



Army Educational Outreach Program
2024-2025 UNITE – Request for Proposal (RFP)

Technology Student Association
October 2023





UNITE

Unite is a pre-collegiate summer program for talented high school students from groups historically underserved in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

An initiative of the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP), Unite is administered by the Technology Student Association (TSA). TSA is a member of the AEOP Consortium formed by the AEOP cooperative agreement award (W911SR-15-2-0001), a group of education organizations that oversee STEM programs designed to support the goals and mission of the AEOP. The lead organization for the consortium is Battelle Memorial Institute, a non-profit research and development organization with a strong commitment to STEM education.

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INTRODUCTION

The United States has long recognized that a scientifically and technologically literate citizenry is our nation's best hope for a secure, rewarding, and successful future. For over 50 years, the Army has supported a wide range of educational opportunities in STEM for our youth, college and graduate students, as well as our valued teachers.

Our nation's economy has greatly benefited from the technological achievements of the last century and is destined for greater achievements throughout the 21st century. The demand for STEM literate citizens has become increasingly high, and STEM talent is increasingly valuable and necessary, as it will continue to play a dominant role in all aspects of everyday life. For this reason, the Army created the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP), which provides a portfolio of Army STEM educational opportunities for the future generations of America's workforce and their teachers.

STEM talent is essential to delivering innovative solutions for the nation, and AEOP is committed to engaging, inspiring, and attracting that next generation of STEM talent.

The AEOP is composed of competitions, enrichment activities, apprenticeships, and teacher resources designed to spark inspiration, exploration, and achievement in STEM literacy and career development. From elementary school through college, students of all proficiency levels, interests, and social and economic backgrounds are encouraged to participate in real-world STEM experiences involving these important disciplines while also engaging with Army-sponsored mentors.

Unite, an initiative in the AEOP portfolio, is a pre-collegiate, academic, summer program for rising 9th through rising 12th grade students from groups historically underserved in STEM. The program is designed to encourage and help prepare students to pursue college-level studies and, ultimately, careers in engineering and related STEM fields.

Unite is administered by the Technology Student Association (TSA), a national non-profit organization of middle and high school students engaged in STEM. TSA was chartered in 1978, and since then over 2,000,000 students have participated in its program of activities. Members apply and integrate STEM concepts through competitive events, leadership endeavors, co-curricular activities, and related programs.

TSA is facilitating the Request for Proposal (RFP) process detailed herein to solicit entities to serve as 2024 and 2025 (a two-year cycle) Unite host sites.



UNITE – ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES

The Unite program is designed to give students the opportunity to:

- Gain a better understanding of the real-world applications of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics;
- Overcome negative attitudes and perceptions they may have about cultural, social, and other barriers to STEM studies and careers;
- Gain confidence in their ability to participate in engineering and other STEM activities;
- Engage in activities that promote collaboration and problem solving in a team environment; and
- Be better prepared to pursue engineering and STEM in college and, ultimately, in future careers.

The 2024-2025 Unite program should provide a summer experience for underserved rising 9th through rising 12th grade students, in which they are exposed to academics and enrichment that will best help them achieve their goals of higher education and careers in STEM.

Options for configuring Unite (2024 and 2025) are suggestions only; host sites should develop their program in a way that best meets the needs of the individual site and its student participants:

- 1) Rising 9th grade students in 2024; rising 10th grade students in 2025 (returning and new, as necessary to meet enrollment numbers)
- 2) Rising 10th grade students in 2024; rising 11th grade students in 2025 (returning and new)
- 3) Open enrollment, rising 9th through rising 11th grade students in 2024; rising 10th through rising 12th grade students in 2025 (returning and new)
- 4) Open enrollment, rising 9th through rising 12 grade students in both years of the program

2024-2025 UNITE – PROGRAM SPECIFICATIONS

This RFP and all information covered in this document are considered **certifications** and are binding on the part of the institution submitting a proposal. Therefore, the document submitted must be signed by both the designated Unite site director and an immediate supervisor at the submitting institution.

