

# Appendix B.

## Aim High RFP - Frequently Asked Questions

### Question 1: How many grants will be given?

- 40 one-year grants of \$20,000 will be awarded.

### Question 2: Are schools and/or school districts eligible to apply?

- Schools (public and private) and school districts are not eligible to apply. Schools and school districts are encouraged to partner with a community-based organization (CBO) to benefit from this grant opportunity.

### Question 3: Are colleges or universities eligible to apply?

- Colleges and universities are not eligible to apply. This includes foundations of universities. As with schools and school districts, colleges and universities are encouraged to partner with a community-based organization (CBO) for this grant opportunity.

### Question 4: Are non-profit organizations that are not 501(c)(3) eligible to apply?

- No, only 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible to apply.

### Question 5: Can 501(c)(3) organizations serve as a fiscal sponsor for programs run by organizations that are not 501(c)(3)?

- Yes, 501(c)(3) organizations may serve as fiscal sponsors for non-501(c)(3) program providers.
- Organizations that are categorically prohibited from applying by the eligibility requirements – such as schools, school districts, colleges, universities, and municipal governments – may serve as fiscal sponsors for other applicants so long as they are registered as 501(c)(3) organizations with the IRS.

### Question 6: What is the geographic scope of the grants?

- Applicants will be accepted from anywhere within the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Applicants from US Territories, such as Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, are ineligible to apply.

**Question 7: What are the target states that will receive the 5 bonus points on their applications?**

- Target states for the 2026 grant cycle are: Alaska, Arkansas, Delaware, Hawai'i, Idaho, Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

**Question 8: What budget should be used to determine whether an organization meets the budget requirement?**

- For the purposes of the Aim High grant program, annual organizational budget is defined as the full organization's operating expenses from the most recently completed fiscal year. For most organizations this will be the FY24 budget.

**Question 9: Are organizations that do not yet have an IRS Form 990 available to submit with their application eligible to apply, so long as they meet the budget requirement?**

- No, only organizations that have an IRS Form 990 ready to submit by the application deadline are eligible to apply.

**Question 10: Are new organizations and programs eligible to apply?**

- So long as they meet the budget requirement, have an IRS Form 990 they can submit, and meet all of the other eligibility requirements, new programs are eligible to apply.

**Question 11: Is there any maximum budget limit that would make organizations ineligible for these grant opportunities?**

- No, there is no maximum budget that would render organizations ineligible.

**Question 12: Are 501(c)(3) organizations that provide supports to middle school youth – but do not directly provide program services in out-of-school time settings – eligible to apply?**

- No, only programs that are direct providers of out-of-school programming are eligible to apply.

**Question 13: If an organization runs multiple programs – some of which meet the low-income requirement and some of which do not – are they eligible to apply? If so, should only the program sites that meet this requirement be included in the application?**

- Yes, and yes.

**Question 14: The Request for Proposals says that organizations currently receiving funding from the New York Life Foundation – either directly or indirectly – are ineligible to apply. Are there any exceptions?**

- Yes, there are two exceptions:
  - Organizations that receive funding from the New York Life Foundation through the Volunteers for Good program, Grief Reach program, or Community Impact Grant program are eligible to apply for the Aim High grants.
  - Organizations that receive funding through the New York Life’s employee matching gift program are also eligible to apply for the Aim High grants.

**Question 15: Can multiple programs or program sites from the same organization submit applications separately?**

- No, each organization can only submit one application. However, if an applicant is an affiliate of a national organization, more than one affiliate can apply for funding so long as each affiliate that applies is currently not receiving grant funds from the New York Life Foundation.
- Note: Affiliates of regional or national organizations that share a common Employer Identification Number (EIN) may submit applications separately under the same EIN so long as each affiliate has its own budget and meets the eligibility requirements laid out within the application.

**Question 16: Can programs that do not currently meet the 80% low-income eligibility requirement apply if they use the funds to serve a population that meets the 80% low-income requirement?**

- No, programs must already meet the 80% low-income minimum.

**Question 17: Can Aim High grant funds be used for capital improvements?**

- No, funds cannot be used for capital/building improvements.

**Question 18: Are programs that only serve youth during the school year or only serve youth during the summer eligible to apply?**

- No. Programs must currently operate during the school year and during the summer.

**Question 19: Can Aim High funds go towards off-site programming that takes place during the traditional school day?**

- No, Aim High funding cannot go towards programming that occurs during the school day, even if that programming is not on the school premises.
- Programming that occurs during the school day cannot be included when determining whether an applying organization meets the required dosage laid out in the eligibility requirements.

