

American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)
CESU Application
2/4/2020

1. Expression of desire to enroll in the CESU as a new partner institution/organization.

The American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) hereby expresses the intention to join the CESU membership as a new partner. AIHEC will work with our member Tribal Colleges and Universities and the CESU membership to further the research, technical assistance, and educational goals of Federal land management, environmental and research agencies.

2. Confirmation that the institution/organization has read the CESU agreement and agrees to support the CESU mission and goals and fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a nonfederal partner, as described in the CESU agreement.

AIHEC has read the CESU agreement and agrees to support the CESU mission and goals and fulfill the roles and responsibilities of a nonfederal partner, as described in the CESU agreement.

3. Description of the institution/organization, its mission, and the primary focus of collaborative activities to be supported through the CESU in the context of the CESU mission.

AIHEC supports the Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in carrying out their important work through a wide range of technical assistance services, including the dissemination of important and timely information, on which these institutions and their students rely. The technical assistance that AIHEC focuses on are areas consistent with the priorities of the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). Specifically, AIHEC works to ensure that TCU campuses provide safe, secure, and healthy learning environments. AIHEC works with TCUs, federal agencies, and private sector partners to ensure access to an educational environment that promotes academic excellence at all stages of the education continuum and encourages students to complete degree programs to American Indians and Alaska Natives. AIHEC activities include professional development workshops involving TCU teams and communities of practice and improvement, strategic planning meetings, dissemination of best practice models, mentoring, and other information sharing strategies. AIHEC partners with TCUs to develop new and innovative ways to be accountable to Native communities, students, and funders and deliver the message that postsecondary education is important and accessible. These efforts are achieved in large part through funding authorized under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-471), commonly referred to as the Tribal College Act and administered by the Bureau of Indian Education.

AIHEC comprises 37 TCUs operating more than 75 sites in 16 states. Thirty-five of our institutions are accredited and regular (voting) members of the AIHEC Board of Directors while the other two are non-voting members of AIHEC seeking accreditation candidacy. Located in some of the most impoverished regions of the country – in fact, 32 TCUs are located in counties

with a household income below the US median – TCUs are planting resilient seeds of hope; sustaining Native languages; and helping to strengthen tribal economies and governments. TCUs, through AIHEC, share the same vision: *Sovereign Nations through Excellence in TRIBAL higher education*. In short, TCUs are Nation Builders through opportunity – opportunity for a healthier life, a more stable and prosperous community, a revitalized language and culture, an engaged citizenry, and a safer and more secure environment.

Tribal Colleges are currently producing an American Indian workforce that includes Head Start teachers, elementary and secondary school teachers, agriculture and land management specialists, engineers, computer programmers, and nurses. For example, Oglala Lakota College and Salish Kootenai College graduate more American Indian nurses than any other institutions of higher education, and one college -- Salish Kootenai College -- trains more than half of all the Special Education teachers at Montana K-12 schools that serve high Native student populations. Thirteen TCUs offer baccalaureate degrees in education, environmental science, computer science, and more; five offer master's degrees; most offer certificates, and all offer associate degrees in high-demand fields. AIHEC institutions provide culturally-based curricula, extended student and family support systems, community education and outreach services, strong K-12 partnerships, including educational enrichment for AI/AN children and youth, and economic development strategies that help our tribes address the socioeconomic challenges they face.

4. Description or list of the primary programs, departments, or other institutional divisions of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will likely be engaged in CESU activities. Include website addresses for further information, as appropriate.

The following are four strong examples of TCU programs likely to be engaged in CESU activities. As indicated under Question 5, there is extensive expertise in a broad range of environmental, natural resource and technical areas of relevance to the CESU membership.

United Tribes Technical College: NSF-funded sustainability of tribal agriculture resources and land management.

https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1022592

Aaniiih Nakoda College: NSF-funded Nic'-Mni (Water) Center to conduct and integrate findings from four related water research studies.

https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1839859

Sitting Bull College: NASA-funded Facility for Innovative Atmospheric Research and Education (FIARE) envisioned as a ground-based atmospheric composition monitoring station.

<https://sittingbull.edu/fiare/>

Diné College: Dine Environmental Institute conducts environmental studies through field and laboratory research and analysis.

https://www.dinecollege.edu/about_dc/nsf-tcup/

Northwest Indian College: The Salish Seas Research Center is a collaborative project focused on community-driven issues related to environmental impacts on the Salish Sea.