1. The Unite program will operate on a two-year cycle. Selected sites will receive funding for one year, with the second year of funding dependent on satisfactory performance in year one, approval of a site's planned program for year two, and TSA's receipt of program funding from the Army.
2. Unite funds can be used only to supplement, not supplant, an institution's existing summer STEM program in such a way that clearly benefits potential Unite participants.
3. The Unite program must be free to all participants. No application, registration, or other fees can be charged.



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4. An institution's Unite program must last four to six weeks and can be residential or non-residential.
 5. Unite sites are responsible for recruiting and selecting Unite participants. Each site must enroll a minimum of 15 students. All students who participate in a Unite program must be U.S. citizens or permanent legal residents, and students must be from populations historically underserved in STEM areas. (Refer to **Participant Recruitment and Enrollment Guidelines/Requirements** [page 9] for clarification and additional details about this designation.)
 6. ***Each Unite program MUST ensure that all enrolled students register on the Ideal Logic platform and complete the AEOP student survey provided via link on the AEOP/Unite and TSA website.*** Adults involved in the Unite program also should complete Ideal Logic registration and complete the adult AEOP survey. Additionally, each program will promote/support student and adult participation in Unite phone interviews and/or focus groups, as requested by the Education Development Center-EDC (AEOP Consortium member responsible for evaluation) and TSA.
 7. During a site's summer program, each site director must submit to TSA photos/videos and news stories that feature the program or participants; such items may be submitted during the summer program or included as part of a site's annual final report.
 8. Unite Site directors will participate in scheduled group conference calls or webinars, as designated by the Unite administrator. This participation will be in addition to individual site director/Unite administrator communications that may be arranged.
 9. A representative from TSA, AEOP, or Battelle will make pre-arranged visits to each site during the summer program timeframe; as noted (#6, above) interviews and/or focus groups with Unite students and adult mentors may be scheduled with sites, as well.
 10. Each student enrolled in Unite must receive a \$100-per-week stipend. The purpose of the stipend is to offset 1) income likely earned by a student had the student been employed during a site's Unite program, and 2) expenses for personal transportation and food costs (related to the program). A timeframe for disbursing the stipend to students is at the discretion of the site. Funding for the required stipend can come from the host institution's budget, from the Unite budget, or from another source.
 11. TSA must be named as an additional insured (for the Unite program) on the selected institution's insurance policy, OR the institution must provide a signed certificate of liability insurance that guarantees coverage for all Unite participants for the duration of the site's program.
 12. Pending approval of the site's proposal and submission of all signed documentation, TSA/Unite Program Administrator will send a formal notification of award to each Unite site.



13. Sites approved to receive a 2024-2025 Unite program award will receive funding in three increments, pending distribution of 2024-2025 Unite funding to TSA from the Army. Distribution of the third payment is dependent on verification that all enrolled students have registered on Ideal Logic and completed the AEOP student survey, and submission of a site's end-of-program documents to the Unite Program Administrator.

IMPORTANT DATES (year one of the two-year cycle)

December 4, 2023	2024-2025 Unite proposal submission deadline
January 24, 2024	Notification to sites of award (or non-award) status
May – July 2024	Site insurance information and Qualifying Student Report due to TSA two weeks after start of program.
May – August 2024	Timeframe for 2024 Unite programs; Deliverable: photos/videos and news stories to TSA
May – September 2024	Award payments (three – approximately mid-May, mid-July, and mid-September) to sites
August 16, 2024	Deliverable: Data Summary and Final report from each site due to TSA



PROPOSAL – FORMAT and INSTRUCTIONS

General Information about the Host Institution

Instructions: Use the proposal template below to answer each of the questions using Calibri or Arial font size 11. The proposal and addendums should not be more than 20 pages.

