



Campus Security Support Program Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

Release Date: April 7, 2026

Submission Date: May 6, 2026 by 12:00 p.m. EST

Program Purpose

To support Ohio institutions of higher education as they work to foster a safe and respectful education environment, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (“ODHE”), per Section 381.220 of Amended Substitute House Bill 96 of the 136th General Assembly, was charged with developing the guidelines and procedures to apply for funding through the *Campus Security Support Program Grant*.

This round of the Campus Security Support Program Grant differs from previous rounds in that institutions of higher education will apply to receive funding on behalf of their institutionally sanctioned organizations to be distributed to such organizations as needs arise.

Institutions of higher education will apply for lump-sum awards as outlined in this RFP. If awarded, they will be responsible for managing and allocating grant funds to institutionally sanctioned organizations on their campuses in accordance with ODHE guidelines.

Proposals received should outline how the institution will use the awarded funds to support student organizations at risk for increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment. The purpose of the funding is to provide institutionally-sanctioned student organizations with the means to prevent or mitigate the risk of violent crime through enhanced security measures and increased student safety.

Through this round of the program, institutions must directly provide funds to the institutionally sanctioned organizations to support the activities outlined in the proposals submitted to and approved by the institution.

I. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include state institutions of higher education as defined in section 3345.011 of the Revised Code and private nonprofit institutions of higher education as defined in section 3365.01 of the Revised Code that have institutionally sanctioned student organizations.

The following institution types are eligible:

“State university” includes all of the following: University of Akron, Bowling Green State University, Central State University, University of Cincinnati, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, Miami University, Northeast Ohio Medical University, Ohio University, Ohio State University, Shawnee State University, University of Toledo, Wright State University, and Youngstown State University.

“State institution of higher education” means any state university or college as defined in division (A)(1) of section [3345.12](#) of the Revised Code, community college, state community college, university branch established under Chapter 3355. of the Revised Code, or technical college.

“Private college” means any of the following:

- (1) A nonprofit institution holding a certificate of authorization pursuant to Chapter 1713. of the Revised Code;
- (2) An institution holding a certificate of registration from the state board of career colleges and schools and program authorization for an associate or bachelor's degree program issued under section [3332.05](#) of the Revised Code;
- (3) A private institution exempt from regulation under Chapter 3332. of the Revised Code as prescribed in section [3333.046](#) of the Revised Code.

Further, applicants, including the institutionally-sanctioned organizations that receive grant funds, are responsible for compliance with all federal and state law and guidance, including laws regarding nondiscriminatory practices. Applicants understand ODHE's acceptance of applicant's proposal does not constitute a review or approval of applicant's compliance with federal or state law and guidance.

Funds awarded through the Campus Security Support Program Grant will only be sent to eligible institutions of higher education. if awarded. The address should be included with the proposal at the time of submission.

II. Anticipated Awards

The total of all awards under the *Campus Security Support Program Grant* will not exceed the total funding available. The Chancellor is not obligated to expend all funds set aside for this initiative and may request revisions to proposals and budgets.

1. Total Award Funding Available: up to \$ 2,290,000.00
2. Tiered Lump-Sum Award for Institutions
 - Institutions with **150+ student organizations** -Tier 1 award: up to \$300,000.00
 - Institutions with **50–150 student organizations** - Tier 2 award: up to \$200,000.00
 - Institutions with **≤50 student organizations** -Tier 3 award: up to \$100,000.00

The maximum award per institution will be based on the number of active institutionally-sanctioned student organizations at that institution as of 12/31/2025.

Award funds should prioritize security-related enhancements for institutionally-sanctioned student organizations. Once those needs have been addressed, remaining funds may be considered for programmatic or activity-based initiatives that align with the purpose of the Campus Security Support Program Grant.

Funding for programmatic or activity-based initiatives should not exceed 40% of the total award amount per institution.

Institutions should ensure that all proposed uses of funds directly support student organization safety objectives and are not intended to fulfill broader institutional security priorities.

The funds must be used by the institution to support institutionally-sanctioned student organizations in their efforts to enhance security measures and increase student safety in alignment with the Campus Security Support Program Grant's purpose. Institutions receiving funds will need to prioritize the needs of institutionally-sanctioned student organizations who are at risk for increased threats of violence crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment.

