

Diversity in Teaching Grant Program, 2021-23

Request for Proposals and Guidelines for Submission

Notice of Interest Deadline: March 9, 2021

Proposal Deadline: April 9, 2021



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Introduction

The Diversity in Teaching (DIT) program grant, administered by the Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC), competitively funds two-year proposals from regionally accredited colleges and universities domiciled in Tennessee, for the development of programs with a commitment to diversity as an instructional tool, and that increase the number of K-12 teachers in Tennessee from underrepresented groups.

THEC anticipates awarding three to five general competition projects up to \$50,000 annually for an individual institution, with a maximum two-year program cost of \$100,000. The grant period will be from July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2023.

Basic Requirements:

- An institution may submit no more than one single institution and one consortium proposal. Consortium proposals must include another postsecondary institution domiciled in Tennessee.
- Projects must include an official partnership with a local education agency (LEA).
- A one-to-one match of the grant award is required. Institutional funds, private or local funds, and/or in-kind services can be used to constitute the match amount.
- Grant funds must be used for direct student support; indirect costs (including personnel) must be covered by the institution through matching dollars.

Interested institutions should complete a notice of interest form [online](#) by 4:30 PM (CT) on **Tuesday, March 9, 2021**. Required information includes a brief overview of the proposed program and proposed amount of funding requested.

THEC staff will hold a technical assistance conference call on **March 16, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. (CT)** to provide further information regarding final proposals. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to participate. Program directors can register for the technical assistance call on the [THEC webpage](#).

Final proposals are due on **Friday, April 9, 2021 at 4:30 PM (CT)**.

DIT Proposal Requirements

Program proposals for the Diversity in Teaching program grant will be scored on the following elements: the program design, the partnership agreement with a local education agency, a recruitment plan, a retention plan, a plan to increase first-time passage on the PRAXIS and/or edTPA, and an internal evaluation plan. These sections are described below.

Program Design

Priority will be given to proposals in which students graduate and complete their teacher licensure programs within two years of their initial participation in the program. Successful proposals will:

- Provide a timeline of all program activities including admissions, marketing, and projected test completion by students.
- Provide program curriculum

Partnership with the Local Education Agency

A key goal of the DIT program is to establish collaborative coalitions between institutions of higher education (IHE) and local education agencies (LEA) or school districts. Evidence of the partnership should include letters of commitment or memorandums of understanding, as well as a specific plan for the partnership between the IHE and LEA. The plan should:

- Detail the types of teacher education students will receive,
- Outline the collaborative efforts towards marketing the program to potential students, including district employees,
- Describe the demographic make-up of the LEA, its needs, and how this proposed program can help meet those needs,
- Include a plan of agreement between the IHE and the LEA to place teacher education students in the school system at some level. For example, the agreement may be that students from this program will student teach in this LEA or be highly considered for employment upon graduation.

Recruitment Plan

All proposals must provide a specific plan for identifying, recruiting, and selecting students to participate in the DIT program. This plan must include:

- The type and number of students sought for program participation. Examples include teacher aides, substitute teachers, college graduates pursuing initial teacher license, or veterans.
- A description of the selection criteria for student participants. This should include a detailed description of the method used to assess the student's commitment to diversity as an instructional tool.

- A narrative and timeline of marketing and admissions activities for prospective students. This should include evidence of collaboration with LEAs.

Retention Plan

All proposals must provide a specific plan for retaining students that are selected into the DIT program. This plan must include:

- The types of support services made available to students to ensure successful completion of the program.
- A detailed contingency plan to retain students who contemplate leaving the program before completion.
- A defined plan to identify and mentor any DIT program students currently enrolled in the institution's teacher education program.

Plan for Successful Test Completion

With the significant number of teacher education students failing to pass the PRAXIS or edTPA through multiple attempts, this proposal must outline plans to raise first-attempt PRAXIS and edTPA pass rates:

- Describe in detail how the program will prepare students for the PRAXIS series testing and edTPA assessment.
- Students will only be eligible for PRAXIS funding on the first attempt per PRAXIS exam. If a student fails the first attempt, subsequent test fees (for the same exam) cannot be covered through DIT grant funding.
- Institutions that are applying for funding immediately following a current DIT project must disclose their Praxis passage rate during the previous academic year, and if necessary, propose methods of raising that rate.

