



SHEEO

STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION



The Jed Foundation

Advancing Whole Student Support Through Improved Mental Health and Wellness Learning Community Request for Proposals (RFP) Selection Process

Project Objective

Inadequate campus support for student mental health, such as student isolation and difficulty accessing care, extreme wait times, understaffing, and underfunding, predates 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, exacerbated preexisting conditions that failed to adequately support students. The impacts have been particularly pronounced for students of color and students from low-income circumstances. Systemic inequities, mental health disparities (related to both additive stressors and lower access to care), and higher levels of harassment and violence, combined with (and exacerbated by) pandemic trauma and the aftermath have rendered these populations more vulnerable to mental health challenges and suicide risk than peers from less marginalized groups.

Five states will be selected for a planning grant of \$25,000 to facilitate their participation in the inaugural Student Mental Health and Wellness Learning Community from 2023-2024. A key objective of this project is to develop and implement state- and system-wide policy recommendations. These recommendations will focus on collaborative strategies and innovative solutions aimed at bolstering institutions' ability to effectively promote and support student mental health, thereby fostering educational success and overall life fulfillment.

This document lays out the RFP selection process and scoring rubric for state teams interested in joining the inaugural learning community cohort by responding to the Request for Proposals (RFP) open from August 31 – September 26, 2023.

Request for Proposals

The RFP opens on **Thursday, August 31** prior to SHEEO's informational webinar that will take place at **2 PM ET on Thursday, August 31**. The RFP document and additional relevant information can be accessed on the [SHEEO website](https://sheeo.org).

State teams should download this document, type directly in it to complete the RFP responses, and then save as a single PDF of their complete RFP responses and submit it to Sakshee Chawla (schawla@sheeo.org) no later than **4 PM ET on Tuesday, September 26, 2023** (NOTE: Deadline has been extended from September 22). Selected states will be notified of their award on or before **Friday, September 29, 2023**.

Eligibility

SHEEO members are encouraged to apply. To promote the development of recommendations that support improving service to students, the application will invite a description of plans for SHEEOs to develop state coalitions of representative institutions and organizations to collaborate on important strategies.

Selection Process

RFP responses will be reviewed and scored by staff from SHEEO and our partner, The JED Foundation. Scoring is based on questions associated with the four major topics this project will cover as described in the RFP and the table below. The selection committee will score proposals with the following rubric for each section: 1 - Minimal demonstration; 3 - Partial demonstration (some areas are underdeveloped); 5 - Sufficient demonstration. Each application has the potential for a total score of 4-20.

Applicants not selected for this inaugural learning community project will be offered an opportunity for a debriefing with project staff if desired. Upon notice of selection, state planning teams will have the opportunity to book their initial virtual meeting with project staff.

| Topic | Description | Score (1-5) | Reviewer Notes |
|--|---|-------------|----------------|
| Coalition-Building and Making the ROI Case | Proposal demonstrates a commitment to collaborative coalition building to advance student mental health and wellness in the state. | | |
| Aligning Student Mental Health to State Higher Education Priorities | Proposal demonstrates how student mental health and wellness aligns with state higher education priorities and/or integrates with complementary initiatives. Proposal also acknowledges the connection between academic persistence, success, and mental health through partnership with other complementary programs or initiatives. | | |
| Planning for Equity-Based, Systems-Scaled Student Mental Health Projects | Proposal demonstrates an equity-focused mental health and wellness strategy to acknowledge student groups that experience pronounced disparities in access to mental health and wellness services. | | |
| Sustainable Budgeting and Productive Funding Models | Proposal demonstrates productive avenues for short- and long-term funding pursuits. | | |
| Total Score | | | |

Questions

Please refer RFP questions to the contacts below no later than **Tuesday, September 26, 2023**.

Contacts

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