

University of Distinction Guidance for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Non-preeminent institutions may choose to submit one proposal that aligns with the Universities of Distinction guidelines. The proposal should identify one existing core program that is capable of reaching national or state excellence. This may include multiple degree programs that support an area like health, or a more specific program, such as increasing the number of registered nursing graduates to produce a stronger qualified workforce for the state of Florida and/or a particular region of the state. Proposals should demonstrate a unique focus for the institution.

The proposal must identify appropriate metrics and goals to measure progress and success as outlined below. Metrics currently reported in the Accountability Plans may be used if appropriate. A single metric may be used to satisfy multiple requirements. The Board of Governors may also recommend additional metrics.

- At least one metric must demonstrate a year-one accomplishment or success.
- At least two metrics must demonstrate a return on investment to the state.
- Metrics that demonstrate how the program has improved over time as a result of the funding.
- Metrics and/or rankings to demonstrate program elevation to excellence and prominence.

Institutions may use funds for faculty recruitment and/or hiring, lab equipment, technology, staff hiring, financial aid, stipends, and other expenses as permitted. Institutions may also use funds to support innovative ideas and partnerships, with Florida College System institutions and the business community. Funding for facilities-related expenses is not allowed.

Another critical component of Universities of Distinction is to improve the quality of Florida's talent pipeline. Proposals should consider the recommendations from the Florida Council of 100's Project Sunrise Report and the Chamber of Commerce 2030 report to increase the output of high-caliber talent from the SUS and to make Florida a place where talent thrives. Proposals must clearly describe how the program will address current or future workforce needs, with a focus on producing high-quality talent. Proposals must include appropriate documentation of those needs, similar to the documentation required for new academic degree programs.

For this program to ignite success and be effective, funding should be recurring. Requests for non-recurring expenses may be included as appropriate to support program elevation. The proposal must include a detailed spending plan for the amount requested. The amount requested must reflect what can realistically be spent in a single fiscal year or include a detailed multi-year spending plan. Institutions may include additional tables not included in the LBR forms, if necessary, to meet these requirements.

Universities of Distinction proposals will be evaluated by Board staff according to the following criteria. Additional criteria may also be applied by Board staff as appropriate.

- The proposal aligns with the System strategic plan, the institution's strategic plan, and the institution's 2020 accountability plan.
- The program is a core competence capable of reaching national or state excellence.
- The program will meet documented state workforce needs now and into the future, including needs that may further diversify Florida's economy.
- The proposal includes appropriate documentation of workforce needs.

- The proposal clearly articulates how the program will foster an innovation economy that focuses on areas such as health, security, and STEM.
- The proposal identifies the required metrics.
- The proposal identifies the institution's current national ranking or status.
- The proposed use of funds is appropriate.
- The proposal includes a detailed spending plan.
- The amount requested realistically reflects what the institution can spend in a single year, or if applicable, what the institution can realistically spend over multiple years.