



**RSTEF Grant Fund Program
Application Packet**

Rio-South Texas Education and Community Development Foundation

RSTEF Grant Fund Program

Program Guide

Introduction

The South Texas Higher Education Authority was founded in 1974 as a higher education student loan secondary market Authority. For over 45 years, the Authority served the community by helping hundreds of thousands of students and their families achieve the dream of higher education by providing low-cost financing and funding millions of dollars in scholarships. In May 2019, the Authority transitioned into the Rio-South Texas Education and Community Development Foundation and adopted a new mission “to ensure residents acquire skills and knowledge and have access to economic opportunities to enable them to pursue meaningful careers and live prosperous lives in Rio South Texas”.

The Rio-South Education and Community Development Foundation (RSTEF) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit private foundation. RSTEF serves a seven-county region that includes Cameron, Willacy, Hidalgo, Starr, Zapata, Jim Hogg, and Webb counties. To achieve its mission, RSTEF has developed a strategic framework with a focus on postsecondary education and workforce development and adopted the strategies of improving cultural awareness for educational attainment, investing in initiatives that align with current labor market demand and development for future workforce needs, and supporting the upskilling of the workforce.

RSTEF has established the RSTEF Grant Fund Program as a way to implement its strategic framework, leverage its community investments, and increase the impact of supported initiatives. The program works by partnering with other 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, primarily 2-year and 4-year institutions of higher education, and investing in innovative initiatives that align with the RSTEF Strategic Framework.

This application packet is intended to assist potential applicants with successfully submitting a funding proposal. Enclosed are the proposal checklist, program parameters, frequently asked questions, and a Grant Proposal Concept template. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact RSTEF at info@rstef.org or (956) 971-3305. RSTEF offices are located at 801 N Bryan Road, Suite 167; Mission, TX 78502.

The RSTEF Grant Fund Program

The RSTEF Grant Fund Program accepts funding proposals from July 1, through August 31. The Rio-South Texas Education and Community Development Foundation (RSTEF) has developed a strategic framework with a focus on Postsecondary Education and Workforce Development and adopted the strategies of improving cultural awareness for educational attainment, investing in initiatives that align with current labor market demand and development for future workforce needs, and supporting the upskilling of the workforce.

The following are examples of initiatives/purposes that fall under the RSTEF's Focus and Strategies

- a. Programs that increase awareness of the value of education
- b. Programs with a focus on postsecondary degrees in target career clusters and occupations.
- c. Programs that provide credit recovery assistance for postsecondary students to continue or complete an academic track in target career clusters and occupations.
- d. Programs that provide for the expansion of apprenticeship opportunities in target career clusters and occupations.
- e. Programs that provide for the expansion of internship opportunities in target career clusters and occupations.
- f. Programs that provide for the expansion or increase capacity through certification in target career clusters and occupations.
- g. Programs that provide for Adult Education (25+ w/lower educational attainment).

Eligible applicants should be 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations. Proposals should reflect 501(c)3 organizations as the lead applicant or applicant of record in the submission.

Proposals should align with the Foundation's Focus, Strategy, and Initiatives. Proposals should demonstrate a need for services and an innovative approach to addressing these needs. Each proposal shall clearly define its critical milestones, outcomes, and performance targets. Funding is limited to a 12-month performance period.

Proposals should be aligned with RSTEF Target Career Clusters & Target Occupations. These are defined as workforce development board identified in-demand occupations having 30 or more job openings annually and with an average wage of \$20/hour or more.

The program requires a dollar-to-dollar match in hard dollars. **RSTEF will not consider in-kind matching.** RSTEF seeks new investment dollars. Standard organizational budgets or existing program budgets will not be considered as matching funds. Student financial aid is considered as in-kind.

Administrative costs, defined as Personnel Salary, Personnel Benefits, and Indirect Costs, are limited to 10% of the funding request. An additional allotment of 5% is made for administrative supplies and materials. This is to stress RSTEF's focus on funding program costs such as tuition, scholarships, student stipends, and/or student salaries & benefits.

The proposal review process runs from September through November. Approved proposals are awarded by January 1st at the earliest.

Organizations interested in applying for funding should contact the RSTEF Grant Manager for a copy of the Grant Proposal Concept template. Email requests to rtapia@rstef.org.

Funding proposals should be submitted using the Grant Proposal Concept template by email to rtapia@rstef.org. Additional inquiries can be made via info@rstef.org or to Rio-South Texas Education & Community Development Foundation (RSTEF), 801 N. Bryan Road, Suite 167, Mission, TX 78572.

