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Division III October Webinar Opportunity Grants

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Agenda

- Opportunity Grant Overview
 - Mission & Purpose
 - Updates to the guidelines
 - New additions
- Funding
- Timeline
- Application Process
- Takeaways
- Questions



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Opportunity Grants Mission & Purpose

- Provide funding to members committed to enhancing representation in athletics administration and assistant coaching roles, to better reflect the student-athlete population we support.



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Opportunity Grants

- **Pathway to Excellence Grant**
Funding for two-year, entry-level athletics administration positions within Division III.
- **Strategic Alliance Matching Grant**
Funding for full-time, mid- to senior-level athletics administration positions within Division III.
- **Coaching Enhancement Grant**
Funding for newly created or enhanced coaching positions within Division III.



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New to the Grants this year!

- For Pathway to Excellence ONLY, Athletic Training and Strength & Conditioning positions are now eligible for grant funding.
- Coaching Enhancement Grant provides an enhancement opportunity for part-time to full-time and an increase in funding opportunity.



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SHOW ME THE OPPORTUNITY (Funding the Grants)



- **Pathway Grant:** 2yr/\$30,000
- **Matching Grant:** 3yr NCAA Funded, 5yr/commitment
 - Year 1: 75% NCAA contribution/ 25% Institution
 - Year 2: 50% NCAA contribution/ 50% Institution
 - Year 3: 25% NCAA contribution/ 75% Institution
 - Years 4-5: 0% NCAA contribution/ 100% Institution
- **Coaching Grant:** 2yr/\$7,500-\$15,000 (matched by institution)
- **All Grants** receive professional development funds.



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Opportunity Grant Timeline

- Application open September 28 – CLOSES January 29, 2027.
- Selections- Late February.
- Contracts- Mid March.
- Hiring- End of June.
- Orientation- First weekend in August.
- Funding disbursed- September.



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Application

Question 1

Question Proposed job title.

Answer Staff Assistant for Business, Operations, and Compliance

Question 2

Question Provide a detailed job description, including percentage of time commitment for each major area of job responsibility and a thorough explanation of job responsibilities.

Answer

Areas of Responsibility:

Business 33% (12-13 hours per week)

As the conclusion of year one, the grant recipient will understand and have experience developing a sport budget to include home and away contest costs, equipment purchases and repairs, staff salaries and benefits. They will also have experience in developing budgets for administrative and building costs. They will have loaded and processed student athletes per diem, and worked through the process of making payments for all expenses associated with intercollegiate athletics.

At the end of year two, the grant recipient will have the skills to provide budget oversight and management and will have done so for several sports.

Responsibilities:

1) Learn the budget process which includes short- and long-term planning for twenty varsity sports, cheerleading, fitness facilities, building operations and administrative accounts.

Time commitment 8 per week in November, March, May.

2) Assist the Sr. Associate AD for Business and Operations in monitoring spending, account reconciliation, and planning for unbudgeted expenses such as postseason.

Time commitment 5 hours per week in October, February, and April.

3) Exposure to strategic planning to maximize University funding and plan Athletics generated revenue (fundraising) use.

Time commitment 2 hours per week in March and April

4) Exposure to financial programs such as excel, Banner for Finance, student-athlete debit cards, charter company portal, and others.

Operations 34% (12-13 hours per week)

At the conclusion of year one, the grant recipient will be competent managing logistics for a typical year August-May in college athletics beginning with preseason camp logistics and proceeding through the sports seasons, post seasons, and Award programs.

At the conclusion of year two, the grant recipient will be competent in sport oversight as well as staff oversight and management.

5) Assist with team travel logistics.

6) Assist in practice and facilities schedules utilizing Teamworks The Operating System for Sports.

#5 and #6 Time Commitment 5 hours weekly.

7) Assist in enhancing the student-athlete experience during university closed periods such as preseason, winter break, and spring break.

Time commitment 10 hours per week in August and January.

8) Serve on short term campus committees that are relative to events such Pep Rally, Family Day, Homecoming.

9) As an entry-level manager in athletics, create an inclusive environment and culture and demonstrate zero tolerance for exclusionary behaviors. This may include assisting with educational efforts around inclusion, assisting transgender student-athletes and addressing other unique needs for student-athletes.



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How to get a grant

- Write a detailed application on how this grant will help you achieve the purpose of the grant and enhance the student athlete experience at your institution.



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Opportunity Grants

Scoring Rubric

Instructions: Proposals will be rated according to this rubric. After ratings are averaged and tallied, proposals will be ranked by score from highest to lowest. The Selection Committee will award funds beginning with the highest ranked application and concluding when all allocated funds have been awarded.

Rating Criteria	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Improvement
The proposed title and job responsibilities for the position are clearly outlined.		1	
Job responsibilities will provide a quality work	1		
The proposed organizational chart directly supports the outlined job responsibilities.		1	
The identified supervisor(s)' activities with the employee will support a productive work	1		
The identified mentor(s)' activities with the employee will aid them in their professional	1		
Explain how your school/conference is committed to fostering cultures of belonging and well-being.	1		
Explain how your hiring strategy will guarantee a broad candidate pool that represents the varied student-athlete population.	1		
The outlined professional development plan will provide adequate learning opportunities.	1		
Exposure to other campus, conference or community groups will provide unique learning		1	
The evaluation of the position's performance will provide effective feedback regarding job		1	
Evaluation of the grant will demonstrate its			1
The institution or conference office's financial plan is appropriate in comparison with the	1		
Reason for pursuing the grant and how it will benefit the organization.		1	
plan is appropriate considering the cost of living for the hired employee.	1		
Total Number of Check Marks:	8	5	1
Point Subtotals:	40	15	1
Rating Criteria Point Total:	56		
Funding Recommendation	Strongly Recommended Points: +2 thru +5	Recommend Funding With Some Reservations	Do Not Recommend Points: (-2) thru (-5)
What is your overall recommendation for funding	4		
Project Recommendation Point Total:	4		
Rating Criteria Point Total: (from above)	56		
Total: (Rating Criteria Point plus Recommendation Point Total)	60	= 75 *Minimum score	

Selection Committee

- Five DIII members.
- Two meetings minimum.
- Provide scoring guidelines.
- THEY MAKE THE DECISION, NOT ME!



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Recipient Responsibilities

- Hiring
- Professional development requirements
- Mentorship expectations
- Reporting and assessment requirements
- Grant closeout responsibilities



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Communication



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III Main Takeaways

- Choose the grant that aligns with your staffing need (entry-level administrator, senior administrator, or coach).
- Demonstrate institutional commitment and sustainability.
- Start planning early with HR and campus leadership before submitting an application.



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Questions?



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