HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ("RFI")

HECC # 25-113A
OregonBuys # S-52500-00015118

Date of Issue: October 24, 2025

Closing (Responses Due): **November 23, 2025 at 3:00 PM (Pacific Time)**

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Contact the Contract Administrator at the contact information found below. We accept all relay calls.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1. INTRODUCTION

The State of Oregon, acting by and through Higher Education Coordinating Commission ("HECC" or "Agency"), is seeking information from entities about available solutions and best practices for modernizing its Financial Aid Management Information System ("FAMIS"). For more information about the existing FAMIS system, please see Section 2.3 below.

The purpose of this RFI is to gather information needed to drive the development of a future procurement and contracting process. HECC intends to release a Request for Proposals ("RFP") at a later date.

This RFI will not result in any kind of contract or agreement, nor will it obligate HECC to procure goods or services of any kind. The information gained in this RFI may be used by HECC to gain an understanding from current industry experts in order to help it develop a future solicitation and selection process that could result in a contract(s). HECC is not responsible for any expenses or costs incurred by any Respondent (a "Respondent" is defined as a person or entity that submits answers to the questions in the RFI) in submitting a Response (a "Response" is defined as answers submitted to the RFI) to this RFI. Each Respondent does so solely at the Respondent's own expense.

1.2. COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY

Individuals within a community, and communities within a larger society, need the ability to shape their own present and future, and HECC believes that workforce development and education are fundamental aspects of Oregon's ability to thrive. Equity is both the means to success and an end that benefits us all. Equity requires an intentional examination of systemic policies and practices that, even if they have the appearance of fairness, may in effect serve to marginalize some and perpetuate disparities. The data is clear that Oregon demographics have been changing to provide rich diversity in race, ethnicity, and language. Working toward equity requires an understanding of historical contexts and active investment in changing social structures and practice over time to ensure that individuals from all communities have the opportunities and support to realize their full potential. Creating a culture of equity requires monitoring, encouragement, resources, data, and opportunity.

HECC applies its Equity Lens (Higher Education Coordinating Commission : Equity Lens : Strategy, Research & Data : State of Oregon & **Equity-Lens.pdf**) to all aspects of its work**.**

1.3. PURPOSE

HECC has initiated this RFI to gather information from the vendor community that may influence the decision on how to approach development, deployment, and support of a single or multiple on premise and/or cloud-based product(s)/solution(s) that can manage the various Grants, Scholarships, and other programs HECC's Office of Student Access and Completion ("OSAC") administers to support Oregon students' educational and career goals.

Specifically, this RFI seeks the following information:

a. Innovative products and solutions that satisfy some or all of the desired objectives and features described in this RFI including:

- Commercial Off the Shelf ("COTS") software: Existing software products that can be configured or customized to meet some or all of HECC/OSAC's

requirements

- Custom Solution: Development of a custom software solution from the ground up
- Hybrid Solution: Combination of COTS software products and/or custom solutions to meet OSAC's business requirements

b. Development and implementation approaches

c. Operational and support model

d. High-level schedule

e. Pricing model and structure

f. Solution features and benefits

g. Optional solution information on features, functionality, or best practices that may be of value to HECC

1.4. RESPONDENTS

HECC is seeking information from those who have experience in implementing modern technology solutions for financial aid management for State government led financial aid agencies. To assess current solutions on the market, through this RFI, HECC is seeking responses from any and all respondents who offer an end-to-end solution in which one or more commercial off-the-shelf or custom solutions are integrated in a manner that acts as a single solution accomplishing all the desired objectives. Responses to this RFI will assist HECC in identifying all available solutions and system features and components that HECC may want to include in future solicitations.

Respondents to this RFI may be invited to meet with HECC to provide further information. This meeting would be intended to allow the free flow of information and offer an opportunity for respondents to demonstrate their solution. Respondents are encouraged to invite any potential subcontractors who may be expected to partner in response to a formal solicitation process.

Vendors who provide any of the capabilities but not all, are encouraged to respond to this RFI. Please describe any limitations of the proposed solution in your response to this RFI.

1.5. PROJECT OVERVIEW

This RFI is a key step in ensuring a transparent and inclusive procurement process that helps HECC identify industry best practices, available solutions, and innovative approaches to meet its modernization goals. The outcome sought through the implementation of the next HECC Modernization contract is a flexible, secure, and sustainable system that:

- Improves efficiency and reduces manual processes.
- Enhances the user experience for students, partners, and Agency staff.
- Strengthens data quality, security, reporting, and analysis capabilities.
- Provides extensibility to adapt to future program and legislative changes, as well as new programs that need to be implemented quickly.
- Supports HECC's mission of expanding access, equity, and success in higher education.