Rio-South Texas Education and Community Development Foundation
Target Career Clusters & Target Occupations
(may change based on data updates)

Based on 30 or more jobs available in the region & an average wage of \$20/hour

4-Year Institution Target Career Clusters and Occupations

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

- Food Scientists and Technologists

Architecture & Construction

- Civil Engineers
- Construction Managers
- Cost Estimators

Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communication

- Public Relations Specialist
- Graphic Designers

Business, Marketing & Finance

- Accountants and Auditors
- Human Resources Specialist
- Insurance Sales Agents
- Loan Officers
- Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists

Education & Training

- Education, Guidance, and Career Counselors & Advisors
- Elementary School Teachers
- Librarians and Media Collection Specialists
- Middle School Teachers
- Secondary School Teachers
- Special Education Teachers

Health Science

- Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Nurse Practitioners
- Occupational Therapists
- Pharmacists
- Physical Therapists
- Physician Assistants
- Physicians
- Registered Nurses
- Speech and Language Pathologists

Hospitality & Tourism

- Food Service Managers

Human Services

- Child, Family, and School Social Worker
- Health Education Specialist
- Healthcare Social Worker
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse Social Worker

Information Technology

- Network and Computer System Administrators
- Software Developers

Law & Public Service

- Compliance Officers
- Lawyers
- Police & Sheriff Patrol Officers

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

- Logisticians

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematic (STEM) related Careers

- Have an average salary of \$20/hour
- Align with RSTEF focus, strategies, and initiatives

2-Year Institution Target Career Clusters

Architecture & Construction

- Architectural and Civil Drafters
- Construction Managers
- Cost Estimators
- Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers
- Electricians
- Operating Engineers & Construction Equipment Operators
- HVAC Mechanics and Installers
- Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters

Arts, Audio/Video Technology & Communication

- Public Relations Specialists
- Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers
- Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers
- Graphic Designers

Business, Marketing & Finance

- Accountants & Auditors
- Human Resource Specialists
- Insurance Sales Agents
- Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists
- Sales Representative of Services

Education & Training

- Education, Guidance, and Career Counselors & Advisors

Energy

- Wind Turbine Service Technicians

Health Science

- Dental Hygienists
- Health Technologists & Technicians
- Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
- Nurse Practitioners
- Occupational Therapy Assistants
- Physical Therapist Assistants
- Radiologic Technologists and Technicians
- Registered Nurses
- Respiratory Therapists

Hospitality & Tourism

- Chefs & Head Cooks
- Food Service Managers

Human Services

- Child, Family, and School Social Worker
- Health Education Specialist
- Healthcare Social Worker
- Mental Health & Substance Abuse Social Worker

Information Technology

- Computer User Support Specialist
- Network and Computer System Administrators
- Software Developers

Law & Public Service

- Compliance Officers
- Correctional Officers and Jailers
- Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs
- Firefighters
- Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants
- Paralegals and Legal Assistants
- Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers
- Postal Service Mail Carriers

Manufacturing

- Industrial Machinery Mechanics
- Welders, Cutters, Solders, and Brazers

Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

- Automotive Body and Related Repairers
- Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
- Bus and Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists
- Cargo & Freight Agents
- Dispatchers, Commercial
- Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- Logisticians

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematic (STEM) related Careers

- Have an average salary of \$20/hour
- Align with RSTEF focus, strategies, and initiatives

Frequently Asked Questions

Do you need to be a 501(c)3 nonprofit to be eligible?

Yes. RSTEF only funds 501(c)3 nonprofits. This includes foundations for 2-year and 4-year institutions, workforce development boards, alumni foundations, and other nonprofit partners with the 501(c)3 designation.

Proposal should reflect a 501(c)3 organization as the lead applicant or applicant of record. If a 501(c)3 organization is applying on behalf of an institution of higher education, it should provide proof of its capacity to do so either through its organizational documentation (Article of Incorporation, Bylaws, resolution, etc.) or via a cooperative agreement (MOU). If in partnership with another organization, a cooperative agreement is required.

How many application cycles are there?

RSTEF funds proposals on an annual basis.

When do you accept applications?

RSTEF accepts applications from July 1 to August 31.

What types of proposals do you fund?

RSTEF funds proposals that align with its strategic framework. RSTEF focuses on postsecondary education and workforce development. It supports strategies that improve cultural awareness for postsecondary education, initiatives that align the workforce with labor market needs, and support the upskilling of the workforce.

What is a target career cluster or target occupation?

RSTEF Target Career Clusters & Target Occupations are defined as workforce development board identified in-demand occupations having 30 or job openings annually and with an average wage of \$20/hour or more.

What is the limit on the amount a proposal can request?

RSTEF does not have a limit on the amount that can be requested. Proposals are funded based on the amount available to be awarded, the number of proposals submitted, the proposed impact, and the proposals' alignment with the RSTEF strategic framework.

