



High Impact Practices and Equity-Minded Learning Pathways

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS | FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (v.1 | 9.29.17)

Jump to a section:

[ELIGIBILITY](#)

[PROJECT GOALS](#)

[PROJECT PARAMETERS](#)

[PROJECT OUTCOMES](#)

[AN EQUITY-MINDED APPROACH](#)

[USE OF PROJECT FUNDS](#)

[BACKGROUND MATERIALS](#)

[SUSTAINING THE WORK POST-GRANT PERIOD](#)

[TEAM FORMATION](#)

[UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT DATA](#)

[PROPOSAL LENGTH](#)

[DEADLINES](#)

ELIGIBILITY

Q: Who is eligible to submit a proposal?

A: NASH systems currently involved in *Taking Student Success to Scale* and the TS³ Network are eligible to submit a proposal.

Q: Can two (or more) systems partner in a proposal?

A: Yes. Especially for smaller systems, it would be an effective way to take HIPs to scale more broadly.

Q: Can a system office + two institutions be considered for the project?

A: No. As noted in the Request for Proposals, larger systems must partner with at least five institutions that will be actively involved in the project and smaller systems must partner with at least three institutions that will be actively involved in the project. One of the broad goals of the project is to scale high-quality, scaffolded HIPs, so the hope is that systems will meaningfully engage as many of their institutions as possible.

Q: Does only one of the five institutions need to have 25% underrepresented student enrollment?

A: This is not a requirement, but preference will be given to proposals that include *at least one* minority-serving institution. For the purposes of this project, minority-serving institutions are defined as those with underrepresented minority student (cumulative Native American, African American, and Hispanic) enrollments of at least 25% of the undergraduate student body.

We are also looking for impact on underrepresented minority and low income students across the institutions involved in each system project. As part of the proposal, systems must submit undergraduate enrollment data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and income status (Pell eligibility) for all of the institutions involved.

Q: For state systems where none of the institutions are minority-serving, would it be possible to partner with an MSI that is outside of the system? For example, in Montana, none of the public universities have 25 percent URM students, so could the Montana system partner with a Tribal College?

A: Yes. That kind of partnership would be welcomed.

PROJECT GOALS

Q: Is the ultimate goal of this grant project to increase # of URM students engaged in HIPs over next 2-years?

A: It's not only that. The goal is more high-quality HIPs for all students over the course of their educational experiences, and greater system and institutional capacity to do this. We see these project goals as being important levers to move the needle on student success and to close equity gaps, two goals that frame the NASH agenda.

Q: Is the expectation that a certain % of URM students must be engaged with this experience?

A: A goal of the project is to substantially increase the number of underrepresented minority (URM) students engaging in high-quality HIPs, but the focus is on improving access, participation, and quality long term, not just on a number or a percentage.

A central goal of the project is for systems and institutions to work on achieving equity across their student populations, including underrepresented minority students, in terms of participation in high-quality HIPs as well as outcomes. Systems and institutions will be expected to develop and/or use existing systems to track participation in HIPs, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income, and other important demographic factors, in order to then work to close any identified gaps. If URM students are underrepresented in

HIPs, then the expectation is for the system and the involved institutions to set goals and benchmarks for improvement.

Q: What is the goal of grant project across the four systems that are selected?

A: The goal is to create a learning community across the four systems and the involved institutions. In addition to the cross-system and cross-institutional learning and support, project deliverables include the development of tools and case studies about the strategies that help (and do not help) in accelerating the pervasiveness of high-quality HIPs and closing equity gaps among student populations.

PROJECT PARAMETERS

Q: Can a single state system have some institutions that are focused on guided pathways and some institutions that are focused on HIPs?

A: Yes, but the overall vision is to see HIPs scaffolded throughout students' educational experiences. Therefore, work on traditional guided pathways without HIPs would not match the intent of the project. As the Request for Proposals notes, "guided pathways have been implemented at some institutions to increase efficiency of degree attainment, but they have not yet been...designed in ways that replace less effective curricular models within the pathways with these high-impact practices that deploy more active, relevant, and equity-minded pedagogies." This project would provide an opportunity for a system with traditional guided pathways to infuse HIPs into them, or would provide a system with numerous HIPs to scaffold them more intentionally to reach all students over time, especially historically under-represented students.

Q: Is a focus on HIPs and/or guided pathways sufficient?

A: No. The proposal must *also* describe a framework for learning that the system and partner institutions are using to situate their efforts (e.g., the DQP, Beta Credentials framework), a method for assessing student outcomes (e.g., VALUE rubrics, CLA), and a method for capturing student participation and learning associated with these experiences (e.g., ePortfolio, extended transcript). See Section 4 under "Systems Plans" in the Request for Proposals for more information.

