the number of Hispanic postbaccalaureate students and educators in STEM. Finally, applicants are reminded that they do not earn additional points for meeting an Invitational Priority.

14. How do I indicate my responses to the priorities in my application? Include your response(s) within the Project Narrative. Use a bold heading and clearly label the sections (**Competitive Preference Priority, Invitational Priority**). Applicants may respond to one or both Competitive Preference Priorities for a total of up to 15 additional points, depending on how well you respond. Applicants may respond to one or more Invitational Priorities. No additional points are provided for responding to the Invitational Priorities.

II. ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

- 1. How do I document in my application that my IHE is eligible for a PPOHA grant?**
Applicants are responsible for demonstrating eligibility under this program. An applicant should include the most recent eligibility designation letter issued by the Department. That letter is available on your IHE's dashboard at the following website [HEPIS](#). Refer to the [FY 2024 Eligibility Instructions](#) for more information. In addition, the Department will compare the data and documentation the institution relied on in its application with data reported to the Department's [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System \(IPEDS\)](#), the IHE's State-reported enrollment data, and the institutional annual report. If different percentages or data are reported in these various sources, the institution must, as part of the 25 percent assurance verification, explain the reason for the differences. If the IPEDS data show that less than 25 percent of the institution's undergraduate FTE students are Hispanic, the burden is on the institution to show that the IPEDS data is inaccurate. If the IPEDS data indicate that the institution has an enrollment of undergraduate FTE students that is less than 25 percent, and the institution fails to demonstrate that the IPEDS data is inaccurate, the institution will be considered ineligible.
- 2. Is my IHE eligible to apply for a PPOHA grant if it holds a Title III Part A or Part B grant?** A grantee under the PPOHA Program, which is authorized by title V of the HEA, may not receive a grant under any HEA Title III part A or part B program during the period for which funds under this program are awarded (section 505 of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. 1101d). The Title III part A programs include: the Strengthening Institutions Program; the American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Program; the Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Programs; the Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions Program; the Predominantly Black Institutions Program; and the Native American-Serving Non-Tribal Institutions Program. Title III part B includes the Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities Program. An IHE is eligible to apply for a PPOHA grant if it would not be receiving funds under part A or part B of Title III during the PPOHA grant period.
- 3. May an IHE receive PPOHA funding during the no-cost extension period of a Title III Part A or Part B grant?** Yes, an IHE may receive PPOHA grant funding while in a no-cost extension period of a Title III part A or part B grant.
- 4. May I apply for a FY 2024 PPOHA grant if my IHE currently holds a PPOHA grant or a DHSI grant?** Yes, you may apply for a FY 2024 PPOHA grant if you

currently hold a PPOHA or DHSI grant.

III. PROJECT DESIGN QUESTIONS

1. **What are some of the allowable activities under the PPOHA program?** The [authorized activities for PPOHA](#) are contained in 20 U.S.C. § 1102b and include: (1) Purchase, rental, or lease of scientific or laboratory equipment for educational purposes, including instructional and research purposes; (2) Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvement of classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and other instructional facilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services; (3) Purchase of library books, periodicals, technical and other scientific journals, microfilm, microfiche, and other educational materials, including telecommunications program materials; (4) Support for low-income postbaccalaureate students including outreach, academic support services, mentoring, scholarships, fellowships, and other financial assistance to permit the enrollment of such students in postbaccalaureate certificate and postbaccalaureate degree granting programs; (5) Support of faculty exchanges, faculty development, faculty research, curriculum development, and academic instruction; (6) Creating or improving facilities for Internet or other distance education technologies, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services; (7) Collaboration with other institutions of higher education to expand postbaccalaureate certificate and postbaccalaureate degree offerings; (8) Other activities proposed in the application submitted pursuant to [20 U.S.C. 1102c](#) that—(A) contribute to carrying out the purposes of the PPOHA program; and (B) are approved by the Secretary as part of the review and acceptance of PPOHA applications.
2. **Can PPOHA funds be used to create a new postbaccalaureate degree, certificate, or credential program?** Yes, PPOHA funds may be used to create or develop new postbaccalaureate degree, certificate, or credential programs.
3. **Can PPOHA funds be used to enhance an existing postbaccalaureate degree, certificate, or credential program?** Yes, PPOHA funds may be used to enhance an existing postbaccalaureate degree, certificate, or credential program.
4. **Can PPOHA funds be used at the undergraduate level?** No. PPOHA funds are designed for persons/programs who have completed a baccalaureate degree. The intended use of the funds is for activities and supports at the postbaccalaureate level.
5. **Can PPOHA funds be used for a combined bachelor's/master's degree program?** PPOHA funds may only be used for the portion of the program that supports students/activities beyond the first bachelor's degree.
6. **Can PPOHA funds be used for a bridge program that prepares undergraduate students to apply for and be successful in graduate school?** No, PPOHA funds may only be used to support post-baccalaureate students. Per the [PPOHA authorized activities](#), PPOHA funds may be used to support low-income postbaccalaureate students including outreach, academic support services, mentoring, scholarships, fellowships, and other

