

# Ohio Reach Postsecondary Designation Request for Applications Written Questions & Answers

**Could we add your symbol to our outreaches?**

Yes, all awarded institutions will receive the logo and all related materials, to be used for their programming.

**Is this program open to all students that have a history of foster care or only those who have not been reunified?**

Ohio Reach programming is open to all students with any history or experience in foster or kinship care at any point in their youth (prior to 18 years of age). This allows for access to services for students with a range of experiences with foster/kinship care in their lives.

**We are never told who these students are. Our financial aid director is the only person that knows these students are and sends messages for us. Only students that choose to disclose... how can we build more agency with the student to help them raise their hand so we can provide more support?**

Most Institutions do not know who every foster care affected student on campus is. Ohio Reach encourages institutions to create a marketing/outreach plan to reach students in a variety of ways. Some proven methods include: Partnerships with community organizations or local school districts, including identifying questions on applications or surveys, speaking in classes, posting information, and sending email communications through the financial aid department. To build agency and trust, liaisons can host events, network with students, and share about the benefits of services offered.

**What happens at the end of the 3 years? Is there a renewal of some sort? And is the award one time for the full three years or is 1,500-5, 000 given each year for 3 years?**

The Designation is awarded for three years. At the end of the 3-year period, institutions will be able to renew their Designation by completing an abbreviated application. Awards will be sent out 1 time with the initial Designation.

**If we need more time to build a program that meets requirements or otherwise can't meet the initial deadline, will there another opportunity to apply?**

Yes, the Request for Applications will be released annually to all institutions. In future years, the RFA will be released early each calendar year. In the meantime, some trainings will be open to staff from all institutions, to allow a chance to learn best practices before applying.

**Can we have co-liaisons? Or a Primary Liaison and secondary contact? Would only the Liaison be able to attend the free trainings? Could you have an additional staff member who is involved also attend?**

Yes, institutions are able to have co-liaisons. Co-liaisons and other interested staff are welcome at virtual trainings.

**It would be great to have a session to hear from other schools of what worked and what went wrong?**

We agree! There will be a meet and greet for all new and established campus liaisons shortly after awards. Future trainings will cover best practices and include panels.

**Can the Designated Campus Liaison also serve and be listed as Campus Champions for their department. In other words, Can the Designated Campus Liaison also cost as one of the three identified Campus Champions? Or is the Liaison excluded from the champion count?**

Yes, the Campus Liaison may serve as the Campus Champion for their department. They are also able to be counted towards the needed three Champions on applications.

**I was wondering how a report would be developed if these students are not known by campus partners. I understand that many may self-identify, but many will not. Also, if the student is not tagged in banner and they swipe in for tutoring, how will we be able to document it?**

Students may not self-identify, we encourage institutions to create an outreach plan to identify students and offer services to them. Ohio Reach Liaisons will only be asked to collect data on students that they have connected with or offered services to.

**How can we identify if a student is connected with Ohio Reach? I am currently working with two students who I am aware of who were / are in foster care. are scholarships available to them and should we connect them to someone in your office?**

The institution identifies and connects students to their Ohio Reach program. Yes, there is an Ohio Reach Scholarship. More information on the scholarship can be found on the "[Scholarship](#)" tab on the Ohio Reach website.

**For mentorship, is this something success coaches could do?**

Yes, success coaching is a form of peer mentorship. Ohio Reach encourages creativity with the structure of how mentorship programs are facilitated. More ideas can be found in the Campus Support Program Handbook.

**Slide 7 of the Virtual Overview PowerPoint says, "Depending on work loads, institutions are also able to use a committee structure or use student interns to help with planning." Does this mean the Liaison can be a committee?**

Ohio Reach needs a name/person for the Liaison (but you can use a generic contact email that multiple people monitor and help address). There can be co-Liaisons, and a committee structure comprised of Liaisons, Champions, and other staff or interns for support.

**Does the Common Application ask this question already or would it be an institutional level customization?**

The Foster and Kinship Care question is added on an individual, institutional level. Ohio Reach can make suggestions on the wording.

**In previous cycles - how many applications were rejected/not accepted?**

In previous cycles, all of the eligible applications were accepted and were awarded the Designation.

**How many colleges/universities are you able to fund this year?**

We will fund all accepted or approved institutions.

**Is there a scoring rubric -how do you rate applications?**

Yes, there is a scoring rubric that is used by an approval committee. The committee is comprised of members from the Ohio Reach Coalition, staff from child welfare serving organizations, as well as former foster youth.

**While the minimum award is \$1,500 per year for the 3-year period, what is the average award?**

The average award will depend on the number of awarded institutions. This initial award is not per year, but for the three-year period. There are other grant opportunities for funding specific initiatives that are direct to your campus throughout that three-year period.