Internal Evaluation Plan

All proposals are required to provide an evaluation design that indicates the process and tools by which the outcomes and effectiveness of the project will be assessed. Proposals must include a specification of performance benchmarks in the evaluation plan. Proposals must address how the findings of these evaluations will be disseminated (i.e., conference proceedings, journal publications, etc.). THEC reserves the right to directly contact workshop participants regarding their experiences.

Criteria for DIT Proposal Evaluation

1) Quality of the Program Design **15 points**

- a) Curricula of the program reflects the most accurate and current pedagogy
- b) Project is efficient (students will be licensed within 2 years of admission into the program)
- c) Project will increase the number of teachers committed to diversity as an instructional tool
- d) Project will increase the number of teachers from underrepresented groups
- e) Project will increase the pool of eligible, highly-qualified, K-12 teachers in the discipline areas of greatest need
- f) Project will increase the pool of K-12 teachers in underrepresented areas of Tennessee

2) Strength of the Partnership with the Local Education Agency **20 points**

- a) Program will meet the needs of the local education agency
- b) Program has structured collaboration with the local education agency (e.g. observation, practicum, student teaching experiences)

3) Quality of Recruitment Plan **20 points**

- a) Services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to meet the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries
- b) Project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of non-traditional students and those students with non-education focused backgrounds.

4) Quality of Retention Plan **20 points**

- a) Project provides a plan to support the students accepted into the program
- b) Project provides a detailed plan to retain students in jeopardy of early exit from the program
- c) Project identifies current teachers and successful teacher education students and includes a plan to incorporate a mentorship opportunity for DIT participants with teachers and other licensure candidates in an effort to increase retention in the DIT program.

5) Quality of the Plan For Successful Test Completion **10 points**

- a) Program will prepare students to successfully complete teacher licensure exams on the first-attempt.

- b) Program has a plan to help students that make multiple attempts to obtain a passing score on the teacher licensure exams (Note: multiple test attempts cannot be funded through the DIT grant.)

6) Quality of Internal Evaluation Plan**15 points**

- a) Methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project
- b) Methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible
- c) Methods of evaluation are appropriate to the context within which the project operates
- d) Plan will conduct follow-up evaluations on the participants and reports the results of such evaluations in final and continued reporting
- e) Plan will include deliverables on lessons learned and future directions to be shared with fellow grantees and future cohorts

Submission Guidelines

Proposals will be submitted as PDF online. Maximum page length for the proposal is 10 pages, excluding the abstract, budget, bibliography, and curriculum vitae. All applications should contain the following elements on numbered, double-spaced pages with one-inch margins and 12-point font. The budget template is provided in Appendix A.

The application must include:

- One Page Abstract/Project Summary
- Program Proposal (limit, 10 pages)
 1. Program Design
 2. Partnership with the Local Education Agency
 3. Recruitment Proposal
 4. Plan for Successful Test Competition
 5. Internal Evaluation Plan
- Bibliography - All cited references must be included in bibliography
- Budget Form and Narrative
- One page curriculum vitae for all faculty and staff involved

Submission Notification

Once each proposal has been received, a notice will be sent to each director. If you do not receive your notice within one week of submitting your proposal, please contact Dr. Mosby (Brittany.Mosby@tn.gov). It is the sole responsibility of the submitting institution to verify receipt of the proposal.

Proposal Review and Award Process

Projects will be awarded on a competitive basis. Project proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by members of the DIT advisory committee upon closure of the RFP time period. The advisory committee will convene for final recommendations on April 22, 2021. The proposals will be ranked based on rubric scores and funding priorities. Projects will be awarded until all funds are assigned. The committee will also recommend any required conditions for funding. The committee's recommendation will be presented to the THEC Executive Director for approval. Grantees will be notified of their selection on April 26, 2021.

