

## **TBR Student Engagement, Retention, and Success (SERS) Initiative**

TBR recently released information regarding the 2019 TBR Student Engagement, Retention, and Success (SERS) initiative. Please forward this information on to interested individuals in your units.

SERS grant funds are designed to support new or existing campus services or programs that serve underrepresented or other targeted student populations including, but not limited to, underrepresented minorities, economically disadvantaged students, adults, veterans, and individuals with disabilities.

Specifically, funded TBR programs will:

- close gaps of retention, graduation, or other metrics;
- have the potential to significantly increase and/or impact access levels for further equity/diversity initiatives at the institution; or
- produce outcomes that correspond to Completion/Achieving the Dream plans and/or the Drive to 55/Complete College TN Act.

This is a **limited submission** program. TTU is permitted to submit up to **five (5)** applications which makes necessary an internal review to select the proposals that will be submitted to the TBR. Therefore, the cover page, grant proposal narrative and budget are required to be submitted to the TTU Office of Research by **noon on Monday, March 11**. This internal package should be submitted as a **single PDF document** via the [research@tntech.edu](mailto:research@tntech.edu) email account. The guidelines for the cover page, narrative, and budget are all included below along with an FAQs document provided by TBR and a program description.

Dates for the TBR Student Engagement, Retention, and Success grant application process are provided below:

- **Noon, Monday, March 11, 2019:** Deadline to submit the cover page and grant proposal narrative to the Office of Research (as a single PDF emailed to [research@tntech.edu](mailto:research@tntech.edu)).
- March 11 – 18, 2019: Internal Review is conducted
- March 18, 2019: Notification to faculty regarding selected applications; reviewers comments will be provided to be incorporated into the application. In accordance with submission requirements, any application selected to be submitted to TBR under this program that is race or gender specific or considers race or gender when determining eligibility for participation will be forwarded to TTU's General Counsel for the required legal review at this time.
- **March 27, 2019:** Final, complete application packages submitted to the Office of Research along with a signed Proposal Endorsement Form (PEF)
- March 29, 2019: Proposals submitted electronically to TBR via the TBR Grants Online Portal

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to be in touch with the Office of Research at [research@tntech.edu](mailto:research@tntech.edu).

## TBR Student Engagement, Retention, and Success (SERS) Program

**Application Deadline:** 03/29/2019 11:59 PM

**Award Amount Range:** \$0.00 - \$35,000.00

**Project Start Date:** 07/01/2019

**Project End Date:** 06/30/2020

**Program Officer:** Josh Koller

**Phone:** 615-366-3920 x

**Email:** [Josh.Koller@tbr.edu](mailto:Josh.Koller@tbr.edu)

### Summary:

SERS grants are available for new or existing campus services or programs that serve underrepresented or other targeted student populations including, but not limited to, underrepresented minorities, economically disadvantaged students, adults, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. The TBR programs will:

- close gaps in retention, graduation, or other metrics;
- have the potential to significantly increase and/or impact access levels or further equity/diversity initiatives at the institution; or
- produce outcomes that correspond to Completion/Achieving the Dream plans and/or the Drive to 55/Complete College TN Act.

### Program Types:

- Single institution proposals from TBR colleges (Colleges of Applied Technology and Community Colleges) or Locally Governed Institutions (LGIs)
- Collaborative proposals where TBR colleges (Colleges of Applied Technology and Community Colleges) or LGIs serve as the lead with other TBR Colleges, other LGIs, UT campus(es), and/or other entities (educational institution, LEA, agency, community group, etc.)

### Program Types and Funding Levels:

Program Type	Maximum Funding
Program Enhancement (existing programs funded by Institutions)	\$35,000
Pilot Program (new programs)	\$25,000

Grants are designed to provide short-term funds to augment or supplement campus funding (non-A&D funding) for campus services or programs – not to substitute for ongoing funding from the institution.

A **program enhancement grant** should be used for existing campus programs that relate to student success, retention, or engagement and are not currently funded by TBR's A&D funds or SERS grants. Program enhancements should not be used supplant salaries or operating budgets from existing programs. Programs that have been previously funded by SERS grants or A&D funding are eligible to apply in this category.

**Pilot program grants** allow institutions to experiment or test new programs, initiatives, or interventions before they deciding whether they will be continued using institution funds. Pilot program proposals must include plans to continue the program beyond the grant period, depending on project success.

**Ineligible costs include:**

- Purchase of furniture, equipment, or software that does not primarily benefit current year program participants;
- Speaker fees or honorariums, unless such fees are part of a broader workshop/seminar or training program;
- Scholarships and tuition/maintenance fee costs;
- Funds for campus personnel, unless specifically authorized in the grant award notice.