1. Contact Information

Host institution:

Host institution postal address:

Indicate if the institution is designated as HBCU _____ or MI _____

Program Director name:

Program Director title:

Program Director phone:

Program Director email:

Alternate contact name:

Alternate contact phone:

Alternate contact email:

Funding payment recipient:

Funding recipient’s postal address:

2. Schedule

Date program will begin:

Date program will end:

Program days and hours:

General schedule of events/classes:

3. Description of Host Institution and Existing STEM Program

Credentials of host institution (1 paragraph):

Name and description of the institution’s existing STEM program, including purpose, goals, and sources of funding (1-2 paragraphs; include website links, as applicable):

Explanation of how Unite funding will help supplement the existing STEM program in a beneficial way (1 paragraph):

2024-2025 UNITE Program Requirements

Unite program requirements are listed below. Please explain how your program, if awarded funding, will meet each requirement. Provide materials, such as marketing brochures, web links, application forms, photos, and samples of the curriculum, as applicable.



4. Marketing, Outreach, and Participant Recruitment and Enrollment

Guidelines/Requirements

The host institutions must:

- Reference Unite, AEOP and TSA (including the logo of each, provided by Unite Program Administrator) in marketing and Unite program literature.
- As part of program marketing, distribute AEOP materials (provided by TSA/Unite Program Administrator) to schools, other appropriate institutions, and students/parents.
- During a site's summer program, each site director must submit to the Unite Program Administrator photos/videos and news stories for AEOP social media and marketing purposes that feature the program or participants; such items may be submitted during the summer program or included as part of a site's annual final report.
- Enroll a minimum of 15 underserved students in a Unite program. Host institutions must reach out to and encourage students who are academically motivated and considered to be underserved and underrepresented in STEM to apply for the Unite program. Host institutions are responsible for ensuring that all Unite participants are from underserved populations. Note: All participants must be U.S citizens or permanent legal residents.

AEOP's goal is to broaden participation of underserved populations in STEM and have diverse participation in AEOP's programs to reflect the nation's demographics. Evaluation criteria for **Unite** for selecting students who fit the definition of diverse include those who self-identify with **two or more** of the following:

- attend a rural, urban, or frontier/tribal school
- low-income students (FARMS)
- females in certain STEM fields (e.g., physical science, computer science, mathematics or engineering)
- identify as racial/ethnic minority in STEM (i.e., Alaska Native, Native American, Black or African American, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, other)
- students with English as a second language (ELL)
- first generation college student (1stGEN)
- students with disabilities (ADA)
- dependent of a military service member or veteran.
 - Military child – dependents of members of the Active-Duty Armed Forces
 - Military-connected – military child plus the dependents of members of the National Guard and Reserves
 - Military-affiliated – military-connected plus the dependents of Veterans
 - Military-connected schools – schools where a minimum of 15% of the student population is military-connected

- A. Describe how the institution will market to, recruit, and enroll underserved high school students (according to the criteria above); describe the types of materials and outreach media that will be used. (1-3 paragraphs)**



- B. Describe the academic criteria (e.g., test scores, GPAs, recommendations) that will be used to recruit and evaluate students who wish to participate in the program. Include the minimum standards for these criteria. (1 paragraph)
- C. Should your institution receive Unite funding, what is your plan for tracking/following up with students once they have completed your Unite program? (1 paragraph)
- D. Using the chart that follows, indicate the estimated enrollment, by criteria, for your program. (More than one category may apply for student enrollment estimates.)

CRITERIA	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
Attend a rural, urban, or frontier/tribal school	
Low-income (FARMS)	
Females in certain STEM fields (e.g. physical science, computer science, mathematics or engineering)	
Identify as racial/ethnic minority in STEM (i.e., Alaska Native, Native American, Black or African)	
Students with English as a second language (ELL)	
First generation college student (1stGEN)	
Students with disabilities (ADA)	
Student is dependent of a military service member	

Indicate TOTAL estimated enrollment:

5. Academic Setting

Guidelines/Requirements:

The host institution will provide a four-to-six-week summer STEM enrichment/ academic program that is integrated into an existing summer STEM program. The primary focus will be to provide rigorous academic coursework and hands-on activities that spark and sustain student interest in STEM and that will help prepare and encourage students to pursue college-level studies and, eventually, STEM careers. The program should be designed around active learning pedagogies. In addition, the site should develop a centralized and required component of the program that includes activities that are specifically designed to introduce participants to the relevant AEOP pathways. Classes should be taught by qualified high-school teachers or college instructors with experience and expertise in teaching high school students.