Proposals, where available, should provide data which provides insight to the need for supportive funding for student organizations at risk for violent crimes, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment. This can include, but is not limited to, complaints received for violent crimes within the Clery geography for the campus, local/municipal crime data specific to the town/city where the institution is located, feedback from student focus groups, campus surveys, etc. Local data provided by the institution will be given greater consideration when evaluating the proposal over national crime data.

III. Institutional Responsibility for Internal Grant Administration

Institutions awarded funds through the Campus Security Support Program Grant will assume full responsibility for developing and implementing an internal process to distribute grant funds to institutionally sanctioned student organizations through a proposal process.

In their submitted proposal, institutions must outline (Further instructions in **Attachment A**):

- How the institution will design and implement its internal process for awarding funds to student organizations, including application procedures, evaluation criteria, award notification, internal reporting and fiscal oversight, and other applicable information pertaining to the institution's implementation schedule.
- How the institution will ensure that student organizations play a prominent leadership role in all funded activities.
- How compliance and oversight of all funded activities will be maintained throughout the funding cycle.

In the award agreement, ODHE will provide guidance on:

- Required templates to be used in the application and evaluation process locally to maintain consistency across all awardees.
- Guidance for evaluating potential eligible expenses beyond those listed in **Attachment B**.
- Criteria for determining whether student organization requests align with the purpose of the Campus Security Support Program Grant.

Awarded institutions will receive a Job Aid and supporting documents from ODHE to assist in administering their internal process for distributing grant funds.

Institutions may add supplemental forms for internal processes, but ODHE templates are mandatory for compliance and reporting.

The institution is responsible for ensuring that all approved projects comply with ODHE's eligibility criteria and program objectives throughout the project term.

IV. Eligible Expenses and Project Term

Institutions receiving funding through the Campus Security Support Program Grant must ensure that awarded funds are allocated to and directly tied to institutionally-sanctioned student organizations at risk for increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment, and must confirm that funded activities directly support the organization's mission or address its safety needs.

These funds must be used to enhance security measures and increase student safety in alignment with the program's purpose.

General security enhancements that benefit the broader campus community are not eligible under this grant and may be better suited for other ODHE funding opportunities. When developing internal processes, institutions must ensure that all awarded projects align with the purpose of the Campus Security Support Program and are not simply a means to implement campus-wide security upgrades.

A comprehensive list of eligible and ineligible expenses has been provided as **Attachment B** to this RFP. This list is not exhaustive. ODHE will provide a Job Aid to help institutions determine whether an expense is allowable under the Campus Security Support Program Grant. In most cases, institutions may approve expenses themselves based on this guidance. However, certain expenses, such as those involving physical security enhancements that require a Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA), will require prior approval before the institution can authorize funding. Information regarding the SVA can be found in Attachment B.

No single student organization may receive a disproportionate share of the institution's total award. Institutions must ensure that funds are distributed in a manner that supports multiple institutionally sanctioned student organizations affiliated with at-risk communities. No single organization should receive more than 25% of the institution's total award amount unless a compelling justification is provided and approved by ODHE prior to awarding the funds. Additionally, institutions are strongly encouraged to prioritize student organizations which have not previously received or are currently receiving funding under this grant program and/or are affiliated with a community at risk for increased threats of violence crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment. As an example, a student organization representing students at risk for violence should be prioritized over the institution's student government association which previously applied for and received funding under this grant program.

Additionally, institutions must ensure that awarded funds are not used to support the same or substantially similar project multiple times. If multiple student organizations submit applications for identical or nearly identical initiatives, institutions should assess whether repeated funding is necessary. Projects that have already been funded under previous rounds should generally not be re-funded unless the institution can demonstrate a clear and meaningful justification for the proposed initiative's impact on the student organization applying for funds. If a proposed project is identical or substantially similar to one previously funded through the Campus Security Support Program, the institution should demonstrate a commitment to sustaining or expanding the initiative, which may include contributing institutional funds alongside grant funds to show the project's continued necessity.

V. Reporting

Campus Security Support Program Grant proposals that are awarded funds through this RFP will have through June 30, 2027 to complete the scope of work for the program, beginning when an agreement is executed between ODHE and the institution. Planning for developing internal processes to ensure a quick turn around on advertising the availability of funds to student organizations should commence upon acceptance of the grant award notification, as awarded institutions are encouraged to allocate at least 40% of their awarded funds by December 31, 2026.