<https://nativenewsonline.net/education/northwest-indian-college-awarded-3-5m-grant-from-the-national-science-foundation/>

5. *A list of and brief description of the staff or faculty with expertise in disciplines and subject areas of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies (do not submit CVs).*

AIHEC Expert Faculty at the Tribal Colleges and Universities

Natural Resources and Environment: Soil Experts
Crebs, Douglas, Stone Child College
Falcon-Chandler, Carole Aaniiih Nakoda College
Guinn, Mandy, United Tribes Technical College
Hafer, James, Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Halvorson, Gary, Sitting Bull College
Henry, Leslie Rae, Oglala Lakota College
Mongoh, Mafany Ndiva, SIting Bull College
Schaedla, William, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
Sells, Angeline B., Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
Woodard, Janyce, Little Priest Tribal College
Ziegenmeyer, Heidi, Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Natural Resources and Environment: Water
Berthelote, Antony, Salish Kootenai College
Crebs, Douglas, Stone Child College
Dupuis, Virgil, Salish Kootenai College
Falcon-Chandler, Carole, Aaniiih Nakoda College
Halvorson, Gary, Sitting Bull College
Hamley, Mark R., Turtle Mountain Community College
Kowalczak, Courtney, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
Montes-Helu, Mario, Tohono O’odham Community College
Ziegenmeyer, Heidi, Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Plants and Their Systems
Antonio, Thomas M., California Tribal College
Blue, Stacie, Turtle Mountain Community College
Crebs, Douglas, Stone Child College
Daye, Germaine, Navajo Technical University
Dupuis, Virgil, Salish Kootenai College
Falcon-Chandler, Carole, Aaniiih Nakoda College
Hafer, James, Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Halvorson, Gary, Sitting Bull College
Kenning, Robert, Salish Kootenai College
Martyn, Al, Little Priest Tribal College
Robinson, Donald K., Navajo Technical University
Sangrey-Billy, Cory, Stone Child College
Sells, Angeline B., Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
Woodard, Janyce, Little Priest Tribal College
Natural Resources and Environment: General
Crebs, Douglas, Stone Child College
Dupuis, Virgil, Salish Kootenai College
Falcon-Chandler, Carole, Aaniiih Nakoda College

Hafer, James, Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Halvorson, Gary, Sitting Bull College
Hamley, Mark R., Turtle Mountain Community College
Henry, Leslie Rae, Oglala Lakota College
Kenning, Robert, Salish Kootenai College
Kinsey, Dan, Aaniiih Nakoda College
Kowalczak, Courtney, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
Lichtenberg, Janene, Salish Kootenai College
Litson, Benita, Dine College
Martyn, Al, Little Priest Tribal College
Mongoh, Mafany Ndiva, Sitting Bull College
Montes-Helu, Mario, Tohono O'odham Community College
Nipp, Kelly, Leech Lake Tribal College
Sangrey-Billy, Cory, Stone Child College
Natural Resources and Environment: Forest and Range
Blue, Stacie, Turtle Mountain Community College
Dupuis, Virgil, Salish Kootenai College
Henry, Leslie Rae, Oglala Lakota College
Kenning, Robert, Salish Kootenai College
Lichtenberg, Janene, Salish Kootenai College
Litson, Benita, Dine College
Mongoh, Mafany Ndiva, Sitting Bull College
Sangrey-Billy, Cory, Stone Child College
Schaedla, William, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute
Woodard, Janyce, Little Priest Tribal College
Natural Resources and Environment: Air
Mongoh, Mafany Ndiva, Sitting Bull College
Native or Medicinal Plants
Anderson, Kimberly, Leech Lake Tribal College
Antonio, Thomas M., California Tribal College
Bellanger, Tammy, White Earth Tribal and Community College
Crebs, Douglas, Stone Child College
Dupuis, Virgil, Salish Kootenai College
Falcon-Chandler, Carole, Aaniiih Nakoda College
Hallum, James, Nebraska Indian Community College
Hamley, Mark R., Turtle Mountain Community College
Henry, Leslie Rae, Oglala Lakota College
Kenning, Robert, Salish Kootenai College
Kowalczak, Courtney, Fond du lac Tribal and Community College
Lichtenberg, Janene, Salish Kootenai College
Martyn, Al, Little Priest Tribal College
Robinson, Donald K., Navajo Technical University
Sangrey-Billy, Cory, Stone Child College
Woodard, Janyce, Little Priest Tribal College
Ziegenmeyer, Heidi, Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Geospatial Technology
Berthelote, Antony, Salish Kootenai College
Crebs, Douglas, Stone Child College
Hamley, Mark R., Turtle Mountain Community College
Kenning, Robert, Salish Kootenai College
Marlow, Amber, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College
Mongoh, Mafany Ndiva, Sitting Bull College
Sangrey-Billy, Cory, Stone Child College