Mentors/assistants should serve in roles that support STEM instruction, related activities, and efforts to inform students of the AEOP pathway of opportunities.

A. Describe how you will provide an academic setting appropriate for targeted students in the summer of 2024 and 2025. Correlate your program to the academic skills needed for student success in a college-level STEM/Engineering program. (1-3 paragraphs)

Include:

- The specific goals of your program
- The program curriculum, including sample activities, schedules, etc.
- The plan for meeting the objectives/goals of your program

B. Provide a list of 2024 adult program team members, including the program administrator; professor(s)/instructor(s); teacher(s); classroom assistant(s); mentor(s), counselors; etc. Include a description of the responsibilities* of these individuals in your program. Also provide a brief (1-2 pages, total) summary of curriculum vitae/resumes/biographies and/or qualifications of the program staff.

Adult responsibilities could include, but are not limited to:

- Providing academic instruction and guidance for hands-on activities
- Providing assistance in academic and hands-on classroom activities
- Presenting or reinforcing information about the pathway of AEOP opportunities available to students
- Assisting in a career event(s) and field trips
- Securing a STEM professional(s) from business/industry of DoD, for a virtual or in-person career presentation.

C. Describe college prep sessions (which may include SAT/ACT test preparation) for students in your program in which they learn about preparing for college-level studies in STEM/Engineering. (1 paragraph)

D. Describe your plan for training the individuals who will work in your Unite program. Training mentors to work with students should include providing strategies that introduce students to the AEOP pathways. (1 paragraph)

E. Describe how your institution will provide a safe and secure learning environment for students. (1 paragraph)

6. Compliance with AEOP/Unite/TSA Requirements

Guidelines/Requirements:

- Sites will assist student participants in required Cvent registration and will ensure Cvent registration for adults in the program.



- Sites will provide evaluation tools (surveys developed by the Education Development Center (EDC) and provided to sites by TSA) to student and adult participants during the program. (Data from these evaluations and/or a summary of findings will be included in annual program and evaluation reports to the Army/AEOP.)
- Sites will participate in evaluation visits by TSA, AEOP, or Battelle representatives during the Unite program timeline and will help coordinate interviews and/or focus groups with Unite students and adult mentors at the site, as needed.
- Sites will educate students and parents/guardians about opportunities for student participation in the AEOP pathway, as well as ARMY/DoD educational and career opportunities. In particular, sites will encourage participation in the AEOP High School Apprenticeship Program and/or the AEOP Junior Science & Humanities Symposium ([JSHS](#)).
- Sites will arrange for career presentations (virtual or in-person) to enhance student awareness about STEM career opportunities, including capacities in which the Army, civil service agencies, business, and industry employ engineers. Career presentations may be supplemented with a visit to a local Army research institute, should there be one nearby, or to civil service/business/industry facilities.

A. Describe your plan for complying with evaluation requirements noted above. (1-3 paragraphs)

B. Describe steps you will take, including anticipated time frames, to inform/educate students and parents/guardians about AEOP/Army-funded programs and opportunities for high school and college students. (1 paragraph)

C. Describe how your institution plans to enhance student awareness of STEM career opportunities, per the information above (Army/DoD STEM professionals, speakers, local representatives from engineering/STEM-oriented industries, and/or civil service professionals). (1 paragraph)

D. AEOP is interested in co-locating Unite sites and High School Apprenticeships. When evaluating Unite proposals, institutions that have applied to host both programs will be reviewed more favorably. For more information on the High School Apprenticeships program and the Apprenticeship RFP, please see the [AEOP website](#) or sign-up [here](#) to receive more information.

If your institution is applying to host both programs, describe how you will provide opportunities for participants in these programs to interact.

