

First-Generation Student Success Grant

Request for Proposals

Submission Deadline:
July 11, 2025

West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education
2001 Union Carbide Drive, Building 2000
South Charleston, WV 25303
Phone: (304) 558-0655

I. Section A: Purpose

Under this competitive grant process, funds will be awarded to public colleges and universities, or research corporations thereof, that meet the eligibility requirements.

Proposals must focus on issues related to recruiting, retaining, and supporting the success of First-Generation college students. FirstGen Forward (formerly the Center for First-Generation Student Success) reports that First-Generation students who complete college are more likely to be employed, earn higher wages, and be civically engaged than those who do not. Therefore, our aim is to make higher education more accessible to our state's First-Generation students and support them in successful completion of their postsecondary goals to the benefit of the individual students, the state, and society as a whole. We must work to ensure that First-Generation students not only have the opportunity to attend institutions of higher education but also are prepared to succeed.

Guiding principles for this grant program include the expectation that education is essential; we must support the efforts of First-Generation students to prepare them to live, work, and thrive in today's world; investment is necessary; and collaboration is paramount. Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funds will be awarded to sponsor comprehensive projects which must meaningfully encompass each of the following categories:

1. Implementation of extraordinary campus-based programmatic initiatives, events, services, or supports designed to address the unique needs of First-Generation college students and bridge gaps in resources, thereby promoting positive educational outcomes for First-Generation college students;
2. Implementation of events, initiatives, or services committed to supporting recruitment and/or retention of First-Generation students on college campuses within West Virginia;
3. Development or enhancement of research, evaluation, assessment, and data collection strategies and practices for the purpose of improving institutional First-Generation initiatives and/or increasing institutional buy-in.

II. Section B: Application Process

Dates and Transmittal

To be considered for the First-Generation Student Success Grant, your application/proposals are to be submitted via email in a Microsoft Word or PDF document at or before 5:00 p.m., July 11, 2025, to the following:

Autumn Perry
Program Director of Student Services
West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
West Virginia Council for Community & Technical College Education
autumn.perry@wvhepc.edu

The initial review will begin after July 11, 2025.

Eligibility Requirements

West Virginia public two-year and four-year colleges and universities, or research corporations thereof, are eligible to apply.

Institutional Grant Protocol

It is important that the applicant coordinates with the institution's advancement office before submitting a grant application.

Estimated Range of Awards

The amount of an award under the RFP will depend upon the quality of the application and the amount of funds allocated to support this category. Institutions are encouraged to seek external funding sources and engage in cooperative arrangements with public and private entities to enhance funding. The maximum single award during FY 2026 will not exceed \$25,000. A total of approximately \$125,000 in grants will be awarded, **pending Commission and Council approval of the FY 2026 budget.**

Reporting Requirements

Each funded institution will submit to the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission or West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education the required First-Generation Student Success Grant end of year program report. This report is designed to capture sponsored programming information, event objectives, evaluation of sponsored events, and end-of-year expenditure information. A specific reporting format will be provided to all grant recipients.

III. Section C: Application Content

Each submitted application must address all required content in order to be considered for funding, and **may not exceed twelve pages total, including the budget sheet and fillable contact information/signature page.**

Required Content

The required content for each application is as follows:

1. Abstract: A brief abstract of no more than one page summarizing major components and planned activities.
2. Rationale: A description and explanation of how the proposed initiative(s), event(s), and/or activit(ies) collectively address each of the First-Generation Student Success Grant objectives.
3. Goals: A statement of measurable goals with expected outcomes and time frames for completion.
4. Activities: A description of each activity that is to be conducted including time frames for completion, required budgetary expenditures, faculty/staff requirements (new or existing) and anticipated number of participants served.
5. Evaluation: A description of the method of evaluation that will be used to collect assessment data relative to the proposed project's goals.
6. Sustainability plan: A description of how you plan to sustain your efforts once funding expires.
7. Budget: A projected budget including brief descriptions of anticipated expenditures by category. Proposal must include completed Excel budget sheet (provided). Note: This grant *does not* allow an indirect cost option or funds to pay salaries, wages, or employee benefits. Anticipated expenditures in support of First-Generation College Celebration Day/Week activities must not exceed 20% of the total amount requested.
8. Completed Contact Information/Signature Page: A completed form (see page 4), including identification of an authorizing official for the proposed project.

IV. Sub-Grant Agreement Document

Successful applicants will be required to complete a "sub-grant agreement document" as part of the transfer of funds process. The sub-grant agreement requires the signature of an authorizing official of the institution or research corporation to be submitted at a later date. Please note, this is not necessarily the person submitting the RFP.

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FY 2026

Institution: _____

Address: _____

Principal Investigator for Proposed Project: _____

Principal Investigator's Title: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please mark the appropriate box. If funded, this First-Generation Student Success Grant award will be managed by the:

☐

Institution

☐

Research Corporation

I hereby certify that the requested grant funds will be utilized as indicated and agree to supply all requested information and reports to the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission or West Virginia Council for Community and Technical College Education. By typing your name below, you are providing a signature and agreeing to comply with the guidelines outlined in this RFP.

Note: Institutions submitting more than one application must provide a priority ranking of applications.

Typed Name & Title of Authorizing Official

Email Address of Authorizing Official

Date

Please include this page as part of your submission in a PDF format.

Autumn Perry
Program Director of Student Services
West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission
West Virginia Council for Community & Technical College Education autumn.perry@wvhepc.edu