



Tips & Strategies for Developing a 100K Strong Proposal

STEM Alliance Grant Competition

August 25, 2026



Please Note



- Webinar recording & materials will be available on the 100K Strong website within 3-5 business days
 - *Presentations, Q&A Report, and list of attendees interested in connecting with others*
- Engage with others using the “Chat” box.
- Submit questions via the “Q&A” box in the Zoom window
 - *Do not use the “Chat” box.*



Agenda

Webinar: Tips & Strategies for Developing Your Proposal for 100K STEM Alliance



Welcome Remarks How to Find Partners with EdUSA

Maggie Hug

*Director, Regional Education Initiatives and Partnerships
DOS/WHA*



Proposal Evaluation Criteria Build A 100K Proposal: Tips & Considerations

Benjamin Rauch

*Senior MEL Officer, 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund
Partners of the Americas*



Lessons Learned: Program Design/Proposal Development

Alex Zimmerman

*Director of International Education, Office of Global Engagement
Oakland University*

Questions & Answers

Overview



- 100,000 Strong in the Americas (100K) is a regional education initiative by the U.S. Department of State that aims to stimulates **cross-sector collaboration** among governments, industry, and academia to expand **regional educational cooperation** and increase access to innovative opportunities for educational exchange and workforce training in the the Western Hemisphere.
- The 100K Innovation Fund builds **institutional partnerships**, strengthens **institutional capacity**, and increases access to innovative, **student and faculty exchange and training** programs in the Americas.

100K Strong Program Highlights

2013 - 2026



352 grants awarded to teams of 619 HEIs



26 countries and 49 U.S. states



11,200+ student beneficiaries



1,350+ grant proposals submitted



2,300+ HEIs in 100K Network



Over \$20 million from public & private sectors to support 100K Strong





Inspiring **strategic partnerships** between colleges & universities to increase **student mobility** and **training** in the Americas.

www.100kstrongamericas.org | #100KStrongAmericas

◆ How To Apply

WWW.100KSTRONGAMERICAS.ORG # 100KSTRONGAMERICAS

◆ Join the Innovation Network



www.100kstrongamericas.org/join/



Connect with 2,300+ higher education institutions across the Western Hemisphere



Receive news & updates about competitions, conferences, webinars, and more



Search ...

ABOUT THE INNOVATION FUND GRANTS IMPACT INVEST MEDIA EVENTS **JOIN OUR NETWORK** CONTACT US

March 27, 2017 100K Strong Leave a comment

The 100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund invites you to join our networks and connect with members.



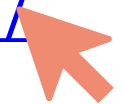
What is the 100K Innovation Network?

The 100,000 Strong in the Americas (100K) Innovation Network is a community of individuals, higher education institutions, consortia, and educational organizations throughout the Americas that are committed to increasing academic exchange between the United

