



Ohio Administrative Code Rule 3333-1-61 Choose Ohio first scholarship program.

Effective: January 13, 2024

(A) Authority

This rule is established by authority conferred upon the chancellor of higher education by section 3333.61 of the Revised Code.

(B) Policy

The choose Ohio first scholarship program makes awards to universities and colleges for programs that recruit students into the fields of science, including health professions, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM), or in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics education in order to enhance regional educational and economic strengths and meet the needs of the state's regional economies.

(C) Eligibility for the choose Ohio first scholarship program

State universities and colleges, as well as nonpublic four-year institutions of higher education are eligible to compete for state funds to implement novel, as well as well-proven, programs, strategies, and initiatives designed to recruit, or to ensure greater academic success for, and provide work-based learning opportunities through a co-op, internship, experience in a university, college or private laboratory, or other work-based learning experiences. Eligible programs of study will be identified with specific STEM "Classification of Instruction Program" (CIP) codes on the Ohio department of higher education's web page, www.highered.ohio.gov.

(D) Requests for proposals

The chancellor of higher education will prescribe a competitive process for making awards under this program to eligible institutions. The process will include the periodic issuance of a request for proposals to all or any segment of the eligible institutions. The chancellor may limit the number of



proposals eligible institutions may submit based upon criteria the chancellor considers appropriate. The forms used in the proposal process will be prescribed by the chancellor and made available each time a request for proposal is issued. The request for proposals process shall be published on the Ohio department of higher education's web page, www.highered.ohio.gov. Any request for proposals for the choose Ohio first scholarship program is to include:

- (1) Instructions for submitting a proposal, including the timelines, format and any specific forms to be used in the proposal; and
 - (2) Eligibility requirements for submitting a proposal;
 - (3) Student eligibility and scholarship amounts;
 - (4) Required cost share;
 - (5) Any minimum and maximum amount of award to be granted by the chancellor.
- (E) Review process of proposals
- (1) Administrative review of proposals
 - (a) Prior to review and evaluation, the chancellor's staff will review the proposals to ensure each proposal complies administratively with the general guidelines, requirements, and program objectives.
 - (b) If a proposal does not comply administratively, the chancellor may ask the applicant of the proposal clarifying questions and request additional information. The applicant of the proposal has ten days from notice of the defect to remedy the proposal.
 - (c) At the chancellor's discretion, a proposal that fails to comply administratively may not be reviewed and evaluated.
 - (d) The applicant of a proposal not reviewed and evaluated will receive written notice within thirty



days of the posted results of the administrative review.

(2) Review panel

(a) The chancellor, in the chancellor's discretion, may convene a panel, comprised of experts the chancellor appoints, to review and evaluate proposals.

(b) The review panel, if convened, will review and evaluate proposals in the following manner:

(i) Address the responsiveness of the proposal to the requirements of the request for proposals;

(ii) Determine which proposals best meet the evaluation criteria;

(iii) Determine which proposals should be recommended to the chancellor for funding consideration.

(c) The review panel will make recommendations directly to the chancellor. The chancellor will take into account the review panel evaluations and recommendations and will make the final funding decisions. A proposal may be accepted in part (with changes) as determined appropriate by the chancellor.

(3) Review of proposals in absence of panel

(a) If the chancellor does not convene a review panel to review and evaluate proposals, the chancellor, or the chancellor's designee(s), will review and evaluate the proposals in the following manner:

(i) Address the responsiveness of the proposal to the requirements of the request for proposals;

(ii) Determine which proposals best meet the evaluation criteria;

(iii) Determine which proposals should be considered for funding consideration, or, in the case of review and evaluation by the chancellor's designee(s), recommended to the chancellor for funding consideration.



(b) The chancellor will exercise independent judgment in making final funding decisions.

(F) Evaluation criteria

(1) The chancellor, or the chancellor's designee(s) or review panel if convened, will review each proposal submitted in response to each request for proposals. Proposals received by entities deemed to be ineligible to submit proposals as defined in the request for proposals will not be reviewed. The review of proposals will include, but not be limited to, the consideration of one or more of the criteria specified in section 3333.62 of the Revised Code.

(2) Special consideration will be given to proposals that recruit underrepresented populations.

(3) The chancellor will endeavor to make awards under the choose Ohio first scholarship program as set forth in section 3333.64 of the Revised Code.

(4) Past performance for institutions that have previously been awarded "Choose Ohio First" scholarships may be considered in each competition that may include, but not limited to, meeting reporting requirements, retaining and graduating students, and serving as primary contact for student questions.

(G) Public meeting

Prior to final funding decisions by the chancellor, each proposal submitted for consideration will be summarized by the chancellor's staff at a public meeting. Each public university or college with a proposal pending for consideration will have the opportunity to review the summary and answer questions or respond to concerns about the proposal raised by the chancellor's staff.

(H) Selection and award agreement preparation

(1) Upon completion of the review and evaluation process, and, if applicable, after recommendations have been made, the chancellor will determine which proposals receive awards, in whole or in part. Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their proposals.



(2) After a proposal has been selected for funding by the chancellor, the chancellor's staff will seek approval from the state controlling board to prepare the final award agreement.

(3) At the request of the chancellor, an institution selected for funding and seeking approval from the state controlling board will attend the controlling board meeting.

(I) Award agreements

(1) The institution with an award approved by the controlling board will enter into an agreement with the Ohio department of higher education. The agreement will be based on the proposal as amended with the inclusion of a revised budget or other amended conditions set forth by the chancellor.

(2) Funding at the requested levels will be contingent upon performance against the stated goals and available funds.

(3) For three additional years following the completion of the project period, the institution will need to submit an annual report detailing the overall status of the project.

(4) Any institution that violates the terms of its award agreement may be instructed to repay the award plus interest at the rate specified in section 5703.47 of the Revised Code.

(J) Reporting and performance requirements

(1) Institutions will need to submit regular reports as specified in the award agreement, which includes at a minimum, performance reports, periodic success stories attributable to the state-funded program, and annual reports for three years following the project period are required. The institution will be responsible for submitting reports to the chancellor's staff utilizing the specified mechanism.

(2) Each funded choose Ohio first scholarship program institution will need to implement a continuous assessment plan that evaluates the program at its campus. Institutions are expected to complete the project as described in the proposal as funded and as amended. The chancellor's staff will assign a project administrator who will work with the institution throughout the duration of the



project. The chancellor's staff and institutions will develop a series of performance metrics that will be used to measure progress of the program. Institutions are to collect appropriately disaggregated baseline data, to measure progress through the collection and analysis of standardized data elements, and to submit progress reports that record the achievements of the plan within the context of the original goals.

(K) Funding

(1) Cost share

(a) The award agreement will set forth information regarding the program project budget and cost share. All reasonable institutional operational and capital costs, that are directly associated with delivering the project outcomes identified in the agreement may, in the chancellor's discretion, be counted as eligible cost-share. The value of institutional, public, or private industry cooperative work experiences and internships will count toward the statewide aggregate amount of other institutional, public, or private money.

(b) As set forth in the award agreement, participating institutions will make regular cost-share investments in the funded choose Ohio first scholarship program project, but will have until the end of the reporting period to meet the full cost-share obligation.

(2) Allowable and nonallowable expenses

(a) The entire award should be used for scholarships, however, at the chancellor's discretion, the award agreement may allow for some amounts of the choose Ohio first program to be used for administration.

(b) All costs incurred in preparation of a proposal are to be borne by the applicant, or applicants for a collaboration proposal, and are not recoverable under an award.