Q: Do all of the institutions in a single system need to focus on the same HIPs, or can each institution focus on the HIPs that make the most sense for their context?

A: Each institution can play to their strengths in terms of the HIPs that make sense for their institutional context and student population, but the proposal must make the case for how the system will achieve synergy across the institutions in other areas: quality

assurance, tracking participation in HIPs, a learning framework, assessment methods, etc.

Q: Do the HIPs that form the basis of a proposal need to include all three “quality” elements, or just one?

A: All three. If the three elements are not already present, then the proposal should indicate how the system and involved institutions will *incorporate* all three quality elements during the project time frame, in addition to taking the HIPs to scale. As such, proposals should (a) describe the quality elements that are already in place and the quality elements that are to be incorporated during the project for each institution and (b) plans for taking these HIPs to scale in/across the institutions.

As noted in the Request for Proposals, the quality elements are: (1) reflection and metacognition; (2) evidence of sustained effort over an extended period of time culminating in a major accomplishment or product such as a report from a research project or applied learning experience; and (3) demonstration of one or more desired outcomes (such as perseverance, increased engagement, interpersonal competence, and/or writing proficiency).

Q: Do all of the institutions involved need to be equally strong in terms of the different project elements – presence of HIPs, tracking/data systems, guided pathways, equity-minded approaches, framework for learning, assessment, and a mechanism to help capture student participation and achievement?

A: No, but as this is a scaling project, none of the institutions should be brand-new to this work. Robust proposals will convey overall strength and readiness to take this work to the next level as described in the Request for Proposals.

In assembling the cadre of institutions to be engaged in the work, systems should highlight the strengths of all of the institutions involved, but also provide evidence of *distinctive strengths* for institutions in the lead and *readiness for development* for those with potential to advance.

Additionally, proposals should describe ways in which institutional and system leaders are championing this work and the relative importance of improving student success and closing equity gaps within the system and campus priorities and strategic plans.

Q: In our system, two institutions have taken several HIPs to scale, including an ePortfolio that we’d like to adopt across all of the institutions involved. Do the other institutions need to already be using the ePortfolio?

A: No, but in this case, there should be evidence in the proposal of their readiness to (1) adopt the ePortfolio, (2) bring it to scale across their undergraduate population during the project time frame, and (3) sustain its use going forward.

Q: Could the proposal plan focus solely on increasing faculty engagement/faculty development necessary to increase HIPs over time?

A: We don't think that would be enough. We want to see HIPs integrated into degree programs and/or into learning pathways in ways that will reach all students. That means there are some systemic issues that need to be addressed related to the curriculum as well as faculty engagement/faculty development.

We do need to build some shared understanding and campus-wide culture among faculty around what is and what is not a high-impact practice, but that's not the whole story; this work also needs to change the student experience.

Additionally, depending on the HIPs under consideration, there is potential for collaboration across academic and student affairs in new ways. There is also potential for collaboration across faculty/academic affairs and academic advising in new ways, when we think about guiding students into and through these activities. Clearly, faculty are a core constituency group that will be driving much of this work, but to move the needle as institutions and across institutions, we need to think about all of the other key constituency groups that might be brought in to the work in different ways.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

Q: The two-year period is not a lot of time to produce dramatically different outcomes, particularly related to degree production, graduation rates, etc. Will you be looking for more process outcomes, or leading indicators of success?

A: This is true. Broadly speaking, we are looking for the systems and institutions involved to develop the mechanisms that will allow them to collect data so that in 5-6 years' time, they will be able to demonstrate outcomes such as graduation. So yes, we are looking for process outcomes and leading indicators, but also for mechanisms that will institutionalize data collection so that systems and institutions will be able to gauge impact over time.

AN EQUITY-MINDED APPROACH

Q: Could you please provide an example or two of how guided pathways would be designed to be equity minded?

A: Part of the purpose of the project is to explore what constitutes equity-minded pathways—the relevant components that result in high levels of engagement for large numbers of first-generation students, Hispanic and African American students, and students entering college less academically well prepared. As for some examples, equity-minded pathways might incorporate community-based learning experiences that tie students and their learning to their communities; or study away experiences that don't require students to be away for an entire semester or an entire year in order to have such an experience; or a high-impact practice that incorporated culturally diverse and culturally relevant content. Again, we are looking for creativity on the part of the proposals in addressing what pathways might include in order to be accessible and relevant to underrepresented students.

Q: Is it accurate to say that equity mindedness would be demonstrated through the design of the HIPs and not so much through the design of the guided pathways?

A: No. Equity-mindedness should be demonstrated through the design of the HIPs as well as the pathways in which the HIPs are situated. Another way of thinking about it would be to view, and review, both HIPs and associated pathways through a lens of equity-mindedness.

