



Question & Answer Report

Live Q&A Session for the 100K Strong STEM Alliance Grant Competition

September 16, 2026

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Website Resources

1. The FAQ Session has been down. When will the website be available again?

The FAQ section should be available now: <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/faqs/>.

2. Is membership in Partners of the Americas required to participate? It seems membership fees are involved.

No, there are no membership fees to be a part of the 100K Network. To join, go to the 100K website and go to “Join the Network” to begin the registration process:
<https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/join/>.

Institutional Eligibility & Participation

3. Is Mexico included in the eligible countries?

Unfortunately, Mexico is not an eligible country for this 100K Strong STEM Alliance Competition.



- 4. Can the South Florida Institute of Technology be considered a higher education institution for the purpose of participating in a proposal with a Caribbean university? In that case, the Caribbean university would provide the students who would contribute to said institute.**

Yes, any degree-granting post-secondary institution is considered a higher education institution, so if the South Florida Institute of Technology meets these criteria, it is eligible. Students from South Florida IT and the Caribbean university should participate in the proposed program, although travel is required in at least one direction.

- 5. Can I work with an HEI/Institution that has never participated in this program?**

Yes, as long as they are part of one of the eligible countries.

- 6. Are multiple international locations allowable, or would you prefer applicants to develop a deeper partnership in one location?**

Yes, you can absolutely work in multiple countries if you'd like to. There is no preference.

- 7. How important are established international partners at the time of application?**

Past grantees have shared that having an established working partnership for their 100K Program has helped them, but this is not required. Others have used this grant as an opportunity to test or explore partnerships and we very much welcome that. What is important is that the partner is also committed to making the partnership and proposed program work and that you show this in the proposal.

- 8. Please explain more about the distinction between the applicant and the main partner, how this should be decided and the implications.**

The "prime" applicant is the one that submits the proposal on behalf of the team and is therefore responsible for taking the lead on the project. If awarded a grant, they will be responsible for fulfilling the administrative responsibilities, which can include receipt and management of the grant funds and the submission of reports and other grant-related documents. This should be determined as a team. In general, the institution with the resources to handle these responsibilities should be designated as the applicant.



Budget

- 9. The RFP asks applicants to demonstrate anticipated contributions through cost sharing, either cash or in-kind, but does not specify a minimum amount. Is there a minimum or recommended level of cost-share, and how should applicants determine an appropriate level of in-kind contribution from the partner institution?**

There is no minimum or maximum amount of cost-share require. We recommend a 1:1 grant to HEI cost-share match to increase your chances of funding. We leave it to applicants to work with their partners to determine the appropriate level of in-kind/cash support and according to their own capacity to contribute. We don't anticipate equal contribution from the partnering institutions, but we would like to see that there is adequate institutional buy-in from the partners, and not just from the applicants.

- 10. Are F&A/indirect costs allowed?**

Yes, but we recommend that the grant covers no more than 20% of the indirect costs and to cost-share the remaining.

- 11. The FAQs mention 20% as the recommended maximum, but this is not included in the RFP. Can you provide documentation of the recommended 20% rate for institutional purposes?**

Yes, we can provide that. We have a page on the 100K website in the Proposal Format and Guidelines section: <https://www.100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/>. These are not in RFP because the format requirements don't change. We can also provide formal documentation if your institution requires it.

- 12. Can you show a sample budget?**

A previously funded proposal, including the budget, is available in the Proposal Format & Guidelines page of the 100K website and available for all applicants to use as a guide. *See link above.*

- 13. Are student stipends, faculty compensation, program assistants, or administrative support allowable expenses?**

Yes, they are allowable expenses.

- 14. Can funds support international partners, community organizations, incubators, or entrepreneurs who participate in the program?**

Yes, as long as the students are the main beneficiaries. You can use some funds support these partners, but if they will be part of the program, they should have some contribution in terms of cost-share.



Application Requirements

- 15. Are the Student Recruitment Plan and monitoring and evaluation templates required to be used? The Student Recruitment Plan does not allow to expand or go into multiple pages.**

The templates are not required to be used but are meant to provide guidance and to show applicants the type of information that we look for. Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We have replaced the [Student Recruitment Plan template](#) to an editable version that allows for multiple pages

- 16. For academic credit, can projects embedded in credit-bearing courses be acceptable?**

Yes, the bottom line is that students must receive credit for their travel/participation.