Other Important Information

Eligibility and Restrictions

Teacher education enrollment is defined as the number of students officially accepted into the institution's or cooperating institution's teacher education program. Tennessee residents should be given preference as participants. All participants should be vigorously encouraged to remain in Tennessee as practicing K-12 teachers.

Funding should be requested for student support rather than personnel or administrative costs. Absent a very strong argument, all state-awarded funds should be utilized for student tuition, licensure fees, and some instructional materials. All costs incurred in preparation of a proposal shall be borne by the applicant. Proposal preparation costs are not recoverable from grant funds. Awards are contingent upon FY 2021 and FY 2022 appropriation of funds by the state legislature.

THEC reserves the right to fund a proposal in full or in part, to request additional information to assist in the review process, to reject any of the proposals responding to the RFP, and to re-issue the RFP and accept new proposals if the DIT advisory committee determines that doing so is in the best interest of the State of Tennessee.

THEC further reserves the right to withhold funding if at any point the program does not adhere to the requirements of the state-funded program, applicable laws and regulations, and stated results and outcomes or the goals and objectives declared in this RFP. THEC staff reserves the right to attend any training or project activity to ensure the fidelity of the program.

State Use of Work Products

The State of Tennessee shall have royalty-free and unlimited rights or license to use, disclose, reproduce, publish, distribute, modify, maintain, or create derivative works from, for any purpose whatsoever, all work products created, designed, developed, derived, documented, installed, or delivered under this grant subject to the relevant terms that will be included in the grant contract. Furthermore, all grant projects are subject to inclusion in the state's Electronic Learning Center.

Title VI Compliance

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission operates all programs and activities free from discrimination on the basis of sex, color, race, religion, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, or disability.

For information on alternative formats available for this and other department publications, please contact the Department ADA Coordinator at 615-741-7571. Any person who believes he/she has been discriminated against should write to:

Shauna Jennings
Deputy General Counsel
Tennessee Higher Education Commission
312 Rosa Parks Ave, 9th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243-0830

Diversity in Teaching Grant Timeline, 2021

February 9, 2021

Announcement of request for proposals to Chancellors, Presidents, Deans, and Colleges of Education

March 9, 2021 4:30 PM (CT)

Notice of Interest deadline

March 16, 2021 2:00 PM (CT)

Technical assistance call with THEC staff

April 9, 2021 4:30 PM (CT)

Proposal Submission deadline

April 12, 2021

Proposals circulated to Advisory Committee

April 22, 2021

Advisory Committee meets to evaluate proposals

April 26, 2021

Approval of grant recommendations by THEC Executive Director
Grant applicants are notified of their selection

May 4, 2021 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM (CT)

Mandatory project director's workshop video call

Appendices

Appendix A: Budget

GRANT BUDGET				
2021-23 Diversity in Teaching Grant				
The grant budget line-item amounts below shall be applicable only to expense incurred during the following Applicable Period: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023				
POLICY 03 Object Line-item Reference	EXPENSE OBJECT LINE-ITEM CATEGORY ¹	GRANT CONTRACT	GRANTEE MATCH	TOTAL PROJECT
1. 2	Salaries, Benefits & Taxes	0.00	0.00	0.00
4, 15	Professional Fee, Grant & Award ²	0.00	0.00	0.00
5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	Supplies, Telephone, Postage & Shipping, Occupancy, Equipment Rental & Maintenance, Printing & Publications	0.00	0.00	0.00
11. 12	Travel, Conferences & Meetings	0.00	0.00	0.00
13	Interest ²	0.00	0.00	0.00
14	Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00
16	Specific Assistance To Individuals	0.00	0.00	0.00
17	Depreciation ²	0.00	0.00	0.00
18	Other Non-Personnel ²	0.00	0.00	0.00
20	Capital Purchase ²	0.00	0.00	0.00
22	Indirect Cost	0.00	0.00	0.00
24	In-Kind Expense / Grantee Match Requirement (for any amount of the required Grantee Match that is not specifically delineated by budget line- items above)	0.00	0.00	0.00
25	GRAND TOTAL	0.00	0.00	0.00

¹ Each expense object line-item shall be defined by the Department of Finance and Administration Policy 03, *Uniform Reporting Requirements and Cost Allocation Plans for Subrecipients of Federal and State Grant Monies, Appendix A*. (posted on the Internet at: <http://www.tn.gov/finance/topic/fa-policyinfo>)

² Applicable detail follows this page if line-item is funded.