Here are a few scenarios to illustrate pathways viewed through a lens of equity-mindedness:

- Institution A has embedded several required HIPs into the curriculum, but institutional leaders have not yet reviewed disaggregated data on course-taking patterns to see if differences exist among different populations, why those differences exist, and whether those differences have an impact on students' success.
- Institution B has multiple HIPs embedded in the curriculum, but those HIPs are heavily concentrated in lower division courses, missing many low-income students who transfer into the institution from feeder community colleges.
- Institution C is planning to strengthen faculty development around culturally inclusive pedagogy for faculty teaching in HIPs, but has not considered whether it would be useful to extend this professional development to advisors who are tasked with helping students to maximize their experiences within HIPs.

USE OF PROJECT FUNDS

Q: Is there any required travel expected of system and institutional teams that needs to be included in the proposal budget template?

A: Grant funds should be used to cover travel costs for institutional teams' participation in project convenings in their systems. Representation from both the system and

institutional teams is expected at the annual TS³ Network convening in April 2018 and 2019.

Travel costs for attendance of all team members at the project convening scheduled for February 20-21, 2018 will be covered through separate funding from the Lumina Foundation.

Q: The HIPs RFP Budget Form includes space for system funds that will be put toward the project. Should this roll up any funds that the institutions will contribute?

A: Yes, this space should include both institution and system contributions. This can include financial as well as other contributions (e.g., staff time, facilities rentals, etc.).

Q: Is it worth it for systems and institutions to include information about matching/in-kind types of resources as evidence of sustainability?

A: Yes. There is space in the budget template for you to do this, and you are welcome to weave this information into your proposal narrative as well.

Q: In terms of allowable uses of project funds, can you talk about what you have in mind when you say “mechanisms for related data collection”?

A: If you're going to measure participation in HIPs, for example, you have to have agreement about what HIPs are, you have to a way to capture/track students' participation in them, you have to build it into the record in a way that a registrar can recognize it if it's going to be something that's required for degree completion. What kind of approach are you going to use, and do you need to put some project funds toward this infrastructure?

If, for example, there's a situation where purchasing a single instance of a software or a single license will help enhance your Student Information system and move you to a place where you can measure these outcomes using student demographic information, that would be an allowable use of some of the funds.

BACKGROUND MATERIALS

Q: Where can I find more information about equity-minded pathways?

A: A quick google search on “equity-minded guided pathways” yields numerous results. The [Spring 2017 issue of Peer Review](#) offers examples of institutional initiatives in this area.

Q: Are there resources related to taking HIPs to scale that I can consult while developing a proposal?

A: Yes. You might start with the resources captured [on the TS³ website](#).

SUSTAINING THE WORK POST-GRANT PERIOD

Q: Should proposals address how the scale-up efforts that form the basis of the projects will be sustained over time?

A: Yes. Proposals should discuss how the system and the involved institutions plan to sustain the project work over time, and sustainability will also be part of the larger cross-system work of the project. Our view is that within the TS³ work particularly, this is not a new idea—systems and institutions are already building capacity for this. Within this project, we'll ask you to take that to the next level and do it more intensively.

TEAM FORMATION

Q: Should a system representative be forming a single team comprised of individuals from all of the involved institutions, or should each institution that is involved be forming its own team?

A: Each institution that is involved in the proposed system project should form a team to carry out the work locally. The system representative should identify a team leader from each institutional team to serve as a liaison to the system and to the project as a whole.

For the purposes of cross-institutional collaboration and system-wide coordination, the system representative also should create a system-level team made up of team leaders from the institutions and key colleagues from the system office, including someone with expertise in data/information systems.

UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT DATA

Q: The proposal asks for undergraduate enrollment data for each institution that is involved, disaggregated by race/ethnicity and income status. How should we define these factors?

A: Institutions should submit Fall 2016 undergraduate enrollment numbers. Disaggregation of enrollment data by race/ethnicity should be done as percentages using the [IPEDS categories](#). Disaggregation of enrollment data by income status should be done as % Pell eligible/% non-Pell eligible.

PROPOSAL LENGTH

Q: Do you have any guidelines for the length of proposal?

A: Concise proposals are always welcome, but we are asking for a lot of information to be included, so take the number of pages you need to do that.

Q: Is it worth it for systems and institutions to include information about matching/in-kind types of resources as evidence of sustainability?

A: Yes. There is space in the budget template for you to do this, and you are welcome to weave this information into your proposal narrative as well.

DEADLINES

Q: When is the proposal due?

A: System representatives should send an email to [Rebecca Martin](#), NASH Executive Director, stating their intent to submit a proposal no later than **Oct. 15, 2017**.

The full proposal must be submitted to Rebecca Martin by midnight on **Oct. 31, 2017**.