**So if I am understanding this correctly, no funding can be used to support the additional staff time necessary to execute the program, correct?**

Funding cannot be used to support additional staff time. Funding can be used on community building, lunch and learns, group outings for Ohio Reach students, etc.

**Ohio University has five regional campuses. Could we apply with one Liaison and then Champions on each of the campuses?**

Yes, the institution can apply with one application and address how each location is equipped to meet the required criteria for the Designation.

**What are the allowable costs for the budget?**

Award funding can be spent on incentives such as gas cards, grocery cards or gifts as incentives for attending events or campus activities, cost for tutoring services for students, social events, additional essential needs for students who may need groceries, transportation, or school fees paid. Funding can also be spent on learning opportunities such as lunch and learns, professional

development, career counseling, or social and emotional learning classes. Gifts/Care packages and running a mentorship program are all acceptable uses of funding.

**What is the process of reapplying for Designation for an institution that hits their three years?**

Institutions will complete a shortened RFA, detailing activities completed and funds spent for their three-year renewal.

**Do you all recommend having co-Liaisons for a larger campus?**

Yes, you are welcome to list a co-Liaison and add multiple Champions to provide additional support to students.

**Can you please give an example of the additional mini grants?**

In 2024, Ohio Reach offered a Microgrant for institutions to apply for up to \$2,500 in additional funding. This funding was specifically meant to support program expenses. For example, this funding can be used on community building opportunities, such as group outings and lunch and learns, or even a mentorship program. Microgrant funding is intended to support how the institution plans to meet the required criteria for the Designation.

**What funding do the students qualify for? Is the minimum \$1500 for Institutional use AND the student receives a scholarship?**

The funding is for institutional use. Institutions can determine how or if they would like to support students. Ohio Reach provides an [Emergency Fund](#) that students may apply for once per year, once enrolled in an institution. Ohio Reach also offers a [Scholarship](#) that opens in March. The Scholarship is \$1,000 per semester (fall and spring), renewable for up to five years.

**How do qualifying campuses tend to identify these students?**

Some institutions have added questions to their admissions application, some participate in targeted marketing and outreach (setting up a booth and engaging with students). Students may or may not identify foster care experience on the FAFSA. The [Ohio Reach Campus Support Program Handbook](#) found on the Ohio Reach website has suggestions for how to identify foster care-connected students.

**If the supports offered to targeted students is open to all students, is the funding only for identified foster-youth students (such as the incentives or community building opportunities)?**

Funding can be used for targeted marketing and outreach, where all students are welcome to items you may give away, such as promotional/swag items. However, specific items like incentives and overall Ohio Reach services are only for students who have identified as foster care-connected.

**Where can we find language for adding the question to the common application?**

Ohio Reach uses the question: Do you have experience in foster care, kinship care, or out-of-home placement (meaning group homes and congregate care settings)? This is an example of language used on admissions applications. There is a slide in the PowerPoint for today that gives specific definitions for the terms: foster care, kinship care, out-of-home placement, and adoption, all legal arrangements involving children.

**Is there a possibility to connect with other college Liaisons that implemented Ohio Reach?**

Yes, trainings for Ohio Reach Liaisons are open to interested institutions. Ohio Reach also offers institutions informal chats, where they can connect with each other and share ideas.

**When thinking about writing this grant – is the idea that we will write for what we will do or what we will be doing?**

Institutions can do both. Institutions can write about what support your campus already has in place and how you would utilize those for Ohio Reach students but also programming that you plan to implement later down the line, such as group outings or community building opportunities. Like many grants, you can write on the plans you will implement if awarded.

**Did you all say that language for how to ask identifying questions were on the website? Or examples of what colleges have used? We are crafting our university question and want to be sensitive to the language we use in our communication. Any insight you provide would be great.**

The Foster, Kinship Care, and Out-of-home Placement question is added on an individual, institutional level. Ohio Reach can make suggestions on the wording, and currently Designated Institutions are able to share their language.

**It is noted that the minimum funding provided to schools to assist with administering this outreach program is \$1500.00. What is the maximum? I understand the maximum may be impacted by the number of schools applying, but what has the maximum been in the past?**

The maximum initial award per institution will be dependent on the number of approved institutions. Institutions also become eligible to apply for additional Microgrant funding once they earn the Designation.

**I have been unable to find online the number of young people in foster care for Warren County and the surrounding counties we target with our marketing. I was wondering if Ohio Reach has access to that information?**

Ohio Children's Alliance has access to county-based statistics and will be releasing that information to institutions soon. In the meantime, feel free to access the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services resource where you can find this information by county: [Point in Time Count of Children in Care | Job and Family Services Data Portal.](#)