**Question 20: Can we receive feedback on our applications from previous years?**

- No, unfortunately the Afterschool Alliance cannot provide individualized feedback to applicants.

**Question 21: Does the school served by the OST program need to meet the 80% free and reduced-price lunch requirement?**

- No, it is the population of youth served by the OST program that determines the eligibility for the Aim High grants.

**Question 22: The schools or school districts our program(s) work with either do not collect or do not share data around Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL) rates. How can we establish that we are eligible?**

- If programs serve low-income populations and do not have access to FRPL data from their school or school district, they may estimate their FRPL rate based on other data that they do have relating to the percentage of low-income families that they serve.
- If a program submits non-FRPL data or an estimated FRPL rate to establish their eligibility for the grants, they are expected to provide a thorough explanation of the data that they used within their responses in Section C: Community demographics and needs.
- Examples of data sources that have been used to estimate FRPL rates in previous years include the United Way's "Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed" (ALICE) measures and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Income Limits data.

**Question 23: Where can we find a list of Aim High awardees from previous years?**

- You can find links to the news releases announcing the recipients of previous rounds of the Aim High program below:
  - [2025 News Release](#)
  - [2024 News Release](#)
  - [2023 News Release](#)
  - [2022 News Release](#)
  - [2021 News Release](#)
  - [2020 News Release](#)
  - [2019 News Release](#)
  - [2018 News Release](#)
  - [2017 News Release](#)

**Question 24: Is there a minimum or maximum number of students that must be served by an applying program?**

- No, there is no minimum or maximum number of students that a program must serve in order to be eligible for the Aim High program.

**Question 25: Can past Aim High winners reapply?**

- Yes, past recipients can reapply for grants that would be outlaid one year after their grant ends. For example, past recipients whose awards ended in summer 2025 may reapply for the 2026 grant cycle.

**Question 26: Are there any eligibility requirements relating to a minimum number of days per week or hours per day that applying programs must operate?**

- In order to be eligible to apply, organizations must operate programs that are available to each middle school-aged participant at least 9 hours per week for at least 20 weeks during the school year.
- In order to be eligible to apply, organizations must currently operate some form of summer programming, but there are no specific requirements for the hours per day, days per week, or number of weeks for the summer programming that is offered.
- Aside from the hours per week requirement described above, there is no minimum number of days per week that a program must be open to participating students, nor is there a minimum number of hours per day.

**Question 27: For the dosage requirement stating that programs need to operate 20 weeks during the 2025-2026 school year, do the 20 weeks need to be consecutive/continuous?**

- No, the 20 weeks do not need to be consecutive. Summer programming does not count towards this requirement.

**Question 28: I need to edit my application, but I've already submitted it. Can I go back in to revise it?**

- No. All submitted applications are final. Applicants and Aim High staff cannot edit or revise applications once submitted.

**Question 29: When I submit my Employer Identification Number (EIN) in the application, an error occurs. What should I do?**

- Please email [aimhigh@afterschoolalliance.org](mailto:aimhigh@afterschoolalliance.org) for all EIN-related issues.

**Question 30: Are school-based programs that are operated by independent 501(c)(3) organizations eligible to apply?**

- Yes, programs that operate partially or entirely on school grounds are eligible to apply so long as they are not run by the school or district (or any of the other prohibited types of entities listed in the eligibility requirements).

**Question 31: Are any types of programming or programs with any particular focus prioritized?**

- Applicants are not required to provide or focus on any particular type of programming or content area.
- Grantees are selected based on their ability to impact middle school-aged participants' readiness for the high school transition. Indicators of readiness for this transition include – but are not limited to – on-time promotion to the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, school attendance rates, improved behavior, grades and test scores, the development of social and emotional skills, and fostering well-being.

**Question 32: Do applying programs need to serve only middle school-aged youth, or can they also serve elementary or high school-aged participants?**

- Applying organizations and programs may serve non-middle school-aged young people. Selections are made solely based on quality of programmatic offerings and positive outcomes for middle school-aged youth.

**Question 33: Given that grant recipients are required to report on participants' matriculation from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, what types of data sources are acceptable for tracking matriculation?**

- We do not have a definitive list of acceptable data sources for 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade matriculation rates. The most common data sources are schools and districts, report cards provided by parents, and parent survey data.