



Campus Student Safety Grant Program Request for Proposals (RFP)

Release Date: June 29, 2026

Submission Date: July 29, 2026 at 12:00 pm

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 Student Safety Grant Program*.

Through the *Campus Student Safety Grant Program*, ODHE seeks proposals from state institutions of higher education and private nonprofit institutions of higher education to enhance security measures on their campus and increase student safety. ODHE will prioritize funding institutions that demonstrate increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment towards students and student organizations.

I. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include state institutions of higher education and private nonprofit institutions of higher education. Institutions are permitted to partner with institutionally-sanctioned student organizations, non-profits, and other institutions of higher education to create the most impact on student safety.

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.

Applicants are responsible for compliance with federal and state law regarding nondiscriminatory practices and understand ODHE's acceptance of applicant's proposal does not constitute a review or approval of applicant's compliance with federal or state law.

Institutions are expected to identify an address associated with an account in Ohio Pays to which ODHE will send funds, if awarded. The address should be included with the proposal at the time of submission. If the applicant is unsure as to what addresses are registered by the institution in Ohio Pays, please consult with the business and/or grants office at your institution. These offices may be able to assist the applicant in identifying a registered address in Ohio Pays which has previously received grant funds from ODHE or another state agency.

II. Anticipated Awards

The total of all awards under the *Campus Student Safety 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 proposal budgets.

1. Total award funding available: up to \$950,000.00
2. Maximum base award per eligible institution: \$50,000 per proposal
3. Maximum base award for two eligible institutions who partner: \$75,000 per proposal
 - a. Any proposal submitted on behalf of two eligible institutions must designate which institution will serve as the fiscal agent on their application form.

III. Eligible Expenses and Project Term

State institutions of higher education and private nonprofit institutions of higher education seeking funds through the *Campus Student Safety Grant Program* should submit proposals that identify how the funds will help to prevent and/or mitigate risks for increased threats of violent crimes, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment to enhance security measures and increase the safety of students and student organizations. Funds should not be used to supplant current campus student safety activities.

Funds may be used to engage strategies such as:

- Supporting programs and/ or training for campus-affiliated law enforcement/security that promote de-escalation, mediation, people-centered engagement or other techniques that may result in peaceful resolution.
- Collaborative programs that enhance student safety through partnerships between law enforcement, institutional offices, students, and/or student organizations.
- Educational training and/or materials intended to promote student safety and mitigate threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment towards students and student organizations.
- Expansion of reporting and/or communication software used to track violent crimes, terror attacks, hate crimes or harassment. Including but not limited to: threat detection software, anonymous tip lines, etc.
 - o Funds should not be used to supplant current reporting and/or communication software.

- Funding requests for physical security and safety of a building owned, or leased for the next 5 years, by the institution will require a security checklist which has been conducted and submitted for each building or location requesting funding for security improvements. Each applicant must include its security checklist and describe how the award will be used to address the vulnerabilities identified in the assessment. The security checklist should be conducted by experienced security, law enforcement or military personnel.
- Funds may be used to hire additional security for an event, program and/or speaker. The security provider must be licensed by the Private Investigator Security Guard Services (PISGS), a component of the Ohio Homeland Security, and if the provider is not licensed by PISGS (peace officers, licensed security professionals), the provider must be contracted through the institution. [Private Investigator Security Guard Services | Ohio Homeland Security](#)
 - o The cost for additional security for any one event, program and/or speaker cannot exceed 20% of the total proposed budget.
- Funds may not be used to purchase weapons. This would include not being able to purchase firearms, ammunition, or any less than lethal components. Less than lethal components would include pepper spray, batons, or similar products.

This is not an exhaustive list of eligible expenses. Institutions may propose items which are not listed above in their proposal which will seek to prevent and/or mitigate risks for increased threats of violent crimes, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment to enhance security measures and increase the safety of students and student organizations.

Campus Student Safety 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 the Department of Higher Education and the institution. Planning may commence upon acceptance of the grant award notification. An interim report detailing progress on specific components of the proposed initiative, including milestones achieved, expenses, and evaluations will need to be submitted at the end of December. 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.

IV. Proposals Review Process and Timeline

The schedule below may be revised by the Chancellor, at the discretion of the Chancellor. Any changes will be communicated to applicants.

Request for Proposals Released	June 29, 2026
Proposal Questions from Interested Parties	June 29 – July 10, 2026
Proposals Due by 12:00 pm	July 29, 2026
Proposal Review Period	July 30 – August 31, 2026
Notification of Awarded Proposals	Early September 2026

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

Questions must be submitted by July 10, 2026, to guarantee a response by July 17, 2026.

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

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

V. **Proposal Submission**

Applicants are responsible for submissions of proposals within the period set by the Chancellor. Proposals must include the address for the institution where funds awarded may be sent. This address needs to be registered in the Ohio Pays system. Proposals must be received no later than 12:00 p.m. July 29, 2026, and must be submitted in the following manner:

One electronic PDF file that includes: the cover letter, application form, document which responds to questions in Sections II – V, and the budget using the provided spreadsheet template, emailed to the ODHE safety grants team, ODHEsafetygrants@highered.ohio.gov. **Proposals should not list or reference the specific name of the location where your physical security enhancements are to be installed.** Please refer to those areas only as "location identified in the SVA".

Funding requests for physical security and safety of a building owned, or leased for the next 5 years, by the institution must submit their completed Security Vulnerability Assessment separately. The SVA should go to schoolsafetygrants@dps.ohio.gov. Only the completed SVA should be sent to this email address. **Do not send the SVA to ODHE for security reasons.** However, please indicate on your application that the SVA has been submitted to the Ohio School Safety Center via the email address provided.

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.

VI. 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. Background information on the project, students impacted, how this will benefit your campus, etc.
- b. Anything additional you want ODHE to consider which is not included in the application.

2. Grant Application: Responses must be received to all applicable questions in the application document. Incomplete submissions will not be considered.

3. Budget and Budget Narrative: In the provided Excel spreadsheet, the budget and budget narrative will document:

- a. Itemized costs for the grant
- b. The underlying assumption for each cost (i.e, base cost of the item or service, how it ties to the overall outcomes associated with the proposal, and number of persons involved/served. Etc.)
- c. Any matching funds that will be leveraged, clearly labeled.

4. Security Vulnerability Assessment (if applicable): Funding requests for physical security and safety of a building owned, or leased for the next 5 years, by the institution will require a security vulnerability assessment (SVA) which has been conducted and submitted for each building or location requesting funding for security improvements. Each applicant must include its SVA and describe how the award will be used to address the vulnerabilities identified in the assessment. The SVA should be conducted by experienced security, law enforcement or military personnel. The completed SVA must be submitted separately from the application to schoolsafetygrants@dps.ohio.gov. **Do not submit the SVA to ODHE with the application for security reasons.** However, please indicate on your application that the SVA has been submitted to the Ohio School Safety Center via the email address provided.

B. Scoring Rubric

Each proposal will be assessed according to the proposal criteria:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| • Project Design | 20 points |
| • Project Rationale | 30 points |
| • Project Plan | 20 points |
| • Budget & Budget Narrative | 10 points |

VII. 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 non substantive 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.

VIII. 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 non Department 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.

Campus Student Safety Grant Program Application

Program purpose: *Through the Campus Student Safety Grant Program, ODHE seeks proposals from state institutions of higher education and private nonprofit institutions of higher education to enhance security measures on their campus and increase student safety. ODHE will prioritize funding institutions that demonstrate increased threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment towards students and student organizations.*

Section I – Applicant(s) Information:

Title of Project: _____

Name(s) of Institution(s)
and/or organization(s)
involved with the proposal: _____

Partnership and Fiscal Agent Information:

- Is this a joint application with another eligible institution?
 Yes
 No

- If yes, which institution will be serving as the fiscal agent for the agreement?

The institution listed above agrees to serve as the fiscal agent and assumes full responsibility for receiving and managing grant funds, if awarded. This includes signing the grant agreement, and ensuring compliance will all applicable requirements.

Primary Institutional Contact

This individual will serve as the main point of contact for all programmatic and administrative matters related to the grant. For applications involving more than one institution the primary contact should be located at the campus serving as the fiscal agent for the funding.

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Secondary Institutional Contact

A secondary contact is only required if two institutions are partnering on a joint proposal. This individual should represent the partnering institution and serve as a point of contact for coordination and communication.

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

Authorized Legal Signatory (if different from the primary institutional contact)

This individual has the legal authority to sign the grant agreement on the behalf of the institution receiving grant funds. For applications involving more than one institution the authorized legal signatory should be located at the campus serving as the fiscal agent for the funding.

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

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 Sections II–V in a separate PDF document and submit it along with the completed fillable form (Section I) and the budget form. **Proposals should not list or reference the specific name of the location where your physical security enhancements are to be installed.** Please refer to those areas only as “location identified in the SVA”.

Section II – Project Design:

1. What specific issues or concerns is your proposal seeking to address?
2. How were these specific issues or concerns identified?
3. How will awarded grant dollars improve the safety, welfare, and security of students?
4. How many students will be impacted by awarded grant dollars?
5. If your campus or surrounding locality has experienced an increase in threats of violent crime, terror attacks, hate crimes, or harassment towards students and/or student organizations, please answer the following questions. If not, you may skip to question 6.
 - a. What supportive 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?
6. 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. You may skip this question if you answered question 5.

Section III – Project Rationale:

1. How will the funds be used?
2. How will the proposed initiative seek to address safety concerns on campus and/or mitigate threats to students and/or student organizations on campus?
3. What will be the short-term and long-term impacts of the proposed initiative on the safety and wellbeing of students and or/student organizations?
4. If your institution is requesting funds to support security improvements to a physical structure, please submit a copy of the complete security checklist and provide documentation demonstrating ownership of the property or a lease agreement for the property through 2032. Do not submit the SVA to ODHE with the application for security reasons. Please submit your SVA and applicable documentation to schoolsafetygrants@dps.ohio.gov.
 - a. **Note for Joint Proposals:** If multiple institutions are partnering and each is requesting funds for physical improvements on their respective campuses, **each institution must submit its own security checklist, property documentation, and SVA separately** to the email address above. Clearly label each submission with the institution name and indicate that it is part of a joint proposal with the project name and name of the partner institution stated clearly in the email.
5. If your institution is seeking to partner with an external security provider for an event, program and/or meeting, please detail how the security provider was identified and their current relationship with the campus policy and/or security at the institution. A copy of the security provider's Private Investigator Security Guard Services (PISGS) license must be provided with the application.

Section IV – Project Plan:

1. What are the roles and responsibilities of key partners?
2. What are the shared goals and outcomes between your institution and key partners?
3. Please provide a detailed timeline for the project including milestones, planned activities, role of key partners, estimated funding schedule, etc.

Section V – Previous Award Status: *Only respond to the following if your institution was previously awarded funds through the Campus Student Safety program and those funds were not fully expended or obligated on or before June 30, 2026.*

1. If your institution received funds through the Campus Student Safety program in Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026) and received an amendment to spend the funds by June 30, 2026, please provide an explanation as to how much money remains and what has prevented the institution from spending the awarded funds.
2. If your institution received funds through the Campus Student Safety program in Fiscal Year 2026 (July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026) and did not spend or obligate all of the funds by June 30, 2026, please provide an explanation as to how much money remains and what has prevented the institution from spending the awarded funds.