6. For academic institutions, include a description of student demographics and the institution’s status as a minority-serving institution (e.g., as defined by the U.S. Department of Education).

Description of student demographics for Tribal Colleges and Universities in total:

Fall 2019 enrollment – 15,114 students

Enrollment by Ethnicity and Status %

Full time Non-Native: 6%

Part-time Non-Native: 7%

Enrollment by Gender:

Male: 36%

Female: 64%

All AIHEC Member Institutions are Tribal College or Universities (TCUs), a category of minority-serving institution defined by the Department of Education.

7. Description or list of facilities, equipment, centers, or institutes that would provide support to the research, technical assistance, or educational activities of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.

In the table below is a list of Tribal Colleges and Universities that would provide support to the research, technical assistance, or educational activities of relevance to Federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.

Institution	Specific Major	Credential
Aaniiih Nakoda College	Environmental Science	AS
Blackfeet Community College	Environmental Studies	AS
Diné College	Environmental Science	AS
Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College	Environmental Science	AS
Fort Peck Community College	Environmental Science	AS
Haskell Indian Nations University	Environmental Science	BS
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College	Environmental Science	AS
Little Priest Tribal College	Environmental Science	Certificate
	Indigenous Science-Environmental	AA
Navajo Technical University	Environmental Science/Natural Resources	AAS
	Environmental Science/Natural Resources	BS

	Environmental Science/Natural Resources	Certificate
Northwest Indian College	Native Environmental Science	BS
Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College	Environmental Science	AS
	Environmental Science	BS
Sinte Gleska University	Environmental Science	BS
	Environmental Science & Conservation	AAS
Sisseton Wahpeton College	Tribal Lands Manage. & Environmental Science	BS
	Sustainable Environmental Studies	AS
Sitting Bull College	Environmental Science	AS
	Environmental Science	BS
	Environmental Science	MS
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute	Natural Resources Environmental Science	AAS
Tohono O'odham Community College	Environmental	AA
United Tribes Technical College	Environmental Studies in Indigenous Borderlands	AAS
	Environmental Science and Research	AS
	Environmental Science and Research	BS
White Earth Tribal and Community College	Environmental Science - Emphasis	AA

8. *Description or list of past research, technical assistance, and educational services supported through federal financial assistance awards that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.*

AIHEC Climate Change Initiatives: Native Climate Resilience Network

The Native Climate Resilience Network (NCRN), established in part with support from the Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Resilience Program, focuses on the implementation of community-based participatory research processes for engaging tribal communities in community adaptation to climate change related challenges. Working within the resource landscape of existing institutions and organizations (i.e. TCUs, tribal governments) the project empowers tribal communities to acquire the knowledge and implement tools necessary to identify climate change threats and develop response strategies. This focus involves integration of traditional knowledge systems and western science, with the expectation that mutually reinforcing connections will inform both paradigms and encourage broader community participation. The project also focuses on garnering the expertise of national climate research and response/mitigation resources to support local and community research and response efforts, as they are needed.

NCRN represents an effort to institute a citizen science framework within the institutional and organizational environments of American Indian and Alaska Native communities served by

TCUs to engage community members in the effort to anticipate and respond adaptively to emerging threats from climate change. The project is intended to facilitate sustained interaction among tribal communities facing similar issues, as well as the larger scientific community.

AIHEC Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) EcoAmbassadors

The Tribal ecoAmbassador Program was established to support research in partnership with Tribal Colleges and Universities. TCU faculty were recruited to serve as project ecoAmbassadors, leading project staff and students in the use of funding and technical support from the EPA to address environmental issues that are tribal government and community priorities. Throughout the period of the project, AIHEC staff worked directly with the TCUs to promote and disseminate information about the program, respond to inquiries, provide project support, and highlight the significant progress each of the Tribal ecoAmbassador projects made in tribal environmental research.

