



Building Connections. Advancing Equity. Promoting Success.

Member Advocacy Grants Request for Proposals

The National College Access Network is pleased to launch this opportunity for our members to expand their capacity for advocacy work focused on higher education policy. The impact of decisions at both the federal level and state levels impact students' ability to access, pay for, and succeed in college. The students our members serve, their stories, and the data cataloguing their successes are all powerful tools in influencing policymakers' decisions to support the best possible outcomes for students who are low-income, first in their family to go to college, or of color. NCAN members and their students are perfectly positioned to advocate for stronger policies to support affordable college going and completion.

The goal of this grant competition is to support college access programs from across NCAN's membership to increase their preparedness and capacity to do advocacy work as both part of a coalition and independently. Ideal candidates for this grant are prepared to work on issues that impact all of NCAN's target populations state- or nationwide. Interested members should be familiar with NCAN's policy goals, available at www.collegeaccess.org/policy.

Successful applicants will have the opportunity to expand their organizational capacity for policy and advocacy work while also participating in trainings, issues education, and networking among a group of like-minded peer organizations. This grant will provide successful applicants up to \$40,000 over an approximately two-year period. Funds may be used for salary and benefit support and travel requirements as well as other activities such as consulting, events, publications, and communications. Funds may not be used for lobbying activities.

Grants will be awarded in two categories: federal advocacy and state advocacy. Eligible member organizations may submit applications for a federal grant, a state grant, or both.

RFP Information Webinar: Thursday, Sept 28th, 2017 at 3pm EDT.

Applications due at 5:00 p.m. EDT on Friday, October 20th. Applicants will be notified in mid-November. Grant recipients will develop individualized grant agreements through the end of 2017.

Grant start date: December 1, 2017.

Grant end date: September 30, 2019.

Eligible applicants:

Organizations that apply for the NCAN Member Advocacy Grant must meet the following requirements in order to have their applications reviewed. The organization must:

- Be an NCAN member in good standing;
- Provide direct service to low-income students, students of color, or students who are first in their family to go to college OR be a network of such direct service providers;
- Be a non-profit organization or program of a non-profit entity; and
- Have the staff capacity to participate in all grantee commitments below.
- Be, as an organization, fully committed to supporting advocacy capacity growth and activities



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By signing and submitting this grant application, organizations commit to the following activities and responsibilities should they be selected as grant recipients:

- Designate a specific staff member who will serve as the project lead, fulfilling all responsibilities designated to the project lead and managing or delegating other responsibilities and communications.
- Participate through the project lead at four in-person events throughout the grant time period: Washington, DC, in spring of 2018; the NCAN National Conference in Pittsburgh in September, 2018; Washington, DC; in spring of 2019; and the NCAN National Conference in Indianapolis in September, 2019.
- Project lead to participate in NCAN Policy Council and regular, approximately monthly check-ins with NCAN.
- Participate in monthly training webinars through either the project lead or a delegated staff member.
- Collect and provide relevant student outcome data for use in NCAN advocacy and communications materials. Examples include percent of students served who are Pell Grant recipients along with their graduation rate, average gap in financial aid package, and percent of students selected for verification.
- Contribute a minimum of three student stories annually for us in NCAN advocacy and communication materials.
- Use grant funds to pay for travel to all four in person events and NCAN conference registration.
- Establish a policy goal to work toward during the grant time period.
- Create an advocacy plan that includes outreach to appropriate elected officials or policymakers and executive on that plan.

By providing these grants to our members, NCAN commit to the following activities and responsibilities:

- Provide guidance during the grant agreement phase for developing organizational specific advocacy goal and outcomes
- Provide a lead grantee contact to provide technical support related to policy and advocacy
- Deliver high-quality and relevant issues education and training to members via in person and online media
- Provide trainings relevant to the grantee networks goals and advocacy plans that will help strengthen the execution of the plans via in person and online mediums
- Provide timely information on federal activities to grantees.
- Establish a learning community atmosphere and networking opportunities among grantees
- Include grantees in NCAN messaging or communications, to possibly include newsletter, blog, social media, or materials for elected officials with the goal of raising your organization's national profile.



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APPLICATION

Questions for All Applicants

All applicants must complete the following questions. While there is no minimum or maximum length for the fields below, one important skill in advocacy work is the ability to succinctly tell your story. Members are encouraged to demonstrate these abilities in this grant application.

Organization Name:

Organization Address:

Individual submitting proposal: (Name, Title, Phone, Email)

State(s) where you serve students:

Organization's Mission:

What are your organization's primary strategies and interventions to achieve your mission?

Why is now the right time for your organization to increase its capacity for advocacy work?

How is policy or advocacy work part of your organization's strategic plan?

How does the organizational leadership plan to or currently support advocacy?

What capacity do you have to dedicate to this project? How would these funds help increase that capacity?



Budget for All Applicants

All applicants must submit a budget following the template below. Budget documents can be uploaded here directly on the Google Form or emailed to Carrie Warick at warickc@collegeaccess.org.

For the item description, please provide succinct phrases for the use. A fuller narrative for the budget question follows below.

Applicants for ONE grant (federal OR state) may apply for up to \$20,000 in each year (\$40,000 total). Applicants for TWO grants (federal AND state) may apply for up to \$40,000 in each year (\$80,000 total).

YEAR ONE (December 1, 2017 – November 30, 2018)

Category	Item Description:	Cost:
Salary and Benefits:		
Travel:		
Consulting:		
Materials/Publications/Comms:		
Events:		
	Total Request Year 1:	

YEAR TWO (December 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019)

Category	Item Description:	Cost:
Salary and Benefits:		
Travel:		
Consulting:		
Materials/Publications/Comms:		
Events:		
	Total Request Year 2:	

Budget Narrative: Briefly describe how the dollars allocated in the attached budget grid will be spent.



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Questions for FEDERAL Applicants Only

Please answer the questions in this section, page 4, if you are applying for a Member Advocacy Grant - FEDERAL. Organizations applying for a STATE GRANT ONLY can continue on to page 5.

Designated project lead (Name, Title, Email, Phone)

U.S. House Congressional Districts where the students you serve are constituents:

What federal level policy or advocacy work have you done to date?

Why is your organization specifically interested in expanding your federal advocacy work at this time?

What higher education federal policy issue do you most want to tackle? [NCAN strongly encourages members to consider issues related to NCAN's policy agenda, including but not limited to: the federal role in college affordability (Pell Grants, Student Loans, Work Study, SEOG), FAFSA simplification, and consumer information.]

What outcomes do you hope to achieve in relation to your chosen higher education issue?

Questions for STATE Applicants Only

Designated project lead (Name, Title, Email, Phone)

Focus State for Advocacy Grant:

What state or local policy or advocacy work have you done to date?

Why is your organization specifically interested in expanding your state advocacy work at this time?

What coalition building and/or convening abilities does your organization have in the state?

Why is your organization uniquely situated to provide a voice on state-level higher education issues?