³ A Grantee Match Requirement is detailed by this Grant Budget, and the maximum total amount reimbursable by the State pursuant to this Grant Contract, as detailed by the "Grant Contract" column above, shall be reduced by the amount of any Grantee failure to meet the Match Requirement.

GRANT BUDGET LINE-ITEM DETAIL:

SALARIES, BENEFITS & TAXES	AMOUNT
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
	Amount
TOTAL	Amount

PROFESSIONAL FEE, GRANT & AWARD	AMOUNT
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
	Amount
TOTAL	Amount

SUPPLIES, TELEPHONE, POSTAGE & SHIPPING, OCCUPANCY, EQUIPMENT RENTAL & MAINTENANCE, PRINTING & PUBLICATIONS	AMOUNT
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
	Amount
TOTAL	Amount

OTHER NON-PERSONNEL	AMOUNT
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
	Amount
TOTAL	Amount

IN-KIND EXPENSE / GRANTEE MATCH REQUIREMENT	AMOUNT
Specific, Descriptive, Detail (Repeat Row As Necessary)	Amount
	Amount
TOTAL	Amount

Grant Budget Line – Item Detail

Line 1 Salaries And Wages

On this line, enter compensation, fees, salaries and wages paid to grant program staff.

Line 2 Employee Benefits & Payroll Taxes

Enter (a) the organization's contributions to pension plans and programs such as health, life and disability insurance; and (b) the organization's portion of payroll taxes such as social security and Medicare taxes and unemployment and workers' compensation insurance.

Line 4 Professional Fees

Enter the organization's fees to outside professionals, consultants, part-time staff and personal-service contractors. *(A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)*

Line 5 Supplies

Enter the organization's expenses for office supplies.

Line 6 Telephone

Enter the organization's expenses for telephone, cellular phones, beepers, telegram, FAX, E-mail, telephone equipment maintenance and other related expenses.

Line 7 Postage And Shipping

Enter the organization's expenses for postage, messenger services, overnight delivery and outside mailing service fees.

Line 8 Occupancy

Not applicable.

Line 9 Equipment Rental And Maintenance

Enter the organization's expenses for renting and maintaining computers, copiers, postage meters, other office equipment and other equipment, except for telephone, truck and automobile expenses.

Line 10 Printing and Publications

Enter the organization's expenses for producing printed materials, purchasing books and publications for the direct use of the organization. (Printed materials in support of conferences and meetings should be reported on Line 12, and printed materials and books purchased specifically for individuals should be reported on Line 15.)

Line 11 Travel

Enter the organization's expenses for faculty and staff travel, including transportation, meals and lodging and per diem payments.

Line 12 Conferences and Meetings

Enter the organization's expenses for conducting or attending meetings, conferences and conventions.

Line 13 Interest

Not Applicable.

Line 14 Insurance

Not Applicable.

Line 15 Grants and Awards

Enter the organization's awards, grants, subsidies and other pass-through expenditures to individuals and to other organizations, including travel, transportation, meals and lodging, stipend payments and equipment allowances. *(A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)*

Line 16 Specific Assistance to Individuals

Not Applicable.

Line 17 Depreciation

Not Applicable.

Line 18 Other Nonpersonnel Expenses

NOTE: Expenses reportable on lines 1 through 17 should not be reported in an additional expense category on line 18. Enter the organization's allowable expenses for advertising, promotions, and recruiting. Include the organization's and employees' membership dues in associations and professional organizations. Include testing fees for software licenses, testing, permits, registrations, etc. *(A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)*

Line 20 Reimbursable Capital Purchases

Enter the organization's purchases of fixed assets and other purchases with a minimum life expectancy of one year. *(A detailed description is required in the Grant Budget Line-Item Detail if this line-item is funded.)*

Line 22 Administrative Expenses (Indirect Cost)

This amount is intended to cover costs associated with administrative functions including providing the required project reports, financial information and information to support project evaluation.