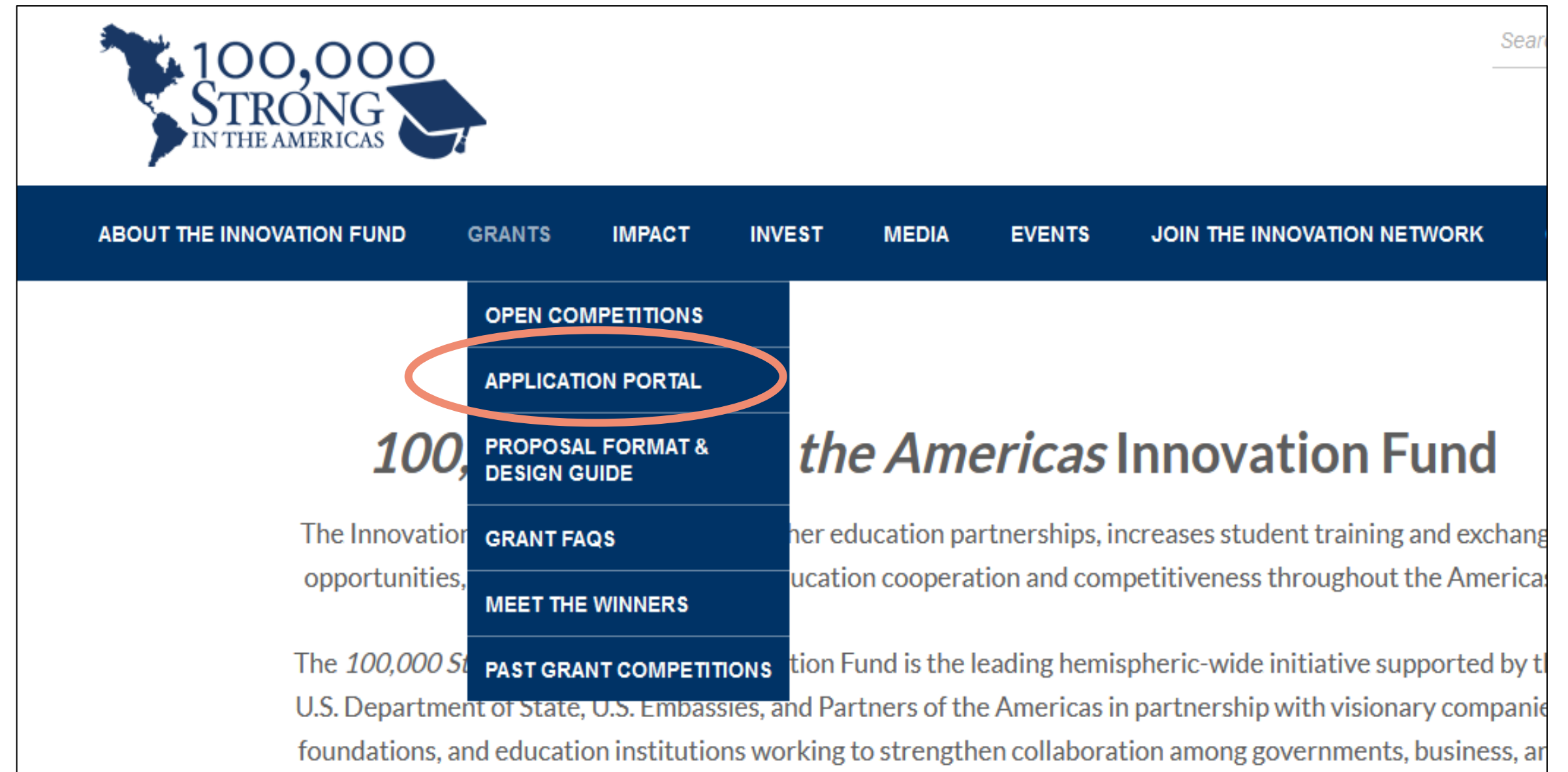
#100KSTRONGAMERICAS



www.100kstrongamericas.org/application-portal/



Step 1: Go to Application Portal



Step 2: Create a Profile

100,000 STRONG IN THE AMERICAS

Homepage

Please click
Profile by c
If you are a

Profile

Applicant Profile Information

Prefix * First Name * Last Name *

Dr. Innovation Fund

Job Title/Position * Department/Unit *

Grant-maker Partners of the Americas

Work Phone * Work Email *

202-628-3300 100kstrongamericas@partners.net

Please include the country code

Edit

IMPORTANT

- Account can be tied only to one email address.
 - **Proposal can be accessed by this email address.**
 - **Recommendation: Use shared email.**
- All communications will be sent to this email + the email of the Project Director listed in the Application Form once submitted.
 - Make sure to closely monitor these inboxes!

Step 3: Complete Required Forms



Test University| -

Order by: Newest to Oldest

Please complete the following tasks. When you have completed all steps, it will no longer state "Action Required." Instead, it will show "Complete".

Grant Application

There are 41 hours remaining to submit this.