AIHEC Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmer and Ranchers Program

This project was established to deliver outreach and support services to Native farmers and ranchers through undergraduate Tribal College and University (TCU) student fellows enrolled in agribusiness, business, and agriculture-related science programs. The project activities addressed all five of the 2501 program's priority areas: assist socially disadvantaged or veteran farmers and ranchers (SDVFR) in owning and operating successful farms and ranches; improve participation among SDVFRs in USDA programs; build relationships between current and prospective SDVFR and USDA's local, state, regional, and national offices; introduce agriculture-related information to SDVFRs through innovative training and technical assistance techniques; and introduce agricultural education targeting SDVFRs, including but not limited to StrikeForce and Promise Zone areas.

AIHEC USDA Tribal Agribusiness Curricula Development Project

AIHEC, with support from and in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) implemented the Tribal Agribusiness Curricula Development Project from December, 2017, through April, 2019. This first-of-its kind collaboration between USDA and AIHEC was designed to increase the number of TCU students interested in and prepared to secure agribusiness and financial management careers in the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the agriculture industry. The project involved working in partnership with three TCUs, the USDA, and field experts to collaboratively develop curriculum materials, courses, and eventually, certification and degree programs to be available for adoption by all 1994 Land-grant institutions as well as other colleges and universities.

- 9. Description or list of current formal agreements and informal relationships with federal agencies that are of relevance to federal land management, environmental, and research agencies that will be engaged in CESU activities.*

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

AIHEC has an executed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the USDA for the period 2017-2022. This MOA affirms the partnership between AIHEC and USDA to:

- a. Assist in fulfilling the mandate of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (7 U.S.C. 301), which requires USDA to establish programs ensuring that tribally controlled colleges and universities and American Indian/Alaska Native communities participate equitably in USDA employment, programs, and activities;
- b. Assist in fulfilling the mandate of Executive Order 13592, Improving American Indian and Alaska Native Educational Opportunities and Strengthening Tribal Colleges and Universities;
- c. Promote increased cooperation among USDA, TCUs, and American Indian/Alaska Native communities in all areas of mutual interest that advance the objectives of 7 U.S.C 301 and E.O. 13592.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

As mentioned above, AIHEC supports the TCUs in carrying out their important work through a wide range of technical assistance services. AIHEC has been funded since 1998 by the BIA within the provisions of the Tribally Controlled Colleges Act of 1978 to provide these services, recognizing that AIHEC is an organization that is well-positioned and capable of furthering the missions and goals of the nation's tribal colleges and universities.

10. Confirmation of the institution's/organization's willingness to accept a limited overhead rate of 17.5% and cost items to which the rate is applicable for activities conducted through the CESU, including research, technical assistance, and educational services (this overhead rate applies to the entire institution/organization for CESU activities).

AIHEC confirms the willingness to accept a limited overhead rate of 17.5% and cost items to which the rate is applicable for activities conducted through the CESU. Currently, AIHEC's federally negotiated indirect rate is 12.2%.

11. Designation of a technical representative (with full contact information – name, title, full address, phone, fax, email) to serve on the CESU steering committee, participate in CESU annual/semi-annual partner meetings, and facilitate internal and external communication, promotion, and response to CESU correspondence and administrative actions (e.g., announcements, new member applications, processing agreements/amendments, five-year reviews).

Research/technical:
Dr. John Phillips
AIHEC Land Grant Programs Director
121 Oronoco Street, Alexandria VA, 22314
703-838-0400
jphillips@aihec.org

Administrative:
Al Kuslikis
Senior Associate for Strategic Initiatives
121 Oronoco Street, Alexandria VA, 22314
703-838-0400 x121
akuslikis@aihec.org

12. Agreement to relay agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs and associated funding opportunities to other institutional/organizational members (e.g., faculty, students).

AIHEC agrees to relay agency-specific research, technical assistance, and educational needs and associated funding opportunities to other institutional/organizational members.

13. Signature (or endorsement) from an appropriate official, with authority to commit institutional resources in a binding multi-year federal cooperative and joint venture agreement (e.g., president, executive director, chief financial officer, vice president for research, director of sponsored programs).