**Priority Categories and Preferences:**

A: High Impact Practices: The proposal must demonstrate how the HIP grant will specifically benefit the success, retention, and/or engagement of the targeted underrepresented group.

**Requirements for HIP Priority funding:**

1. The proposal must be for an HIP focus area as identified as part of TBR's High Impact Practice Initiative as of December 2016: ePortfolios; service-learning; certifications; student research; learning communities; work-based learning; first-year seminars/experience; honors programs; study abroad; or technology-enhanced learning.
2. HIP Focus proposals from institutions that have completed a self-study of the particular HIP (using the taxonomies that have been developed by TBR or other assessment), can use the self-assessment data to clearly identify next steps for scaling that particular HIP at the institution using SERS grant funding.

Funding is available for Internationalization of the Curriculum proposals that articulate a campus plan for scaling international education throughout the curriculum.

Awardees are encouraged to attend regional HIP Drive-ins and/or state-wide conferences offered by the Office of Student Success.

B. Collaborative Proposal: In the case of similar project proposals, funding preference will be given to collaborative grant proposals. Collaborative grant proposals require that each partnering entity provide a letter of commitment to the project from a senior administrator of the organization. The TBR institution submitting the application must serve as the fiscal partner in the event the project is funded.

**Submission Requirements:**

- All proposals must be completed via the TBR Webgrants System by March 29, 2019.
- **Each campus may submit a maximum of 5 (five) applications.**
- An individual may serve as the project director for only one awarded grant in a given year.
- All proposed applications that are race or gender-specific or that consider race or gender when determining eligibility for participation must undergo legal review by the TBR's

Office of General Counsel (OGC) or the institution's legal counsel prior to submitting the final application for funding consideration.

- Drafts of applications to be reviewed by the OGC must be submitted to the TBR OGC office by close of business on March 9, 2019. All proposed applications must be sent by email to the appropriate campus attorney on the OGC staff. The subject line of the email should read: "SERS Grant Legal Review."

**Awards and Notifications:** Notice of award decisions will be made by late-April 2019.

**Payment Schedule:** Institutions will receive grant funds in three (3) installments.

- 1/3 (one-third) of the grant total will be transferred by August 1, 2019;
- 1/3 (one-third) of the project costs will be transferred upon receipt of the February 3, 2020 mid-term project report (see Post-Award Requirements);
- Remaining actual expenditures will be reimbursed after receipt of the September 4, 2020 final report (see Post-Award Requirements).

**Post-Award Requirements:**

Program revisions: Any proposed changes to the scope of services, targeted group(s), project manager or project timeline must be submitted via TBR Webgrants (Amendment Request for Approval form). Substantive changes may result in reduced funding or revocation of program approval.

Budget revisions: Reallocations between line items of less than \$2,000.00 may be made at the discretion of the institution but must be reflected in the final report budget. Budget reallocations between line items of \$2,000.00 or more must be submitted using the Amendment Request Form via TBR Webgrants.

Extensions: Any such requests for extensions must be submitted using the Amendment Request Form via TBR Webgrants no later than April 30, 2020. Requests for extensions beyond the fiscal year are not typically approved.

Mid-Year Report: A mid-year report is due on February 3, 2020 and must be submitted on the mid-year report form via TBR Webgrants.

Final Report: A final report must be submitted by September 4, 2020 via TBR Webgrants. The final payment will include funds for actual expenditures and could be less than one-third of the award.

Non-compliance with any post-award requirements may result in denial of future grant applications.

## **TBR Student Engagement, Retention, and Success funding program**

### **Cover page requirements:**

Please enter the type of program and targeted population(s) below. Choices are offered in parentheses

Type of Program:

(Pilot Program or Program Enhancement)

Targeted Population(s):

(Underrepresented Minority, Adult, Veterans, Students with Disabilities, Other) More than one population can be entered.

If Other, Please Explain (This field is limited to 500 characters)

Have SERS Grant Funds Been Requested for this Specific Program in the Past?

List information for project team members below:

Name	Department	Mailing Address	City	State	Zip Code	Phone	Email	Role in the Project

### **Grant Proposal Narrative:**

What is the Anticipated Number of Participants?