Line 24 In-Kind Expenses/ Grantee Match

In-Kind Expenses is for grantee reporting of the value of contributed resources applied to the program not specifically expressed Grant Budget.

Line 25 Total Expenses

The sum of all grant expenses goes on this line.

Appendix B: Scoring Rubric

Diversity in Teaching Grant Program, 2021-2023 Scoring Rubric

Program Director	
Institution	
Project Title	

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
Quality of the Project Design <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent to which the curricula of the program reflect the most accurate and current pedagogy ▪ Extent to which the project is efficient (students will be licensed within 2 years of admission into the program). ▪ Extent to which the project will increase the number of teachers committed to diversity as an instructional tool ▪ Extent to which the project will increase the number of teachers from underrepresented groups ▪ Extent to which the project will increase the pool of eligible, highly-qualified, K-12 teachers in the discipline areas of greatest need ▪ Extent to which the project will increase the pool of K-12 teachers in underrepresented areas of Tennessee 	15		
Scoring Range			
1 – Proposal states objectives but does not connect with the RFP			
7 – Proposal states objectives and connects with priorities but lacks detail			
15 – Proposal provides detailed and clear connections between project objectives and the priorities of the RFP			

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
Strength of the Partnership with K-12 LEAs and Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent to which the program will meet the needs of the local education agency. ▪ Extent to which the program has structured collaboration with the local education agency (observation, practicum, student teaching experiences). Scoring Range 1 – Partnerships with LEAs are not stated or clearly defined, or lack the required members 10 –Partnerships with LEAs stated but lacks justification for given partnership and explanation of partnership 20 – Partnerships clearly defined and describe structured collaboration; LEA partnership is clearly described and LEA certifies it will play an active role in involving students. Official agreement and/or MOU is included with local LEA is included in the proposal.	20		
Quality of Recruitment Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to meet the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries. ▪ Extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of non-traditional students and those students with non-education focused backgrounds Scoring Range 1 – Recruitment plan is included but gives no details 10 – Recruitment plan is included but lacks detail 20 – Plan included and provides details as to how the program will recruit students	20		
Quality of the Plan for Successful Test Completion	20		

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent to which the program will prepare students to successfully complete teacher licensure exams on the first-attempt ▪ Extent to which the program has a plan to help students that make multiple attempts to obtain a passing score on the teacher licensure exams (Note: multiple test attempts cannot be funded through the DIT grant) <p>Scoring Range</p> <p>1 – Plan included but omits details to back up test completion</p> <p>10 – Plan is included but lacks details</p> <p>20 – Plan is included and links program objectives with test completion</p>			
<p>Quality of Retention Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent to which the project provides a plan to support the students once accepted into the program ▪ Extent to which the project provides a detailed plan to retain students in jeopardy of early exit from the program. ▪ Extent to which the project identifies current teachers and successful teacher education students and includes a plan to incorporate a mentorship opportunity for DIT participants with teachers and other licensure candidates in an effort to increase retention in the DIT program <p>Scoring Range</p> <p>1 – Retention plan is included but gives no details.</p> <p>5 – Retention plan is included but lacks detail.</p> <p>10 – Plan included and provides details as to how the program will retain students.</p>	10		
<p>Quality of the Project Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and 	15		

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points	Reviewer Score	Comments/Recommendations
<p>appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible ▪ Extent to which the methods of evaluation are appropriate to the context within which the project operates ▪ Extent to which the plan will conduct follow-up evaluations on the participants and reports the results of such evaluations in final and continued reporting. ▪ Includes plan for the creation of deliverables to transmit lessons learned and future directions to be shared with the present and future cohorts <p>Scoring Range</p> <p>1 – Evaluation plan has been partially described and is missing the evaluation method that the program will use</p> <p>7 – Evaluation plan has been described but lacks detail</p> <p>15 – Evaluation plan is included, fully described, and directly tied into program objectives</p>			

Total Score: _____ (out of 100)

Reviewer Signature: _____

Name Date

Overall Comments: