Request for Proposals

Southern Company Foundation HBCU Technology Grants

In January, Southern Company and its subsidiaries announced a $50 million, multi-year investment to provide students attending HBCUs with scholarships, internships, leadership development, access to technology, and innovation to support career readiness. We remain committed to the vision and goals of this initiative while we also recognize the immediate needs of HCBUs as these important institutions seek to educate students amid a global pandemic.

Southern Company wants to help vital educational institutions deliver on their mission during these uncertain times. To this end, Southern Company Foundation will award $5 million of the overall $50 million funding commitment to select institutions during fall 2020 to support technology assistance. Southern Company Foundation invites requests of up to $500,000 in funding.

Proposal Submittal Instructions

The grant portal will open to applicants on September 8, 2020. The portal will close on September 29, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. EST. Applicants will have 21 days in total to complete their submission.

Important Contacts
For questions about the RFP or overall grant, please contact by email:
Coxe Curry & Associates
SouthernCompany@coxecurry.com

For specific, technical questions about the online form or website:
Kecia Haggins
Georgia Power Foundation, Inc.
gpfoundation@southernco.com
404-506-6784

Timeline
- September 8, 2020 – Application opens
- September 29, 2020 at 11:59 p.m. EST – Applications due

- October 2020 – Funding decisions made and communicated to all applicants; funds disbursed to awardees
- October 2020 – December 2020 – Individual press release opportunities to spotlight recipient institutions (Southern Company will coordinate with PR contact at institution)
- June 30, 2021 – Grant reports due

Program Details

Desired Outcomes

Applications should be centered on funding technology needs that enable HBCUs to effectively deliver quality education to students. Institutions should explain how near-term support for technology will enable them to navigate challenges presented by COVID-19, as well as how this support will advance longer-term strategic goals around technology and innovation.

Proposed uses of funding may include, but are not limited to:

- Laptops, hotspots, data plans, and other tools to enable virtual learning;
- IT support and staffing needs;
- Professional development and training related to technology; and
- Investments in critical infrastructure upgrades to effectively deliver remote learning.

Institutions may present a technology need not specified above, so long as they explain its merit in the context of immediate instructional needs and future technology planning.

Grant funds may not be used to reimburse the institution for technology costs incurred prior to the submission of this grant.

Grant requests up to $500,000 will be considered. While institutions will not be required to match this award with additional fundraising, it is our hope that recipient institutions will be able to leverage these dollars to attract other investments.

Applicant Eligibility

In order to apply for this grant opportunity, applicants must meet all of the following criteria:
- Historically Black College or University;
- Located in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, or Virginia;
- Four-year institution;
- Award undergraduate degrees; and
- SACS accredited.

Evaluation & Priorities

Project submissions will be evaluated based on the core criteria outlined in this RFP. Final awards will be made based on the recommendations of the grant review committee.

Priority will be given to institutions that:

- Make a compelling case for technology assistance to support instruction delivery and promote student enrollment and retention;
- Have strong 6-year graduation rates;
- Demonstrate a track record of financial stability, as evidenced by audited financial statements; and
- Had healthy enrollment for the 2019-2020 academic year, pre-COVID.

Required Proposal Elements

Organizational Information
- Institution name and basic contact information
- Tax status, including subsection
- Annual budget
    - Percentage allocated for operating costs
    - Percentage allocated for fundraising costs
- Current technology budget
- 6-year graduation rate
- 6-year graduation rate for PELL-eligible students
- Enrollment trends
- Instruction plans for Fall 2020 (in-person, virtual, or hybrid)
- Breakdown of attendance for Fall 2020
- Explanation of changes in tuition over the last year
- Names and affiliations of any Southern Company or subsidiary employees associated with your institution (board member, adjunct professor, major donor, etc.)

Funding Request Primary Contact Information
- Basic contact information for the person we should reach out to with any questions about the grant application

Proposal Details
- Funding goal for technology project
- Funds raised towards goal
- Request amount (up to $500,000)
- Project description
- Description of COVID-19's impact on your institution
- Description of current technology infrastructure and how these funds will strengthen education delivery model (include tools purchased and training administered since Spring

2020, if applicable)
- Top three technology needs, in order of priority, and estimated cost for each
- Explanation of how this funding would help your institution become more effective, efficient, and innovative

Overall Institutional Capability
- Explanation of any financial difficulties or deficits over the last three fiscal years, prior to COVID-19
- Explanation of any significant changes in senior leadership over the last three years, if applicable
- Description of team responsible for executing project at your institution

Project Funding Sources
- List of funders for this project (name, amount)
- Top 10 grants to your institution over the last three years (name, amount)
- Explanation of any CARES Act funding received by your institution (amount, use of funds)
- Explanation of any state or local funds received for COVID-19 relief, if applicable

ACH Information Contact at Your Institution
- Basic contact information

Media Contact at Your Institution
- Basic contact information

Supporting Documentation
Applicants will be asked to upload the following attachments prior to submission:
- IRS Determination Letter
- Board of Trustees List
- Most Recent Audited Financial Statement
- Annual Operating Budget
- Project Budget