- 1) Describe the targeted student populations (limited to 5000 characters):
  - a. Which specific populations are targeted?
  - b. What are the indicators for the selected groups which the grant will help to improve?
  - c. How many participants are anticipated for this program?
- 2) Describe the primary purpose of this project (limited to 5000 characters):

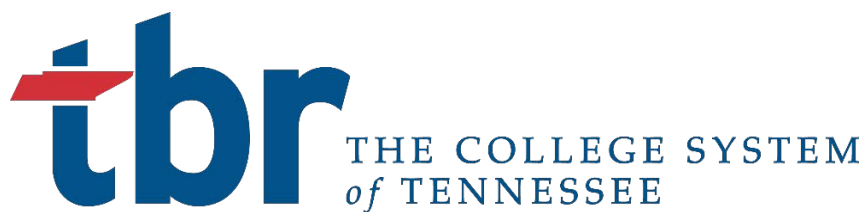
- a. How does it relate to the goals of the Completion/Achieving the Dream plans, campus strategic plan, diversity plan, etc.?
  - b. How will success with the targeted population specifically impact this goal?
- 3) Explain how the project will enhance student engagement, retention, and/or success (limited to 5000 characters):
  - a. For program enhancement proposals, please provide specific information on how this grant will increase success of the program.
  - b. For pilot program proposals, please provide an evidence-based rationale for why this program is expected to positively impact student engagement, retention and/or success for the selected population.
- 4) Is this a High Impact Program:  
If yes, please discuss the following (limited to 5000 characters):
  - a. How does the institutional HIP self-study data provide evidence to support the need for the proposed HIP project?
  - b. For HIP program enhancements, how have initial measures on the self-study data changed as a result of the project?
- 5) Steps: Outline the steps (including timelines and necessary resources) required to complete the project (limited to 5000 characters).
- 6) Assessment Plan: Projects must have measurable outcomes in order to determine effectiveness. Outline the assessment plan and specific metrics that will be used to evaluate the success of the project. (limited to 5000 characters)
- 7) Sustainability: Explain how this project will become self-sustaining and/or how your institution will continue support of the program after the grant period ends. (limited to 5000 characters)
- 8) Is this a Collaborative Proposal?  
If yes, please identify the collaborators and discuss the nature of the collaboration including the roles of the collaborators in the project. (limited to 5000 characters)
- 9) What other resources, including in-kind contributions, will be used in conducting this project? Please list those in-kind contributions here. (limited to 5000 characters)

## 2019-2020 SERS Grant Budget Summary

	<b>EXPENSE OBJECT LINE-ITEM CATEGORY</b> (detailed schedule(s) attached as applicable)		<b>ORIGINAL GRANT REQUEST</b>
1	Salaries	(detail attached)	\$0.00
2	Student Wages	(detail attached)	\$0.00
3	Benefits	(detail attached)	\$0.00
4	Honoraria	(detail attached)	\$0.00
5	Supplies	(detail attached)	\$0.00
6	Food	(detail attached)	\$0.00
7	Facilities	(detail attached)	\$0.00
8	Travel / Conferences	(detail attached)	\$0.00
9	Stipends	(detail attached)	\$0.00
10	Other (Specify)	(detail attached)	\$0.00
<b>11</b>	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>

GRANT BUDGET DETAIL	
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>SALARIES</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>STUDENT WAGES</b>	
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>BENEFITS</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>HONORARIA</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>SUPPLIES</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>FOOD</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>FACILITIES</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>TRAVEL/CONFERENCES</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>STIPENDS</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00
LINE-ITEM DETAIL FOR: <b>OTHER</b>	AMOUNT
TOTAL	\$0.00





## FALL 2019-SPRING 2020 Student Engagement, Retention, and Success Grants Frequently Asked Questions

### **Who should I call with questions about the grant process?**

Questions should be sent to [completionsupport@tbr.edu](mailto:completionsupport@tbr.edu) throughout the entire grant lifecycle. Keeping track of questions helps us improve our process and develop our FAQ list!

### **Can I submit a paper application or email an application?**

- No. Starting with 2019-2020 SERS grants, the grant application has moved online to <https://tbrgrants.webgrantscloud.com>. Any issues should be directed to [completionsupport@tbr.edu](mailto:completionsupport@tbr.edu).

### **Do SERS grants need to focus on underrepresented minority students?**

- SERS grants are funded with Access & Diversity funding and can focus on any subpopulation that is part of the following institution plans:
  - o Achieving the Dream,
  - o Pathways Project
  - o Diversity or completion plan(s).

### **Can or should proposals target large groups that may include subpopulations?**

- These grants are for specific initiatives that target subpopulations that fit within the Access & Diversity scope. They are not intended for proposals that cast a wide net (all students, all freshmen, etc.) in hopes of capturing those subpopulations.