ODHE will monitor each institution for which an award is granted to ensure that there is fiscal accountability and progress towards distributing funds, and that the desired outcomes are achieved, as regular interim reporting will be required from all awardees during the project period. All award expenditures must be properly documented following ODHE guidelines. Additional information will be set forth in the grant agreement. Reports should be sent to the ODHE safety grants team, ODHEsafetygrants@highered.ohio.gov.

A final program and expense report will be due from the institution 30 days after the end of the expenditure period. Reports should be sent to the ODHE safety grants team, ODHEsafetygrants@highered.ohio.gov.

VI. Proposals Review Process and Timeline

The schedule below may be revised at the Chancellor's discretion. Any changes will be communicated to applicants.

Request for Proposals Released	April 7, 2026
Proposal Questions from Interested Parties	April 7, 2026 – April 20, 2026
Call to review the RFP at 10:00 am	April 17, 2026
Proposals Due by 12:00 p.m.	May 6, 2026
Proposal Review Period	May 6, 2026- May 20, 2026
Notification of Awarded Proposals	May 29, 2026

The Chancellor will provide information to interested parties and provide assistance to potential applicants by responding to questions submitted via e-mail to: ODHEsafetygrants@highered.ohio.gov by the deadline.

Questions must be submitted by April 20, 2026 to ensure an answer by April 24, 2026

Responses will be posted at: <https://rfp.ohiohighered.org/>

Individuals interested in participating in the call on Friday, April 17, 2026 at 10:00 am, can do so through the following link:

<https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/a8800fa0-7f75-40e7-befe-0418688790b1@50f8fcc4-94d8-4f07-84eb-36ed57c7c8a2>

The Chancellor's staff will initially screen proposals for completeness and eligibility. Any deficiencies must be addressed by the applicant within a time period set by the Chancellor's staff. While all properly

submitted proposals will receive consideration, submission of a complete proposal does not guarantee funding.

Upon applicant approval, the Chancellor will provide an award notification letter to the institution, which will include the total awarded amount. ODHE and the applicant will enter into an agreement prior to funding being disbursed. All applicable materials for grant management and compliance will be provided by ODHE along with the fully executed agreement.

VII. Proposal Submission

Applicants are responsible for submissions of proposals within the time period set by the Chancellor. Proposals must include the address for the institution where funds awarded may be sent. The information for the institution, including the mailing address needs to be exactly as registered in the Ohio Pays system. Proposals must be received no later than 12:00 p.m. on May 6, 2026, and must be submitted in the following manner:

One electronic PDF file that includes: the cover letter, application form, and the budget narrative and budget, emailed to the ODHE safety grants team at ODHEsafetygrants@highered.ohio.gov.

All information submitted in response to this RFP is public information unless a statutory exception exists that exempts it from public release under the Ohio Public Records Act in Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

VIII. Proposal Requirements

A. Format

Proposals must be submitted in Arial Font, 11 point and double-spaced; there is an exception for tables and images, where the font may be single spaced. Please see below for page allocations and directions for each section of the proposal

1. **Cover Letter (one page maximum):**
 - a. A brief overview of the institution's plan to utilize awarded funds to manage and distribute grant dollars to institutionally sanctioned student organizations.
2. **Grant Application (Attachment A):** Responses must be received to all applicable questions in the application document. Incomplete submissions will not be considered.
3. **Budget and Budget Narrative:** In a PDF document attached to the grant application, a high-level budget request must be submitted. This budget request should reflect the institution's planned use of the lump sum award as well as an explanation of the institution's past participation in the Campus Security Support Program Grant.

Specifically, the lump-sum budget request should include:

- a. Total amount requested and the anticipated number of organizations which may benefit from this requested amount.
- b. (If applicable) A detailed rationale for all applications previously submitted under the Campus Security Support Program from January 1, 2025, through February 23, 2026, for institutionally sanctioned student organizations. This should include:

- i. The number of applications submitted during this period.
- ii. The number of student organizations supported (or that could have been supported if proposal was not awarded funds) under those applications.
- iii. If the number of student organizations listed in this proposal is noticeably higher than in previous submissions, please share any context that explains this change. For example, have new needs emerged, or have additional organizations become eligible or expressed interest since prior rounds?
- c. If your institution has not applied in prior rounds, please explain why. For example, have new needs emerged, or have additional organizations become eligible or expressed interest since then?
- d. Indirect costs should be limited to no more than 5% of the proposed budget.

B. Scoring Rubric

Each proposal will be assessed according to the proposal criteria:

- Project Design 20 points
- Project Rationale 15 points
- Project Plan 25 points
- Budget & Budget Narrative 10 points

IX. Legal Notices

The applicant understands that if its application is accepted by the State, the applicant shall enter into an agreement with the State governing the use of the awarded funds. The applicant agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations in the conduct of the work hereunder.

The State reserves the right to fund any application in full or in part, to request additional information to assist in the review process, to require new applications from interested parties, to reject any or all applications responding to this announcement, or to reissue the announcement if it is determined that it is in the best interest of the State of Ohio. Issuing this announcement does not bind the State to making any awards. The State reserves the right to adjust the dates for this announcement for whatever reasons are deemed appropriate. The State reserves the right to waive any nonsubstantive infractions made by an applicant, provided that the applicant cures such infraction upon request.

All costs incurred in preparation of an application shall be borne by the applicant. Application preparation costs are not recoverable under an award. The State of Ohio shall not contribute in any way to recovering the costs of application preparation.

The funding decisions are final. Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application(s) at the conclusion of the review process.

The applicant understands that the information provided herein is intended solely to assist the applicant in submittal preparation. To the best of the State’s knowledge, the information provided is accurate. However, the State does not warrant such accuracy, and any errors or omissions subsequently determined will not be construed as a basis for invalidating this solicitation. Interested parties bear the sole responsibility of obtaining the necessary information to submit a qualifying application. The State retains the right to modify or withdraw this solicitation at any time. By submitting an application, applicants expressly agree to these terms.

X. Trade Secrets

All Applicants are strongly discouraged from including in a proposal any information that the Applicant considers to be a “trade secret,” as that term is defined in Section 1333.61(D) of the Ohio Revised Code.

1. To determine what qualifies as trade secret information, refer to the definition of “trade secret” in the Ohio Revised Code at 1333.61(D), which is reproduced below for reference:

“(D) ‘Trade Secret’ means information, including the whole or any portion or phase of any scientific or technical information, design, process, procedure, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or improvement, or any business information or plans, financial information, or listing of names, addresses, or telephone numbers that satisfies both of the following:

- (1) It derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to, and not being readily ascertainable by proper means by, other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use.
- (2) It is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.”

2. If any information in the proposal is to be treated as a trade secret, the proposal must:
 - a. Identify each and every occurrence of the information within the proposal with an asterisk before and after each line containing trade secret information and underline the trade secret information itself;
 - b. Identify that the proposal contains trade secret information in the cover letter; and
 - c. Include a summary page immediately after the cover letter that lists each page in the proposal that includes trade secret information and the number of occurrences of trade secret information on that page.
3. The Ohio Department of Higher Education requires non-disclosure agreements from all nonDepartment of Higher Education persons who may have access to proposals containing trade secret information, including evaluators.
4. If the Applicant claims that a record is not subject to disclosure under the Ohio Public Records law based on trade secret, it will bear costs of defending this claim.

Attachment A

Campus Security Support Program Grant Application

Program Purpose: Through the Campus Security Support Program Grant, ODHE seeks proposals from state institutions of higher education and private nonprofit institutions of higher education for a lump sum award amount which will in turn be used in an institutionally-managed process to allocate grant funds to institutionally sanctioned student organizations on their campuses. These organizations must be affiliated with communities at risk for increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment. The purpose of the funding is to enhance security measures and increase student safety.

Section I. Applicant information.

Primary Institutional Contact

This individual will serve as the main point of contact for all programmatic and administrative matters related to the grant.

Name: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Secondary Institutional Contact (If applicable)

Name: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Authorized Legal Signatory

This individual has the legal authority to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the institution receiving grant funds.

Name: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Email Address: _____

Number of Institutionally Recognized
Student Organizations as of 12/31/2025 _____

Tier Category (Select One)

- Tier 1: 150+ student organizations award up to \$300,000.00
- Tier 2: 50 -150 student organization award up to \$200,000.00
- Tier 3: ≤50 student organizations award up to \$100,000.00

Amount of Funding Requested _____

Please review the cover sheet for eligibility criteria, important dates, and legal notices before submitting your application

Instructions: Please respond to (Section II) in a separate PDF document and submit it along with the completed fillable form (Section I) and the budget form.