financial assistance to permit the enrollment of such students in postbaccalaureate certificate and postbaccalaureate degree granting programs.

7. **Can PPOHA funds be used for outreach to students that have completed their undergraduate degree?** Yes, funds may be used to support outreach to postbaccalaureate students.
8. **Are non-degree or non-credit courses that are needed to help prepare a student for a postsecondary credential allowable under PPOHA?** Support for non-degree or non-credit courses that cannot be applied towards the requirements for a postsecondary degree, diploma, certificate, or other recognized postsecondary credential is not allowable.
9. **If an IHE does not offer a postbaccalaureate certificate or program, is it eligible to apply for PPOHA?** No. Per the PPOHA statute, the IHE must be a designated HSI and offer a postbaccalaureate certificate or program.
10. **May an IHE that does not offer a postbaccalaureate certificate or program partner with an HSI that does offer a postbaccalaureate certificate or program to apply for PPOHA?** Yes, it may, but the IHE that meets the PPOHA eligibility requirements (i.e., is a designated eligible HSI and offers a postbaccalaureate certificate or program) must be the lead applicant/fiscal agent.
11. **Does the PPOHA program allow subgrantees?** Yes. Grantees may award subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs), State educational agencies (SEAs), IHEs, and 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.
12. **How do you determine "low-income" students for PPOHA grants?** A low-income student is a student whose family's taxable income does not exceed 150 percent of the amount equal to the poverty level, as established by the U.S. Census Bureau. The definition of "low-income" is found in the HEA at [20 U.S.C. 1058\(g\)](#) and at the Department's regulations at [34 CFR 606.3\(c\)](#)

IV. BUDGET QUESTIONS

1. **What is the distinction between operational costs and developmental costs under the PPOHA allowable activities?** PPOHA grant funds should be used to benefit your postbaccalaureate students and not primarily to support general IHE expenses. For example, costs related to maintenance, general administrative tasks, or overall IHE operating costs should not be included in the PPOHA project. Costs related to academic programs (including expanding or enhancing course offerings), direct student services (such as tutoring or counseling), upgrading facilities to enhance student learning, and faculty professional development are all examples of appropriate costs under the PPOHA program.

2. **How does one determine allowable costs under the PPOHA program?** All project costs must align with the [PPOHA program statute](#) and with the funded project's goals and objectives. In addition, project costs must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable, in accordance with the [Cost Principles and other requirements in the Uniform Guidance](#) ([2 CFR 200.404](#), [200.405](#), and [200.403](#), respectively).
3. **May PPOHA grants offer direct student financial assistance?** The PPOHA statute allows scholarships, assistantships, fellowships, and other financial assistance for low-income students only. A low-income student is a student whose family's taxable income does not exceed 150 percent of the amount equal to the poverty level, as established by the U.S. Census Bureau. Grantees may use not more than 20 percent of their total PPOHA program grant award for these expenses.
4. **Does financial assistance to low-income students include payment of tuition and fees?** Tuition remission and other support provided in accordance with the established policy of the IHE and consistently provided in a like manner to students in return for similar activities conducted under Federal awards is allowed under the PPOHA program. Please refer to [§200.466 Scholarships and student aid costs](#) of the Uniform Guidance for complete information.
5. **Are indirect costs allowable under the PPOHA program?** Yes, indirect costs are allowed. The PPOHA program uses a **restricted** indirect cost rate (ICR). Under a restricted indirect cost rate, IHEs are limited to an 8% Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) base. Please see [34 CFR 76.564](#) for more information. In addition, please refer to the paragraph titled [Section III: General](#) of your IHE's ICR agreement, that covers statutory or administrative limitations of a given grant (e.g., restricted programs). If you are claiming indirect costs in your application, please include a copy of the ICR agreement in your application package. For more information regarding indirect costs, please visit the Department's [Indirect Cost Rate Division](#) webpage or email them at IndirectCostDivision@ed.gov.
6. **Is there a cost matching requirement under the PPOHA program?** This program does not require cost sharing or matching unless the grantee uses a portion of its grant for establishing or improving an endowment fund. If a grantee uses a portion of its grant for endowment fund purposes, it must match or exceed those grant funds with non-Federal funds.

V. EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. **Where can I find resources for developing a logic model?** There are several resources for developing a logic model posted at [Grants.gov under the PPOHA Opportunity Number](#). These resources are from the Department's Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs). Also, the [Education Logic Model \(ELM\)](#) application is a downloadable, browser-based application that will help you build a logic model by answering a series of questions.

- 2. For the promising evidence standard, must I use studies from the Department’s What Works Clearinghouse?** A study does not need to meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Standards to meet the definition of Promising Evidence. However, studies that meet the WWC standards and show a statistically significant effect of a project component on a relevant outcome do meet the Promising evidence standard. Therefore, the WWC can be a helpful source for studies and research that you may want to use for your PPOHA project. If you choose to use studies from another source, you should include information in your application regarding the protocols and rigor of the source in its review of studies.
- 3. When searching using the term “postbaccalaureate” in the WWC, there are few relevant studies. How can I find relevant studies for my PPOHA project?** Search for terms related to the academic content or pedagogical approach on which you are designing your project, such as “nursing,” “computer science,” “mentoring for graduate students,” “academic advising,” or “online modules” (these examples are for illustrative purposes only). Also remember that “postbaccalaureate” may include master’s and doctoral degrees, certificates, and credentials, so you may try searching under those terms as well.
- 4. Should applicants mark “Demonstrates a Rationale” or “Promising Evidence” when completing the Evidence Form (OMB No. 1894-0001)?** As defined in [the NIA](#), “demonstrates a rationale” means a key project component included in the project’s logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes. “Promising Evidence” means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following: (i) a practice guide prepared by the (WWC); (ii) an intervention report prepared by the WWC; or (iii) a single study assessed by the Department. To receive the maximum points under the Quality of the Project Design criterion, your project must demonstrate a rationale **and** be supported by promising evidence. You demonstrate your rationale by creating a logic model for your project; the logic model should include a project component that is informed by research. You document your use of promising evidence by citing the studies or reports that show that the project component(s) in your logic model meet the Promising Evidence definition. Therefore, on the Evidence Form, you should mark both “Demonstrates a Rationale” and “Promising Evidence.”
- 5. Should applicants complete all 3 columns on the Evidence Form (OMB No. 1894-0001)?** Yes. In Column A (Research/Citation), you should provide the complete citation in APA, MLA, or other scholarly format. The citation should include the name(s) of the author(s), publication date, journal name or URL, title of study, and monograph or volume number, if applicable. If providing a URL, please ensure that the link is active, as Peer Reviewers are not permitted to consult outside sources when reviewing applications. Alternatively, you may also include a copy of the study or report in question. In Column B (Relevant Outcome[s]/Relevant Finding[s]), indicate the finding(s) of the study or report that is related to your project component (for example, “the study indicates that use of “A” mentoring program shows positive gains over “X”

number of years/months.”) In Column C (Project Component/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings), indicate the project component that you are including based on the results of the study and the specific population(s) and setting(s) to which the intervention will be applied. For example, the “A” mentoring program has been found successful with [demographic/age/gender/grade level] students in [rural, urban, suburban] and/or [other] settings. For additional information, see the instructions and examples provided on Pages 2-4 of the Evidence Form.

6. **Is the logic model limited to one page?** No, the logic model is not limited to one page.
7. **Is there software available that can help IHEs build a logic model?** Yes, the [Education Logic Model \(ELM\)](#) application is a downloadable, browser-based application that will help you build a logic model by answering a series of questions.