### **What is an achievement/completion gap?**

- This is the gap between the completion rate for majority (white, non-low-income students) versus the rate for underrepresented population (most often underrepresented minorities and/or PELL recipients)

### **Are Locally Governed Four-year Universities eligible for to receive SERS grant funding?**

- Yes. LGI's are eligible to be lead institutions for the 2019-2020 SERS grant cycle.

### **Can grants be awarded for multiple years?**

- Only single year grants are accepted at this time.

### **What is a program enhancement?**

- A **program enhancement** should be used for existing campus funded programs that relate to student success, retention, or engagement and meet the overall criteria for SERS grants. SERS Grant funds may only be used to enhance programs and should not be used supplant salaries or operating budgets from existing programs. Grants that have been previously funded are program enhancements and eligible to apply. However, programs currently funded by SERS funds or A&D funds will not be considered. There will be more scrutiny placed on proposals that have been considered or funded previously.

### **What is a pilot program?**

- **Pilot programs** allow institutions to experiment or test programs, initiative, or interventions before they become institutionalized. Pilot programs proposals must include plans to incorporate the program into the campus' regular programming following the grant, depending on project success.

### **What are collaborative proposals?**

- Collaborative proposals are proposals whereby TBR colleges partner with an external organization, such as an LGI, government or non-profit agency, business, or another secondary or postsecondary institution.

### **Can funds be used for tuition?**

- SERS grant funds may not be used to for tuition and mandatory fees.

### **Can SERS grants fund campus personnel?**

- Grant funds may not be used to establish new full-time positions. On a case by case basis, funds might be used for temporary program help, faculty release time, or stipends for student workers.

### **Where can I find information about high impact practices (HIP)?**

- The Association of American Colleges & Universities recognizes 11 HIPs (<http://www.aacu.org/resources/high-impact-practices>)
- The Office of Student Success website has a list of 9 HIPs of particular focus for TBR and associated resources for each of those HIPs (<https://www.tbr.edu/student-success/tbr-high-impact-practices>).

### **Is a self-study or self-assessment of a HIP required to receive a SERS grant?**

- If selecting from one of the 9 TBR identified HIPs, a self-study or self-assessment is required. All institutions were asked to do a self-study of all 9 HIPs, and the institution's assessments should guide decisions for the grant application.

### **Does internationalization of the curriculum mean studying abroad?**

- This includes more than study abroad opportunities. Faculty and staff should consider how all students gain exposure to diverse ideas and cultural understanding both inside and outside the classroom. This may include intentionality of including international perspectives on a particular topic, internationally related experiences, or pedagogical practices.

**When is the state-wide HIP conference? If I cannot attend, will the grant lose funding?**

- TBR will set the next HIP Conference date prior to the start of the 2019-20 academic year. Grant recipients will be personally invited to attend the conference. If there is a conflict that would prohibit participation, the grantee will be asked to provide another form of best practice sharing (webinar, video recording, etc.) that can be shared with conference participants.

**Who will pay for the travel to the conference?**

- The HIP Conferences are grant funded and provide for travel reimbursement to participants.

**In what format should the final project summary be (for HIP proposals)? How is this different from the final report?**

- Grant recipients may be asked to prepare short descriptive summary of the project, initial findings, and next steps that will be posted to the TBR HIP website for use by other institutions. If the grantee presents at the HIP conference, any additional presentation materials will also be shared publicly through the HIP website.

**Will applications be accepted after the deadline passes?**

- Late applications will not be accepted.

**What will the mid-year and final report look like?**

- These reports will be available in the TBR Webgrants systems once the grant has been accepted and the funding cycle begins. The reports are used as status updates based on the stated goals in the proposal.

**When filling out the budget, how specific should line items be?**

- Be as specific as possible. If travel will be for a specific conference, include all relevant information about that conference (name and dates, etc.). However, if ordering food, the location and menu of where the meal will be purchased is not necessary. The line item budget should include uses of the funds. Examples: "Travel for 5 by van to X conference - \$5,000" or "One meal per month for ten months - \$500 each or \$5,000."

**Post Award FAQ****What kinds of revisions need to be reported to TBR?**

- Programmatic revisions should be submitted through the TBR Grants system (<https://tbrgrants.webgrantscloud.com>).
- Programmatic revisions are those that significantly change the scope, target group, timeline, or project director.
- Budget revisions should be submitted through the TBR Grants system (<https://tbrgrants.webgrantscloud.com>).
- Budgetary changes are greater than \$2,000 and are between line items. Changes of less than \$2,000 or that are intra-line items do not need to be reported.

TBR is happy to consult on any changes. Please feel free to email [completionsupport@tbr.edu](mailto:completionsupport@tbr.edu) or by phone.