What is the performance period?

RSTEF will fund proposals with a performance period of up to 12 months. Proposals with a performance period of less than 12 months will be considered. The exception being endowments which are expected to exist in perpetuity.

Will RSTEF consider multi-year funding?

No. RSTEF does not provide multi-year funding. RSTEF will only fund proposals with a 12-month performance period or less, except for endowments.

What about administrative costs or indirect costs?

RSTEF limits the administrative costs to 10%. Administrative costs are defined as Personnel Salary, Personnel Benefits, and Indirect Costs. An additional allotment of 5% is made for administrative supplies and materials. This is to stress RTSEF's focus on funding program costs such as training, tuition, scholarships, student stipends, and/or student salaries & benefits.

Do you fund equipment requests?

RSTEF will consider requests to fund equipment. 100 percent of RSTEF funds may be used for equipment for new programs. For existing programs, proposals must document that current equipment is either obsolete or past its life span.

Do you fund K-12 programs?

No. RSTEF's focus is on postsecondary education and workforce development.

Do you require a match?

Yes. RSTEF requires a dollar-to-dollar match.

Can the match be in-kind?

No. The match must be hard cash. Note that RSTEF seeks new investment dollars. Standard organizational budgets or existing program budgets will not be considered as matching funds. Student financial aid is considered in-kind.

What is your service area?

The RSTEF service area covers the Texas counties of Willacy, Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, Zapata, Jim Hogg, and Webb.

Is there a specific format for proposals?

Yes. Proposal should be submitted using the RSTEF Grant Proposal Concept template.

How do I get a Grant Proposal Concept template?

Please email the RSTEF Grant Manager to request a Grant Proposal Concept template at rtapia@rstef.org

How do I submit a proposal?

Funding proposals should be submitted using the Grant Proposal Concept template by email to the Grant Manager at rtapia@rstef.org

**Rio-South Texas Education and Community Development Foundation
Application Checklist**

	Item/Document	Description
	IRS Determination Letter	Eligible Lead Applicants must be 501(c)(3) organizations. In order to be considered complete, proposals for funding must be submitted with an IRS Determination letter showing the organization is a 501(c)(3).
	W-9 Form	In order to be considered complete, proposals for funding must be submitted with an IRS W-9 Form. Should the proposal be funded, this form is required for processing and distribution of the award in a timely manner.
	Funding Proposal	Proposals for funding must use the RSTEF proposal template. You can request an MS Word copy of the template by contacting the Grant Manager. Below are listed the required components for a funding proposal and abbreviated descriptions.
	Proposal Summary/ Executive Summary	<i>The Proposal Summary should be about one paragraph of 1-3 sentences and should include: (1) The amount of funding requested; (2) Provide where the 1 to 1 Matching Funds will come from (matching funds must be available no more than 30 days from RSTEF's funding); and (3) Give the most general description of the use that will be made of the funds.</i>
	Organizational History	<i>The Organization Description and History section should be about 1-4 pages in length and should include (in the order below): (1) The history of the organization; (2) The structure of the organization; (3) Information about office locations that will be involved in carrying out the activities that will be funded by the requested grant; (4) Major accomplishments of the organization; (5) Relevant experience and accomplishments of the organization; (6) Established partnerships and relationships that will be important to carrying out the activities funded by the grant; and (7) Explanation of how the description you provide makes your organization an appropriate grantee.</i>
	Problem Background/ Statement of Need	<i>The Background section, of 1-3 pages in length and should provide:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •An explanation of the problem that has created the need for the program that will be funded by the requested grant. •It should provide evidence that the problem exists in the Rio South Texas Region (Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb, Willacy, Zapata) •Provide evidence that the proposed project will contribute to a solution to the problem or will reduce the harmful impact of the problem.
	Project Description	<i>The Project Description may vary widely in length depending on the size and scope of the program that will be funded and the size of the award being sought.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The project description should give the reader a detailed description of the program that will be funded by the requested grant. •Should explain the duration of time during which the funds will support the project. •The goals of the project, how they will be achieved, how success or failure will be measured. •What services you promise to deliver to what population and what results you expect to bring about.
	Project Timeline with associated costs	<i>Using your Project Description, provide:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A timeline that shows the chronological order in which the activities listed under each goal heading will be undertaken and/or completed. •Also include information about how/when funds that are awarded will be spent to support each activity.
	Budget	<i>Provide the reader with a table with categories of expenditures that will be funded by the requested grant, how much funding will be required for each category, and how much of that funding will come from the grant request. Also include matching funds and who the donors are. The Foundation requires a 1:1 match. RSTEF limits administrative costs to 10%.</i>
	Points of Contact	<i>Provide the Name, Title, Address, Phone, and Email for the roles of Primary Contact, Project Manager, Grant Administrator, and Authorized Signatory.</i>
	ACH Form	<i>Awarded proposals will be required to provide an ACH form to process payments</i>



Rio-South Texas Education and
Community Development Foundation

Grant Proposal Concept

PROJECT TITLE

(Please keep it as short as possible)

DATE

I. Proposal Summary (Executive Summary)

Please remove template instructions and examples from all sections in the final proposal.