Submit

When all required information is provided and all steps completed, the "Submit" button to the right will turn green, which means that your Application is ready for submission.

The Application will not be completed until you click the "Submit" button.

Warning: Once you click "Submit", your Application will no longer be available for edits.

1

Application Form

Action Required

Open

To begin or continue with the Application, please click the "Edit" button to the right.

Once you have completed the Application, you may return here to view or print your submission by clicking the "View" button to the right.

2

Partner Information Request

Action Required

Open

As part of the Application, you must provide at least one contact person at your partner institution(s), who will be collaborating with you on the implementation of your proposed project. This will be done by sending a request to your contact(s) to complete the required form.

To begin, please click the "Open" button to the right.

Step 3: Partner Institution Profile



Recommendation: Send the Partner Profile Request as soon as you confirm your partner institution(s), so that they have sufficient time to complete the form.

Partner Profile Request

Please use this screen to send and track your request(s) to your partner institution(s).
Click the **"New Request"** button to begin. [Click here to view a copy of the form that your partner\(s\) must complete.](#)
For questions about this form or process, please contact 100kstrongamericas@partners.net.

The minimum required requests have been sent. Please check back to ensure they have been completed.

Minimum required: 1 Maximum allowed: 100 Show: All **+ New Request**

Partners University	Sent 08/18/2020 11:13am EDT	Remind	View	Delete
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This form is part of the application and must be completed by the deadline!

On-Demand Webinar:

How to Apply & Partnership Building for the 100K STEM Alliance Grant Competition

Watch webinar recordings and access materials at:

www.100kstrongamericas.org/grants/



01

Competition Eligibility & Requirements

02

Overview of the Online Application Portal

03

How to Identify the Right Institutional Partners

04

Lessons Learned in Partnership Building from a 100K Grantee



◆ Eligibility

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◆ Eligible Countries



Required Partnership



1 U.S. HEI + 1 Central America/Caribbean HEI

UNITED STATES

All U.S. States & Territories



Institutions located in any U.S. state or territory are eligible.



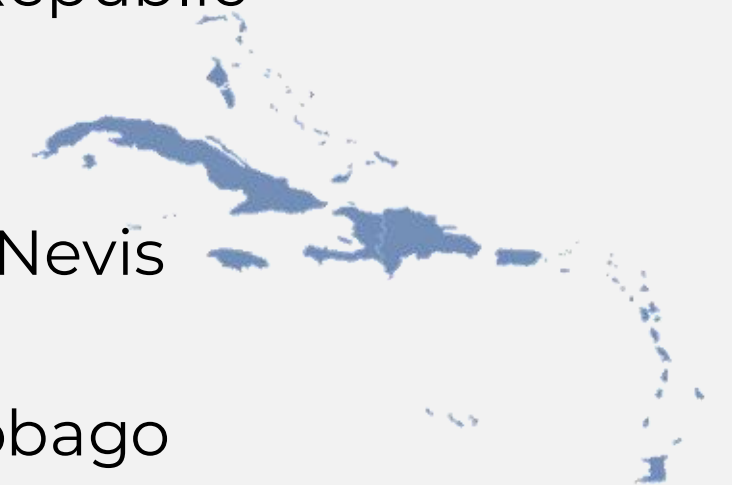
CENTRAL AMERICA

- ◆ Belize
- ◆ Costa Rica
- ◆ El Salvador
- ◆ Guatemala
- ◆ Honduras
- ◆ Panama



CARIBBEAN

- ◆ Antigua & Barbuda
- ◆ Bahamas
- ◆ Barbados
- ◆ Dominican Republic
- ◆ Grenada
- ◆ Jamaica
- ◆ Saint Kitts & Nevis
- ◆ Suriname
- ◆ Trinidad & Tobago
- ◆ Saint Lucia
- ◆ Saint Vincent & the Grenadines



◆ Eligible Thematic Areas



**Science,
Technology,
Engineering, and
Mathematics
(STEM)**

Critical Minerals

Artificial intelligence (AI)

Entrepreneurship

Agricultural & Food Sciences

...and others.



