



Illinois Board of Higher Education

JB Pritzker, Governor
John Atkinson, Chair • Ginger Ostro, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Illinois Public Universities and Private, Not-for-Profit Colleges and Universities

FROM: Ginger Ostro, Executive Director

DATE: August 28, 2023

RE: Request for Proposals: End Student Housing Insecurity

DUE DATE: October 13, 2023 at 12 p.m.

IBHE established the *End Student Housing Insecurity* (ESHI) grant to support institutions in addressing the root or systemic causes of homelessness and basic-needs insecurity among students. The state's higher education strategic plan, [A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth](#) calls for closing equity gaps for students who have been left behind by, in part, by addressing learning renewal and student support needs, including housing insecurity and other basic needs. This grant is intended to support and supplement the work already taking place at the institutions under the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act¹ to address the basic needs of the youth in care, at-risk, or currently experiencing homelessness.

The agency is seeking proposals that address homelessness and housing insecurity in holistic and transformational ways to improve completion rates.

Eligible Institutions: Illinois public and non-profit, independent four-year institutions holding accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission.

Grant Period: The anticipated grant period will be November 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Grant Funding: Institutions may apply for grants in the amount required to implement the initiatives within the term of the grant. IBHE anticipates awarding up to \$200,000 per institution.

Application Deadline: The application materials must be submitted via email to ESHI@ibhe.org. Applications must be received by 12:00 pm on October 13, 2023 to be considered for funding.

Contact Person: For more information on this application, send inquiries to ESHI@ibhe.org.

¹ [PA 102-0083](#)

Background and Program Specifications

The Illinois Board of Higher Education is offering a competitive grant opportunity to Illinois' public and non-profit, independent four-year institutions holding accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission.

IBHE established the *End Student Housing Insecurity* (ESHI) grant to support institutions in addressing the root or systemic causes of homelessness and basic-needs insecurity among students. The state's higher education strategic plan, [A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth](#) calls for closing equity gaps for students who have been left behind by, in part, by addressing learning renewal and student support needs, including housing insecurity and other basic needs. This grant is intended to support and supplement the work already taking place at the institutions under the Higher Education Housing and Opportunities Act² to address the basic needs of the youth in care, at-risk, or currently experiencing homelessness. The agency is seeking proposals that address homelessness and housing insecurity in holistic and transformational ways to improve college completion.

Funding Allowances

Institution proposals should reflect a comprehensive plan identifying services and supports needed to address root causes of homelessness and basic-needs insecurity and to overcome barriers to student persistence and completion. Supports and grant funding can include:

- Training and professional development for HOUSE liaisons and/or other staff related to addressing the unique needs of homeless students and students in care.
- Partnerships with local K-12 schools or community organizations to facilitate the transition for homeless students and students in care into higher education and provide resources and support along the way. (i.e., Summer bridge or mentorship programs designed for the specific needs of homeless students and youth in care)
- Outreach and identification campaigns to increase student and staff awareness of institutional services and identifying at-risk students.
- Collaboration across staff and campus units (i.e., student services coordinators, financial aid, enrollment management, career services, counseling center) to create programs and services that will prevent and end homelessness.
- Addressing basic needs insecurity by creating or expanding food pantry programs to include toiletries, hygiene products, childcare items, and/or clothing.
- Responding to basic needs insecurity by providing vouchers for transportation, food, medicine, laundry, and mental health supports to at-risk students.
- Student wraparound services that may include academic and career coaching, use of a benefits navigator, textbook and technology loaning programs, and childcare services on campus.
- Direct aid to students including housing vouchers/stipends, textbook scholarships, technology stipends, rental application fees, and utility bill assistance.
- Other programs and services aimed at serving the unique needs of homeless students and students in care.

² [PA 102-0083](#)

Proposal Format

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please review the attachments carefully. The following may be used as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal.

1. **Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance (Attachment 1):**

This form must be completed, dated, and signed by the President/CEO of the fiscal agent.

2. **Proposal Narrative (Attachment 2):**

Maximum of 10 double spaced pages. Within the proposal narrative, please explain how the proposal supports the institution's comprehensive plan to identify services and supports needed to address root causes of homelessness and basic-needs insecurity and to overcome barriers to student persistence and completion. The proposal should demonstrate how the institution

- will address the root causes of homelessness in a holistic manner that accounts for the specialized needs for historically underserved populations (African American, Latinx, Low-Income, working adult, rural, etc.);
- will offer high school to college transition services to youth in care, students experiencing homelessness, and other at-risk student populations;
- will plan to coordinate services to students with other statutorily required liaisons such as the Benefits Navigator, Undocumented Students Liaison, and the Veteran Coordinator. For private institutions that are not required by statute to have such positions at the institution, how does the plan guarantee that these populations are being served with appropriate coordination amongst staff to avoid duplication and siloing of student support services;
- will evaluate the success of these initiatives in terms of the enrollment, retention, and completion outcomes of the identified student population(s) over the long term (not necessarily within the term of the grant);
- will guarantee that any direct student aid proposed in the grant will not negatively impact a student's financial aid;
- describes any eligibility requirements or means testing that the institution plans to use for providing direct aid to students and whether these requirements are evidence-based;
- will create a network of internal stakeholders to coordinate the execution of grant services, including administrative, financial, and student services in order to streamline services to students and reporting to IBHE.