Please see the attached list of Target Career Clusters and Occupations the Foundation is currently supporting. The Proposal Summary should be about one paragraph of 1-3 sentences and should include:

- *The amount of funding requested.*
- *Provide where the 1 to 1 Matching Funds will come from. Matching funds must be available no more than 30 days from RSTEF's funding award letter. Exceptions may be made for matching funds expected from state and federal sources.*
- *Give the most general description of the use that will be made of the funds.*

II. Organization Description and History

The Organization Description and History section should be about 1-4 pages in length and should include (in the order below):

- *The history of the organization.*
- *The structure of the organization.*
- *Information about office locations that will be involved in carrying out the activities that will be funded by the requested grant.*
- *Major accomplishments of the organization.*
- *Relevant experience and accomplishments of the organization.*
- *Established partnerships and relationships that will be important to carrying out the activities funded by the grant.*
- *Explanation of how the description you provide makes your organization an appropriate grantee.*

III. Background

The Background section, of 1-3 pages in length and should provide (in the order below):

- *An explanation of the problem that has created the need for the program that will be funded by the requested grant.*
- *It should provide evidence that the problem exists in the Rio South Texas Region (Cameron, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Starr, Webb, Willacy, Zapata)*
- *Provide statistics for the region that reflect a need for the program.*
- *Provide evidence that the proposed project will contribute to a solution to the problem or will reduce the harmful impact of the problem.*

- *Highlight media and government publications or public support letters suggesting that the problem is a high priority and that the proposed solution is one that decision-makers support and believe in.*
- *It is important that the reader who finishes this section know why your program should be funded over others.*

IV. Project Description (Program Narrative)

The Project Description may vary widely in length depending on the size and scope of the program that will be funded and the size of the award being sought.

- *The project description should give the reader a detailed description of the program that will be funded by the requested grant.*
- *It should explain the duration of time during which the funds will support the project.*
- *The goals of the project, how they will be achieved, how success or failure will be measured.*
- *What services you promise to deliver to what population and what results you expect to bring about.*
- *A useful structure is to break the project down into component goals.*
- *Use each goal as its own heading and under each goal heading, list and describe the activities that will be funded to achieve that goal and how achievement of that goal will be measured or defined.*
- *The Project Description may also include information about the staff who will work on the project, their experience and qualifications to perform the activities that will be funded.*

V. Project Timeline/Budget Timeline

Using your Project Description, provide:

- *A timeline that shows the chronological order in which the activities listed under each goal heading will be undertaken and/or completed.*
- *Also include information about how/when funds that are awarded will be spent to support each activity.*

Example:

- Activity #1 (Enroll participants)
 - ✓ Start designing enrollment marketing materials on October 1, 2011
 - ✓ Spend \$X to create enrollment marketing tool by November 1, 2011
 - ✓ X% of enrollment goal by January 31, 2012
 - ✓ X% enrollment goal by March 31, 2012
- Activity # 2 (Deliver Training Program)
 - ✓ First training class to commence on December 1, 2011
 - ✓ Conduct one four-week training class per month beginning on the first of each month commencing December 1, 2011.
 - ✓ Spend \$X on incentives for participants by September 30, 2012 (\$X per four-week course cadre)
 - ✓ X% of enrollment goal complete training class by September 30,

VI. Budget

Provide the reader with a table with categories of expenditures that will be funded by the requested grant, how much funding will be required for each category, and how much of that funding will come from the grant request. Also include matching funds and who the donors are. The Foundation requires a 1:1 match. RSTEF limits administrative costs to 10%.

Example:

Expenditure Category	RSTEF funding request	Matching Funds from other sources	Matching Funds Organization	Total
Salaries	\$25,000	\$25,000	XYZ Foundation	\$50,000
Program Supplies	\$12,500	\$12,500	ABC Foundation	\$25,000
Student Tuition	\$112,500	\$112,500	DEF Foundation	\$225,000
Student Exam Fees	\$50,000	\$50,000	GHI Foundation	\$100,000
Student Supplies	\$50,000	\$50,000	XYZ Foundation	\$100,000
Totals	\$250,000	\$250,000		\$500,000

Contact Information:

Primary Contact

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Project Manager

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Grant Administrator

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Organization Name: _____

Authorized Signatory/Representative

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____