***Read the Request for Proposals (RFP) for more information!**

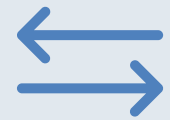
Available Grants



10
Grants

\$32,000
USD

◆ Program Design



Student Mobility

- **Required:** In-person travel in at least one direction.
 - *Bidirectional travel preferred*
- No minimum/ maximum number of students.
- No minimum/ maximum duration of stay.



Level of Study

Students can be at any level of post-secondary education.

- ✓ Undergraduate
- ✓ Graduate
- ✓ Doctoral



Student Credit

Required: Students must receive some level of credit from their home institution during or as a result of the proposed program.

Grant Competition Timeline



ACTIVITY	TIME PERIOD
Application Deadline	October 18, 2026
Notification of Proposal Status	By November 30, 2026
Award of Grant Funds to Winners	December 2026 – January 2027
Period of Project Performance	
January 1 – December 31, 2027	

**Please note that these dates are subject to change.*



How can I find a Partner Institution?



◦ Consult EducationUSA Advising Centers

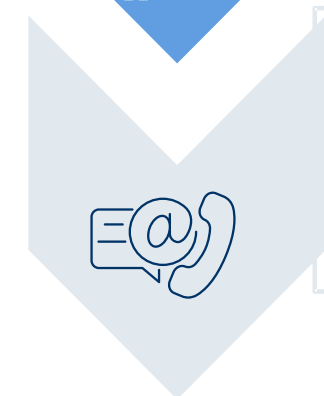
<https://educationusa.state.gov/find-advising-center>



◦ Join the 100K Strong Innovation Network



◦ Connect with others from webinars!



◦ Contact us: 100kstrongamericas@partners.net

EducationUSA

August 2026

Giselle Dubinsky

REAC: Regional Manager for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean



EDUCATIONUSA: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS

EducationUSA is not just an advising service — we are a **platform for partnership-building**. In many countries, EducationUSA can be your official bridge that connects U.S. and local universities, foreign governments, ministries of education, scholarship agencies, and students.

EducationUSA Expertise:

- Market intelligence & local context
- Government & Institutional access
- Cost-effective recruitment
- Credibility and Trust
- EducationUSA as a facilitator

Partnership Model:

- HEIs: programs, priorities, capacity
- EducationUSA: matchmaking, context, convening
- Local partners: scholarships, pipelines, policy goals
- Partnership boards



EDUCATIONUSA: PARTNERSHIP BOARD FOR WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Identify and encourage partnership opportunities between U.S. and Latin American and Caribbean higher education institutions

Please keep in mind:

- This partnership board serves as an announcement board only. You will have to do matching.
- This space is exclusive for the Americas and U.S. institutions.
- Please enter information in English only.

**SUBMISSION
FORM**



**PARTNERSHIP
BOARD**



OUR EDUCATIONUSA ADVISERS IN THE REGION

REAC: Regional Manager, Giselle Dubinsky - gdubinsky@educationusa.org

CENTRAL AMERICA

- **Belize:** Erlinda Smith
ESmith@educationusa.org
- **Costa Rica:** Ana Solis
asolis@educationusa.org
- **El Salvador:** Marta Carranza
mcarranza@educationusa.org
- **Guatemala:** Mariana Hernandez
mhernandez@educationusa.org
- **Honduras:**
Melissa Zelaya
mzelaya@educationusa.org
Lauren Sacaza
lsacaza@educationusa.org