7. Budget

Guidelines/Requirements:



- Anticipated **total** AEOP/Unite funding is about \$640,000 for 2024-2025 summer programs. (Point of reference: Program awards for 22 sites in the most recent funding cycle [2022-2023] ranged from \$17,000 to \$35,000, annually.)
- Unite involves two years of funding, as follows: In the first year of the grant cycle, a site will receive the funding amount designated in the grant notification. Pending satisfactory performance in year one, the site should expect to receive the amount of funding requested in year two.
- Unspent funds after year one, with approval, may be rolled over to year two of the cycle. After year two, unspent funds should be returned to TSA.
- Unite funds should be considered an add-on to the funding required to run an institution’s existing summer STEM program. Generally speaking, UNITE funds should be used to support the STEM components of the proposed program.
- Unite funds **may not be used** to fund transportation to and from the summer program, or for housing costs or meals/snacks; these costs should be funded from another source.
- Unite funding **may not be used** to fund administrators or administrative costs not directly tied to Unite or the implementation of the STEM aspects of the program.
- Unite funds **may not be used** to cover any overhead costs; these costs should be funded through the existing summer STEM program.
- Unite funds **may be used** to support the following: STEM instruction; STEM instructional materials/supplies; salaries for program facilitators (classroom assistants, coordinators, counselors, lab leads, etc.) whose work directly connects to STEM activities; and student stipends.
- Unite funds also **may** be used to pay for transportation to a STEM field trip and for a meal/snack while on that trip.

Using the chart that follows as a guide, provide a budget for the 2024-2025 Unite program. Identify and provide allocations for all funding sources, including Unite funds and in-kind donations. Include job titles and salary calculations. Also, provide an estimated “per participant” cost.

Budget Categories	Use of university funding that will help support the Unite program	Use of Unite funds only
Program Director/Instructor(s)/Teacher(s) Provide job titles and include salary calculations for each	\$	\$



Program facilitators (classroom assistants, peer mentors, coordinators, counselors, etc.) Provide job titles and salary information for each	\$	\$
Instructional materials/supplies Provide a breakdown of what will be purchased	\$	\$
Transportation/meals for STEM field trips Provide details about the transportation and meals that will be covered; include calculations	\$	\$
Student Stipends \$100 per student, per week; provide calculations	\$	\$
Other Include a breakdown of each expense	\$	\$
TOTAL	\$	\$
Estimated Cost per Unite Student		

8. Submission of Proposals to TSA

1. Proposals, reports, and other documents should be submitted electronically to Mimi Leonard (mleonard@tsaweb.org) with a cc to Rosanne White (rwhite@tsaweb.org) **no later than 5:00 pm, ET, Monday, December 4, 2023.**
2. Please indicate **2024-2025 Unite** in the subject line. You will receive an email from TSA confirming receipt of your proposal within 48 hours of the submission. If you do not receive this confirmation, please contact Mimi Leonard by email or phone (303-880-7990).
3. Sites that submit a 2024-2025 UNITE proposal will receive notice of award – or non-award – on or about January 24, 2024.

9. Required Signatures

By signing below, the undersigned agree to the following statements:

1. We believe that all information contained in this proposal and attendant materials is accurate.
2. We will adhere to specified conditions and requirements, including deadlines for program data and reports.
3. We will ensure student Ideal Logic registration and student completion of AEOP surveys; the same (Ideal Logic registration and completion of adult surveys/assessments) will be expected of adults involved in Unite.



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4. We will participate in evaluation visits by TSA/AEOP/Battelle representatives during our Unite program timeline.

 5. If selected as a 2024-2025 Unite site, our institution will supply documentation to the Unite Program Administrator that names TSA as an additional insured for the Unite program on the host institution's insurance policy, **OR** a signed certificate of liability insurance from the institution that guarantees coverage for all Unite participants for the duration of the program at the site.

 6. We fully understand the consequence of failure to comply with all conditions and requirements.

Proposing Institution: _____

Signature	Date	Print name
Proposed Unite Director		

Signature	Date	Print name
Institution supervisor (other than the proposed Unite Director)		