Attached

14. Letter(s) of support from one or more CESU federal agency partners sponsoring the new partner's application.

Attached

Carrie L. Billy
President & CEO

MEMBERSHIP:**ALASKA**

Iñisaġvik College

ARIZONA

Diné College
Tohono O'odham Community College

KANSAS

Haskell Indian Nations University

MICHIGAN

Bay Mills Community College
Keweenaw Bay Ojibwa Community College
Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College

MINNESOTA

Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College
Leech Lake Tribal College
Red Lake Nation College
White Earth Tribal and Community College

MONTANA

Aaniih Nakoda College
Blackfeet Community College
Chief Dull Knife College
Little Big Horn College
Fort Peck Community College
Salish Kootenai College
Stone Child College

NEBRASKA

Little Priest Tribal College
Nebraska Indian Community College

NEW MEXICO

Institute of American Indian Arts
Navajo Technical College
Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute

NORTH DAKOTA

Cankdeska Cikana Community College
Nueña Hidatsa Sahnish College
Sitting Bull College
Turtle Mountain Community College
United Tribes Technical College

OKLAHOMA

College of the Muscogee Nation

SOUTH DAKOTA

Oglala Lakota College
Sinte Gleska University
Sisseton Wahpeton College

WASHINGTON

Northwest Indian College

WISCONSIN

College of Menominee Nation
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College

WYOMING

Wind River Tribal College

Dan Filer
Research Coordinator
Chesapeake Watershed CESU
301 Braddock Rd.
Frostburg, MD 21532

February 4, 2020

Dear Dr. Filer,

On behalf of the nation's 37 American Indian Tribal Colleges and Universities, which collectively are the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), I am submitting herewith AIHEC's application for membership in the Chesapeake Watershed Ecosystem Studies Unit. With research and education programs in environmental science, natural resource management and geospatial information systems, many of our colleges are well-positioned to participate in a wide range of ecosystem management research, technical assistance and education projects involving CESU partners.

Our colleges recognize the importance of incorporating traditional ecological knowledge in natural resource and ecosystem management decision-making. I believe that this perspective that TCUs would bring to the CESU partnership can broaden and strengthen our collective capacity to identify and address current and emerging ecosystem management challenges, particularly those associated with climate change.

We at AIHEC look forward to the opportunity to explore and facilitate collaborations between our colleges and the CESU membership and, more broadly, to participate in a community of practice in ecosystem stewardship that the CESU program represents.

Sincerely,



Carrie Billy
President and CEO



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Washington, DC 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Dr. Tom Fish
National Coordinator, Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Coordinator
U.S. Dept. of Interior, National Park Service
1849 C St NW, Rm #2649
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Dr. Fish

The Bureau of Indian Affairs Tribal Resilience Program (BIA TRP) is pleased to provide information regarding the outstanding past performance of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) as they prepare their application for partnership in the Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Network. AIHEC has partnered with BIA TRP on several occasions to support tribal climate resilience work. Notably, AIHEC hired the Southwest (SW) Tribal Resilience Liaison that works with the DOI Climate Adaptation Science Center (CASC), hosted at the University of Arizona. The Liaison has performed substantial work as an employee of AIHEC to further engage SW tribes and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the DOI CASC partnership, to bring the technical support of the CASC to meet the climate needs of the tribes. AIHEC is well-positioned as a tribal organization to support the future technical capacity-building of tribes across the country due to its unique mission to support the TCU system and the tribal students within the TCUs. The program that Mr. Al Kuslikis operates consistently seeks out opportunities to leverage federal and non-federal grants to support the TCU STEM faculty across the country with new partnerships with federal agencies and major academic institutions.

In addition to their programmatic support to further STEM opportunities, AIHEC is well-staffed with communicative administrative support and has produced on-time and responsive reporting to BIA TRP.

Based on this successful past experience, BIA TRP believes that AIHEC would be a much-needed addition to the CESU network that could increase federal partnerships that support the STEM education of tribal students, and thus the capacity-building of American Indian tribes across the country. Given the federal trust responsibility and the current lack of partners in the CESU Network that focus exclusively on Indian Country and Alaska Native Villages, it is BIA TRP's belief that AIHEC, a national organization, would provide an invaluable partnership to the Network.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding AIHEC's past performance and BIA TRP's experience working with the organization.

Sincerely,

Rachael Novak

Acting Program Coordinator, BIA Tribal Resilience