CARIBBEAN

- **Antigua & Barbuda:** Andrea Airall
aaairall@educationusa.org
- **Bahamas:** Breyant Marshalls
bmarshall@educationusa.org
- **Barbados:**
Sabrina Gitten
sgittens@educationusa.org
Faith Callender
fcallender@educationusa.org
- **Dominican Republic:** Dania Gell
dgell@educationusa.org
- **Jamaica:**
Cleo Walker
csmith@educationusa.org
Bernadette
HutchinsonBG@state.gov
- **Saint Kitts & Nevis:** Anatasia Parris
aparris@educationusa.org
- **Saint Lucia:** Milissa Emmanuel
memmanuel@educationusa.org
- **Saint Vincent and the Grenadines:**
Monique Rogers-Murray
mrogers-murray@educationusa.org
- **Suriname:** Chevallie
cvinkwolk@educationusa.org
- **Trinidad & Tobago:** Afeisha Beckles
abeckles@educationusa.org





◆ Build Your 100K Strong Proposal

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◆ Evaluation Criteria

Technical Narrative (80%)

15 pages maximum

Cover Page (1 page)	
Table of Contents (1 page)	
Executive Summary & Program Description	40%
Sustainability Plan	15%
Capacity, Challenges & Opportunities	10%
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Plan	15%

Budget (20%)