- 17. Can the foreign institution award the academic credit for both U.S. and their own students? (U.S. students would then transfer the credits to their home institution)**

As long as the students receive credit and the two universities/HEIs agree that the credit is transferable and will be accepted, then yes. Students must receive credit for their participation and travel.

- 18. Are you looking for innovative pedagogy, innovative partnerships, or innovative outcomes?**

We are looking for innovation across the board.

- 19. Can faculty use the project for research, assessment, conference presentations, or publications as long as those activities support the grant objectives?**

Yes, as long as the students' benefit is maximized for the grant and the reviewers see that as an integral part of the project.

- 20. For the required letter of support from each participating HEI, does the letter need to come from senior institutional leadership, such as a president, dean, or department chair, or would a letter from the director of an affiliated research center formally representing the HEI also satisfy the requirement?**

Both of those options will work. We will accept letters from anyone who meets the academic and scientific credentials and can vouch for you. Reviewers may consider their titles, but there is no specific outline for *who* should provide a letter of support; however, letters from senior leadership are viewed as stronger by the Review Committee as it demonstrates some level of institutional buy-in.



21. The RFP says a 2-page CV. Should we adhere to that? Or is a cover letter acceptable?

The RFP recommends 2 pages maximum per person for their résumé or biography due to the overall 10-page limit for the annexes. As long as you adhere to the 10-page limit, the CV or cover letter for the project leads or team can be any length.

Submission Process

22. So, we can submit the grant up to October 19?

Yes, on the morning of October 19th, if the 100K Strong team has received an application by then, it will be accepted.

23. Typically, at our institution, the Grants Office submits on behalf of the project director (PD), is that okay?

Yes, this is okay. In the application form, there is an option to indicate whether the person submitting is the PD or not. This is where the Grants Office representative can enter the contact information of the PD. That way, both the PD and grants representative both receive information about the application.

Review Criteria

24. Are there any HEIs who have been repeat awardees? Are past awardees less likely to be awarded?

Many HEIs who are past awardees return to apply for a new grant. Receiving a grant has no effect on past awardees' ability to be awarded again. Our application reviewers operate in a non-biased environment and rate you based on whether the project is feasible and if it will benefit students the most, not on whether you are a past winner or new applicant.

25. Are interdisciplinary program proposals granted more weight in the review process than those that are limited in scope to a single field or discipline?

No. Proposals are solely rated based on whether their program field(s) or discipline(s) are part of one of the eligible thematic areas of this competition and through demonstrated capability to perform these.



26. What are the most common mistakes applicants make that we should avoid? If you could give applicants one piece of advice before they begin writing, what would it be?

One of the most common mistakes applicants make is when their partner HEI doesn't complete the partner profile until it's time to turn in the application, which can create a lot of issues. Other common mistakes we have seen is when the numbers don't add up in the budget, or when budget items aren't appropriately explained how they are relevant to the program. Our advice here is to stick to the templates and be clear and concise about what you intend to use the funds for. Another significant mistake is when applicants do not include their partners in the administration and execution of the proposed program; they may be briefly mentioned in the Program Description but are missing in the rest of the proposal.

Visas

27. Can you please explain the U.S. visa approval process for selected students from eligible countries traveling to the U.S. under this grant? Can they expect expedited visa processing, and what is the chance of them being denied a visa?

Generally speaking, the U.S. visa approval process is outside the control of the 100K Strong team. Although we work hard, in coordination with the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Embassies, to support 100K Strong grantee institutions and request expedited visa processing for their students/faculty, the decision to approve visas ultimately remains with the consular offices.

28. Is there a guarantee that visas from designated countries will be approved?

No, the 100K Team is not responsible for visa approval; however, we will work closely with you and the U.S. Embassy to secure visa appointments and expedite them, when necessary, for your students/faculty, and to provide guidance to increase your group's chances of approval.

Grant Follow-up

29. For doctoral programs that last a minimum of three years, what would the coverage and follow-up look like after December 2027?

Follow-up would be us reaching out to you to try and gather any information about lasting outcomes that have occurred because of the grant and your students'/faculty's participation in the 100K-funded program.