SMART
Scholarship-For-Service Program

SMART
SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS,
AND RESEARCH FOR
TRANSFORMATION
PART OF THE NATIONAL
DEFENSE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Solicitation for Vendor Proposals – STEM Outreach to Rural Populations

Logistics Management Institute (LMI), in collaboration with the Department of Defense (DoD), is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to support outreach and awareness of the Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) Scholarship-for-Service Program (referred to as the SMART Program) to rural[1] populations to increase the diversity of the Program.

SMART Program Description: The SMART Program, a highly competitive scholarship-for-service program, aims to develop a diverse, technically proficient, and innovative talent, and where appropriate, upskills the existing DoD science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) workforce. SMART accomplishes this goal by providing:

- Full tuition to students in pursuit of a post-secondary STEM degree at any accredited U.S. institution;
- An annual stipend for living expenses;
- Annual allowances for books and health insurance;
- Summer internships at participating DoD facilities, including laboratories, centers, and installations; and
- Guaranteed employment with the DoD upon completion of a participant's SMART-funded degree.

In return for receiving these scholarship benefits, participants commit to a post-graduation civilian employment with the DoD of one year for each academic year they received SMART benefits.

Since its establishment in 2006, the SMART Program has awarded over 4,700 scholarships to students pursuing a degree in one of 24 STEM disciplines critical to national security. Over 90% of participants have completed, or are currently on track to complete, their employment commitment. Of those that have completed their SMART employment commitment, approximately 70% of participants reported that they continue to remain employed with the DoD.

In 2023, the SMART Program expanded the scholarship program eligibility by introducing the Ronald V. Dellums Memorial SMART Scholarship (Dellums SMART Scholarship)[2]. To honor the lifetime work of Representative Dellums, Congress established the Ronald V. Dellums Memorial SMART Scholarship, with the goal to increase participation of underrepresented students in the DoD STEM workforce. This opportunity expands the SMART scholarship opportunity to rising college freshmen with no previous college transcripts who plan to pursue a bachelor's degree in one of the 24 SMART STEM disciplines and high school seniors are eligible to apply. For more information on the SMART Program, please visit the website[3].

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[1] The "rural" category spans a variety of communities. The critical factor in categorizing and understanding rural communities is that they are fundamentally nonmetropolitan in nature. For further information, see https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/ruraled/exhibit_a.asp

[2] Ronald V. Dellums Memorial SMART Scholarship webinar: https://youtu.be/59-UxXppiIM

[3] SMART Program website www.smartscholarship.org

We invite you to submit your proposal in accordance with the following requirements:

Opportunity: The SMART Program is managed within the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD(R&E)) and is executed through a Cooperative Agreement with Logistics Management Institute (LMI). Together, the DoD and LMI seek to find vendors that will support increased outreach to qualified students, specifically in rural populations. Activities can include, but are not limited to, collaboration with organizations that specialize in promoting STEM opportunities to students in rural populations, targeted digital media and advertising, university programs, and/or industry association collaboration to include joint events, workshops and webinars. Likeminded collaborators from academic institutions, affinity groups, professional societies, and non-profit and for-profit institutions are encouraged to apply.

The SMART Program anticipates the following outcomes:

- The expansion of outreach and recruiting activities to underserved communities and/or students underrepresented in STEM in rural populations who are eligible to apply for a SMART scholarship.
- The establishment of new resources or opportunities that assist underrepresented and/or underserved applicants as they complete and submit competitive SMART applications.
- Increased diversity among both SMART applicants and awardees.

Funding Amount and Period of Performance: LMI, as lead organization under the SMART Cooperative Agreement with the DoD, will fund organizations who will support raising awareness of the SMART Scholarship and support applicants at schools, organizations, and/or students and faculty from rural populations. The period of performance will vary depending on the proposed activities and will not exceed one (1) year. The funding model for this partnership will be a standard vendor contract which will include a detailed description of the goods or services, length of the contract and/or expected product delivery time, cost and payment method, and terms for ending the contract. Based on performance and success, the Program will consider execution of additional work after the initial period of performance is complete.

Submission Instructions: Applicants will submit white papers for initial consideration. White papers should be submitted as a single PDF file to **outreach@smartscholarship.org**, with the subject line, **"SMART Vendor Proposal - White Paper - <Your Organization Name>"**. Upon review, a select number of white papers will be invited to prepare a contract with the statement of work and services to be provided.

Timeline:

Vendor Solicitation Released	7-May-2024
Q&A period	7-May -2024 through 17-May 2024
Q&A responses provided	24-May-2024
White Papers Due	10-Jun-2024 (COB)
Invitation to Submit Contract with Statement of Work	24-Jun-2024
Vendor Contract Due	12-Jul-2024 (COB)

White Paper Format: Applications must include the following sections. White papers submitted without the requested information will not be considered.

- **Cover page (1 page maximum**) – The cover page shall be labeled with:
  - The Applicant's organization name; and
  - The Applicant's technical and financial points of contact's name, telephone number, and email.

- **Section 1 - Technical Concept (2 page maximum)** – Applicants will provide a summary of the proposed effort by addressing each of the considerations below:
  - 1.1 - A description of the proposed effort.
  - 1.2 - How will the effort target or design for underserved populations in rural areas in STEM?
  - 1.3 - What makes your organization uniquely qualified to execute the proposed effort in collaboration with the SMART Program?
  - 1.4 - How will your organization measure and evaluate success?

Section 2 - Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) Cost (1 page maximum) – The vendor will provide a ROM for the cost of the proposed effort. The cost estimate should not exceed $250,000 and should include a timeline of proposed work and explanation of anticipated costs.

Evaluation Criteria:
Proposals will be evaluated based on price, quality of white paper, experience and uniqueness of proposal that expands beyond the current outreach being conducted by the SMART Program and LMI.

Contact Information:
Submit questions and white papers to outreach@smartscholarship.org