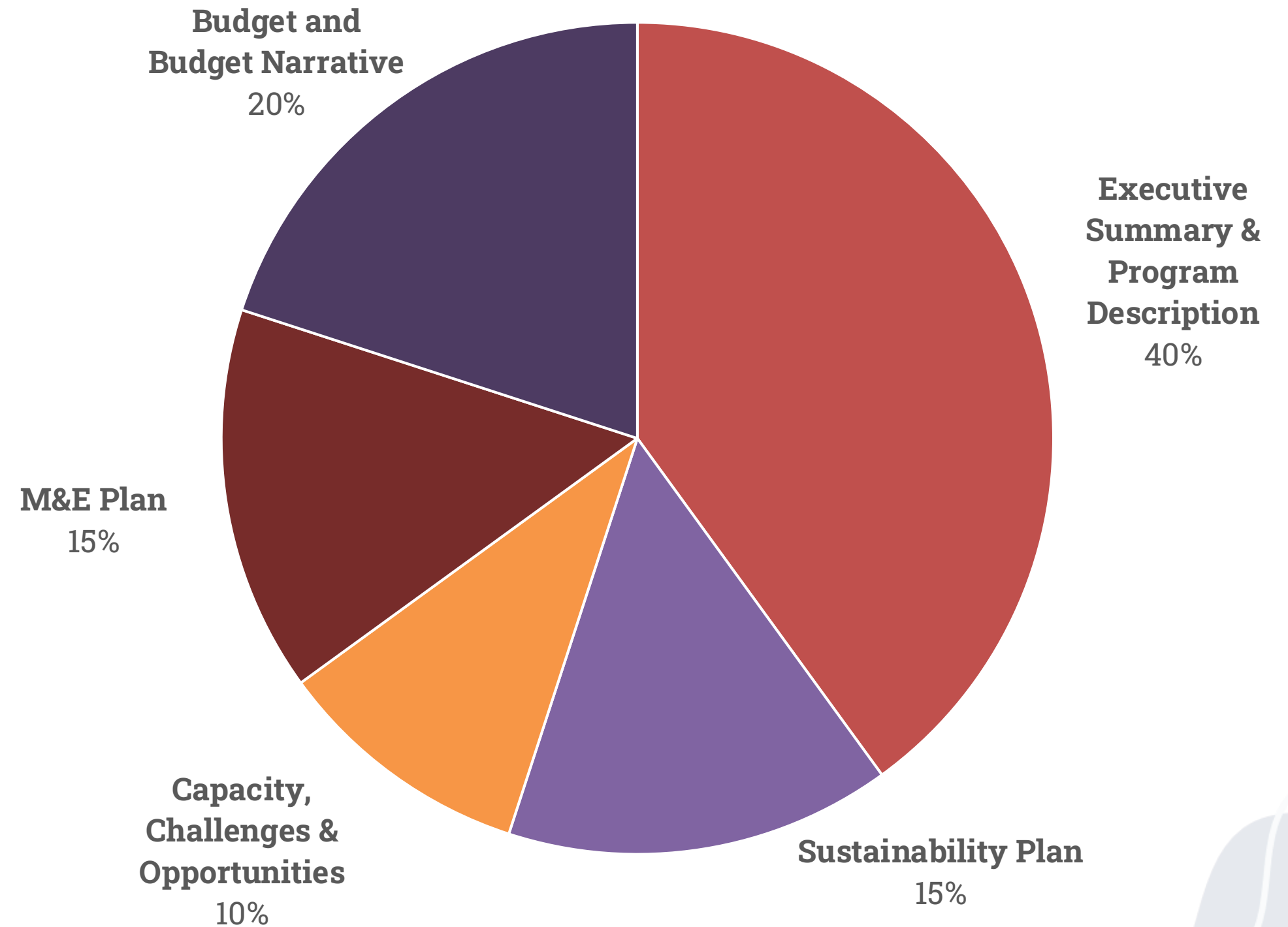
5 pages maximum

Budget Summary Table	
- Clarity	5%
- Cost-Share	5%
- Indirect/Administrative Costs	5%
Descriptive Budget Narrative	5%

Supporting Documents

10 pages maximum

Letters of Support (required)	
• From participating HEIs	
Biography/Resume of Project Team (required)	
Additional Materials	



Executive Summary & Program Description



Executive Summary of the Proposal

Program Description

- ✓ Need for program explained/justified
- ✓ Clear program goals, specific objectives, and key activities
- ✓ Student Exchange
 - ☐ Student learning objectives
 - ☐ Detailed activities: focus on hands-on, practical experience
 - ☐ Timeline of exchange activities, including travel
 - ☐ # of students that will travel in either/both directions
- ✓ Credit for students at either/both institutions
- ✓ Clearly identify the innovations/new components to the program

*****Make sure reviewers are not left with questions about the design and purpose of your proposal.*****

40%

Be clear, concise, and specific about the project design, goals, objectives, and student activities.

◆ Sustainability Plan



Current Support

- Is there **institutional “buy-in”/ support** from all involved institutions to the program?
- Have you identified any local, national or international **funding sources**?
 - ✓ Highlight financial commitments from institutions, community partners, government agencies, etc.

Future Support

- What **concrete plans/actions** do you have to ensure the continuation of program?
- What are your plans to secure **additional funding**?

15%

Provide actionable steps to continuing your proposed program after the initial year of 100K funding.

REQUIRED: Letters of support from your institution and partner institution/s – from individuals outside of project team.

◆ Capacity, Challenges, & Opportunities For Growth



Discuss with your partners:

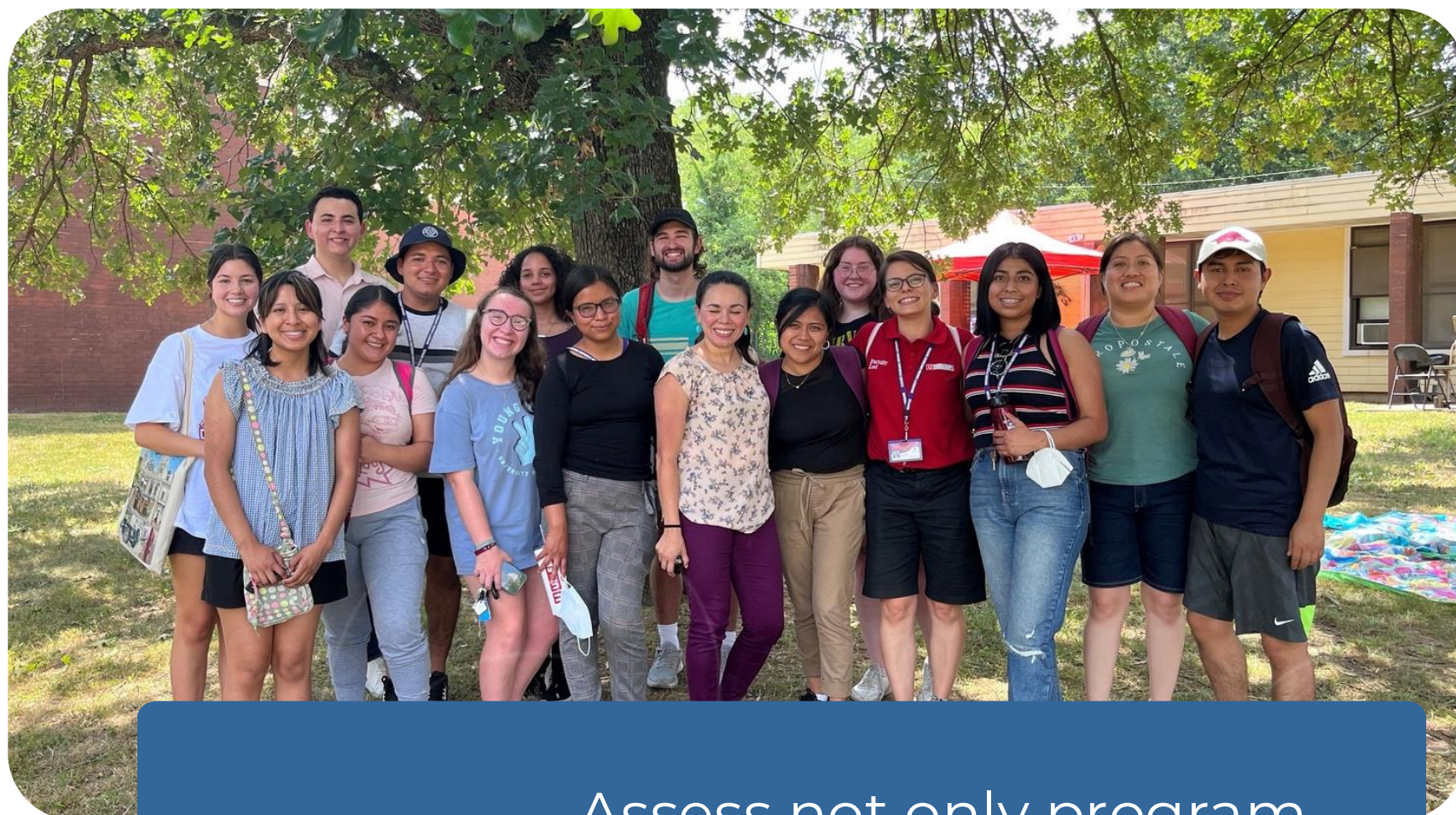
- Division of responsibilities (including grant resources and cost-share contribution)
- Resources and capacity to administer international exchange programs and/or support participating students & faculty
- Awareness of institutional challenges that prevent students from going abroad
- Opportunities provided by the 100K grant that will help to overcome the challenges of student mobility

REQUIRED: Biography/résumé of all project team members from each HEI involved.

10%

Present the capacity, challenges, and opportunities of **ALL** collaborating institutions.

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Plan



15%

Assess not only program success, but the impact on students, faculty, and the partnering HEIs.

- **What will you measure?**
Quantified target goals, benchmarks, indicators of progress, etc.
- **How will you measure program progress & indicators?**
Tools & technology for data collection
- **When/How often will you collect data?**
i.e., baseline, throughout, post-activity, etc.
- **Who is responsible for collecting the data?**
PIs, separate department, etc.

Use the M&E plan template provided on the 100K website:
100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/

◆ Budget



Narrative (5%)

- Explain and justify each item & activity listed in the budget summary
- Provide breakdown of cost estimates
 - *How are costs calculated?*

Use resources provided at:

100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/

- ☐ Sample Budget Narrative
- ☐ Budget Summary Template



Clarity (5%)

- Make sure all calculations are correct
- Be as specific as possible

Indirect/Administrative Costs (5%)

- Consider placing indirect costs under your cost-share
 - If not, the recommendation is no more than 20% of the grant
- Low indirect costs = better

20%

Budget items should reflect proposed activities. Be as specific as possible.