In addition (within the narrative) note:

- Whether the institution is also submitting an Equity Plan (submit as an attachment to the Proposal Narrative. The Equity Plan itself is not included in the 10-page Proposal Narrative limit.).

3. **A Grant Budget with narrative descriptions of each line (Attachment 3):**

Complete the budget template for each category including a detailed Budget Narrative of the estimated expenditures in the budgeted category. Within the Budget Narrative, please indicate how the budgeted items will achieve the plan in the Proposal Narrative. Sign the certification statement indicating your institution is eligible for this grant program based on the criteria listed above.

Review of Proposals

Proposals will be reviewed, scored according to the rubric below, and selected by a committee convened by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Institutions with the highest scores based on the rubric below will be awarded funding up to the funding available. Institutions scoring below 60 points based on the rubric below will not be considered for funding. All applicants will be notified of the panel's recommendations via email message to each institution's primary grant contact.

ESHI Application Requirements and Scoring Rubric:

Submitted the Required Documents:

- ☐ Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance – **Attachment 1**
- ☐ Proposal Narrative – **Attachment 2**
- ☐ A Grant Budget with narrative descriptions of each line and signed certification statement – **Attachment 3**

Institutional Eligibility:

- Public University or Independent, Non-Profit 4-year institution YES ☐ NO ☐
- Higher Learning Commission accreditation YES ☐ NO ☐

If any of the above is NO, the institution is not eligible for the grant.

| PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA | MAX. POINTS |
|--|--------------------|
| High need as defined by Map-receipt (points determined by percentage of Map students served at the institution). | 20 |
| Strength of institution's plan to address root causes of homelessness in a holistic manner that accounts for the specialized needs for historically underrepresented populations (African American, Latinx, low-income, working adult, rural, etc.). | 20 |
| Strength of institution's plan to offer high school to college transition services to youth in care, youth in care, students experiencing homelessness, and other at-risk student populations. | 15 |
| Strength of institution's plan to create a network of internal stakeholders to coordinate the execution of grant services, including administrative, financial, and student services in order to streamline services to students and reporting to IBHE. | 10 |
| Strength of institution's plan to coordinate services to students with other statutorily required liaisons such as the Benefits Navigator, Undocumented Students Liaison, and the Veteran Coordinator. For private institutions that are not required by statute to have such positions at the institution, how does the plan guarantee that these populations are being served with appropriate coordination amongst staff to avoid duplication and siloing of student support services. | 10 |
| Strength of institution's plan to evaluate the success of these initiatives in terms of the enrollment, retention, and completion outcomes of the identified student population(s) over the long term (not necessarily within the term of the grant). | 10 |
| Strength of institution's plan to guarantee that any direct student aid proposed in the grant will not negatively impact a student's financial aid. | 5 |
| If proposing to provide direct aid to students via housing vouchers or other means, does the | 5 |

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| institution provide a detailed description of the program that includes any eligibility requirements or means testing that the institution plans to use and whether these are evidence-based. | |
| Institution submitted an Equity Plan along with ESHI grant submissions. | 5 |
| TOTAL SCORE | <u>100</u> |

Items below are for informational purposes only and not required as part of the request for proposal submission.

1. Project, Expenditure Reporting and Grant Payments:

Each grantee will be required to submit project and expenditure reports. The reports will describe the progress of the project in carrying out the activities described in the proposal. The anticipated submission and period of these reports will be the following:

| <u>Project Period</u> | <u>Submission Due Date</u> |
|--|----------------------------|
| Period 1 – November 1 to December 31, 2023 | January 31, 2024 |
| Period 2 – January 1 to March 30, 2024 | March 29, 2024 |
| Period 3 – April 1 to June 30, 2024 | July 12, 2024 |
| Close-out Report Due (narrative and financial) | July 31, 2024 |

2. Uniform Grant Agreement Sample (Attachment 4):

This is a sample of the agreement that will be used between IBHE and the grantee. This is not required to be completed and submitted with the request for proposal.