Section II. Questionnaire

Project design

1. Describe how your institution will design and implement its internal grant process for distributing Campus Security Support Program funds to student organizations. Include how your institution's existing resources and systems demonstrate the capacity to manage and oversee this process.
2. How will your institution ensure fair access to funds for all student organizations, including those serving at-risk communities?
3. Describe how your institution will engage student organizations in shaping or informing this process to ensure it meets their needs?

Project Rationale

ODHE will give priority to proposals that use campus-specific or local municipality data to support the rationale over proposals that only include national data.

1. If your campus or surrounding locality has experienced an increase in threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment toward students and/or student organizations, please answer the following questions. If not, you may skip to the next question.
 - a. What supportive local data does your institution use to demonstrate this increase?
 - b. How does your institution partner with the campus community and/or municipal law enforcement to address threats as they pertain to student safety and wellbeing?
2. If no threat is present on or around campus, please describe any engagement efforts currently being done to establish and sustain relationships with affected student communities.
3. What data or metrics will your institution use to identify priority areas for funding and measure success?

Project Plan

1. Describe where the internal grant process will reside within your institution (office or department), who will manage and provide oversight for all awarded projects, and any campus partners who will support this individual/office (if applicable)
2. Describe your plan for managing the internal grant process for student organizations. Please outline:
 - a. Criteria to be used to evaluate funding requests
 - b. Award funds in a fair and transparent manner.
 - c. Measure the impact on student safety.
3. What internal controls will you implement to prevent misuse of funds?
4. How will you monitor funded projects to ensure compliance with ODHE guidelines?
5. How will you ensure institutionally sanctioned organizations will play a prominent leadership role in funded activities?

Attachment B

Eligible Expenses for Campus Security Support Program Grant

Physical Security Enhancements

Please refer to the authorized equipment listed under the Campus Security Support Program on <https://rfp.ohiohighered.org/> for a list of eligible items. Please note that there are some items on this list that are also included in the ineligible expenses list below. Please be sure to cross-reference each list.

For any funding requests involving physical security or safety enhancements to a building owned or leased (for at least the next five years) by an institutionally sanctioned student organization or its sponsoring organization:

- The institution must ensure that a completed Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) is submitted to schoolsafetygrants@dps.ohio.gov prior to approval of the project.
- Only the completed SVA should be sent to this email address. Do not send the SVA to ODHE for security reasons.
- The institution must retain proof of DPS approval of the SVA as part of its grant documentation.

Programmatic Components

- Student Safety Ambassador Program (employing students as peer safety advocates)
- Situational awareness training (active threat response drills, personal safety workshops, bystander intervention training)
- Community outreach and awareness campaigns (safety fairs, social media campaigns)
- Educational materials (brochures, posters, digital safety guides)
- Safe ride campaigns (promoting safe transportation options)
- Giveaways for engagement (safety whistles, ID badge holders, reflective gear)
- Vendor-led training for students on new security technology

Ineligible Expenses

- Weapons of any kind (firearms, ammunition, pepper spray, batons, or similar products)
- Less-than-lethal components.
- General campus-wide security upgrades (must be specific to student organization's needs)
- Staff-only training or passive outreach with no student engagement.
- One-time speakers.
- Entertainment or performance activities without a direct safety purpose.
- Event security costs (including hiring licensed security personnel)
- Hiring licensed security personnel for any purpose

- Weapons training or tactical gear
 - Routine operational costs (salaries for regular staff, utilities, insurance, unrelated maintenance)
 - Vehicles of any kind (patrol cars, school buses, fire trucks, or any other vehicle purchase)
 - Construction projects (large-scale renovations or new building construction beyond security enhancements)
 - Fire suppression systems.
-

Important Note: The items listed above are examples of eligible expenses under the Campus Security Support Program Grant. The Authorized equipment list is provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and cannot be altered by ODHE. Specifically, the programmatic components list is not exhaustive. Institutions may approve other expenses if they align with the program's purpose with the exception of any security enhancement request which requires the completion of an SVA. All security enhancements requiring the completion of an SVA, as detailed above, must come from the Authorized Equipment List which is developed and maintained by the Ohio Department of Public Safety.

Prohibited items are listed in the Ineligible Expenses section.