◆ Budget



Is there guidance on how the grant funds can/cannot be spent?

- **Funds should support students.**
- Personnel, consultants
- *Travel (e.g., flights, hotels, transportation, meals, etc.)*
- Student stipends/scholarships
- Communications, marketing materials, translation, etc.
- Use/rental of equipment (*keep this low*)
- Course materials, software, etc.
- Program assessment tools
- Conference fees
- Indirect (*no more than 20% of grant*)

Cost-Share (5%)

- **Required**, but no minimum amount
 - It is recommended to match the grant 1:1.
- In-kind or cash contributions from partnering HEIs and/or external resources

Include contributions from all involved HEIs to match the grant.

Examples:

- Personnel
- Faculty/staff travel
- Equipment/lab/facility use
- Student scholarships/stipends from the HEIs or external sources
- Remaining/all indirect costs

Expenses covered by students out-of-pocket do not count as cost-share.

Final Tips



Use the 100K templates provided

- M&E Plan
- Budget Summary

Refer to sample documents

- Budget Narrative
- Sample 100K Proposal

Make sure that all proposal documents are in English

Available at
100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/

Don't wait!

- Begin writing your proposal as soon as possible.
- Ask your partners for a letter of support now.
 - Send request to complete the HEI Partner Profile form. Send via the Application Portal.

◆ Lessons Learned in Program Design/Proposal Development



Freshwater Ecology in the Great Lakes and Guatemala: Promoting Sustainability in an Era of Global Change

**OAKLAND
UNIVERSITY™**

Alex Zimmerman

Director of International Education,
Office of Global Engagement
Oakland University
(100K Strong Grantee)

#100KSTRONGAMERICAS



◆ Establishing a Connection



- Made initial contact at a 100K Strong workshop in Guatemala City
- Think about the strengths of your institution and of your partners'
- Build on existing programs or infrastructure
- Get institutional partners in both countries on board before drafting the proposal
- Aim for a bidirectional exchange, if at all possible
- Don't neglect secondary/supporting partners in both countries

◆ Writing the Proposal and Planning the Program



- Come up with a compelling hook – why should this program exist?
- Schedule periodic meetings with partners
- Meet with the program's teaching faculty
- Connect group activities back to the core program mission
- Incorporate diverse perspectives on the subject matter
- Be flexible

◆ Budgeting



- Don't underestimate staff time requirements, especially while the program is in operation
- Try to get indirect costs waived as a cost-share
- Businesses/organizations are often willing to give preferential rates for initiatives like this
- Organize the budget narrative by section and try to make it as straightforward as possible
- Work with your campus grants or research office to finalize the budget and narrative

Questions?

Please submit questions via the Q&A box in your Zoom window

- Questions not addressed during this webinar will be answered in a Question & Answer Report, sent to you within 3-5 business days.
- Refer to our Grant FAQs for answers to the most commonly asked questions:
100kstrongamericas.org/100k-competition-faqs/
- Submit additional your questions at
www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions/

Note: Webinar recording and related materials will be sent to all attendees.



Join our upcoming webinars to learn how to develop your proposal for the STEM Alliance Grant Competition.



Consejos y estrategias para desarrollar su propuesta 100K Strong

August 27, 2026

1:00 – 2:00 pm EDT



Live Q&A Session

September 15, 2026

1:00 – 2:00 pm EDT

Learn more:

www.100kstrongamericas.org/events/webinars/

**UPCOMING
WEBINARS**



REGISTER NOW





Apply Now!

STEM *Alliance* GRANT COMPETITION

Application Deadline
OCTOBER 18, 2026

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100K Strong

 100kstrongamericas@partners.net

 www.100kstrongamericas.org

Oakland University

 **Alex Zimmerman**

*Director of International Education,
Office of Global Engagement*

azimmerman@oakland.edu

Thank you!