1.6. DUE DATE/SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT (SPC)

Responses to this RFI will be received until the Closing Date and Time as referenced on the cover page of this RFI.

The SPC for this RFI is identified on the Cover Page, along with the SPC's contact information. Respondents shall direct all communications related to any provision of this RFI only to the SPC, whether about the technical requirements of the RFI, the RFI process, or any other provision.

SECTION 2: SCOPE

2.1 BACKGROUND

The current FAMIS system manages the agency scholarship and grant applications, disbursements, reporting, and reconciliation. The Agency seeks a flexible, scalable, and user-friendly system that supports integrated workflows, improves student outcomes, and meets fiscal, regulatory, and accessibility requirements.

HECC's Office of Student Access and Completion ("OSAC") is the state of Oregon's student financial aid coordinating office, recipient of federal financial aid application records ("FAFSA"), and also collects non-federal student financial aid application records (Oregon Student Aid Application "ORSAA"). FAFSA/ORSAA applicant data includes both financial and personal demographic data for over 200,000 applicants per year. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") requires HECC to maintain the confidentiality of this data and to prevent inadvertent disclosure.

OSAC also administers privately-funded scholarships and grant programs, each with their own specific eligibility criteria. In addition, OSAC programs include the ASPIRE mentoring program (see below description), the FAFSA Plus+ program (see below description), and provides outreach services to Oregon students and parents, schools, and other organizations (see description below).

Each year, OSAC awards nearly $200 million in grants and scholarships to tens of thousands of Oregon students who are striving to achieve their education and career goals. See Section 2.8 for Grants and Scholarships Program details.

The ORSAA is an alternative to the FAFSA for Oregon students who have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status, Temporary Protected Status, or are undocumented. The ORSAA is used to determine eligibility for Oregon financial aid programs for these students.

The ASPIRE program helps educate Oregon students to become career and college ready. ASPIRE offers education, resources, and mentoring opportunities for all students, partnering with middle schools, high schools, and community-based organizations. Student support includes one-on-one and group mentoring, activities or events that focus on career exploration, career and college research, admissions applications, scholarships, and financial aid. More than 200 schools/organizations in Oregon participate in the ASPIRE program serving 25,000+ students.

The Outreach program is where OSAC staff provide support to students, families, and educators statewide with tailored presentations and workshops on career and college readiness at 800+ events annually.

FAFSA Plus+ provides student-level data on FAFSA completion to participating high schools, community-based organizations, and other college support programs to increase FAFSA completion rates.

OSAC works with the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) to administer two programs for foster youth and other specific student populations – the Chafee Education and Training Voucher Grant and the Tuition and Fee Waiver. Data is shared among DHS, OSAC, and institutions to determine eligibility, award and/or waiver amounts.

The Oregon Financial Aid Exchange is a secure data exchange that allows institutions to share amongst each other their student enrollment information for dual-enrolled students, ensuring accurate and appropriate awarding of financial aid.

2.2 IMPACTED PARTIES

OSAC has several key groups that have an interest in the operation and success of FAMIS. OSACs grants, scholarships, and mentoring and outreach programs directly impact partners.

- **Students** access financial aid information and resources and apply for grants and scholarships
- **Parents** of students use the ORSAA application to provide personal and financial details for state aid eligibility consideration
- **High School and Community-Based Organization Staff** participate in ASPIRE and FAFSA Plus+ programs
- **Higher Education Institution Staff** utilize FAMIS to collaborate and deliver financial aid support and resources
- **Donors and Selection Committees** contribute private funds to scholarship programs and assist in determining awardees
- **Other Agencies and Systems** including Oregon Department of Human Services, Oregon Military Department, Oregon Department of Education, Educator Advancement Council, State of Oregon Enterprise Information Services, Oregon Department of Administrative Services, Oregon Youth Authority, Oregon Department of Corrections, Oregon Statewide Financial Management System using the Statewide Financial Management Application("SFMA") and Relational Statewide Accounting and Reporting System
- **Oregon Tribes** serving enrolled members in the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon
- **HECC Staff** including OSAC, Research & Data Office, Information Technology, and Fiscal Office.
- **Governor's Office** whose education strategy calls for making investments in career and technical education as well as post-secondary pathways
- **US Department of Education** funds postsecondary education through grants and loans and provides FAFSA information to OSAC

2.3 CURRENT STATE/FUTURE STATE

The current FAMIS system has become increasingly difficult to maintain, enhance, and extend. Its inflexibility limits the ability to adapt to frequent legislative, programmatic, and partner-driven changes. Oregon is unique among states in both the number and complexity of its financial aid programs, as well as the diversity of populations served, and partner organizations engaged. HECC manages hundreds of strategic partnerships across schools, community-based organizations, agencies, and individuals. To better

serve these impacted parties and ensure continued responsiveness, OSAC plans to replace FAMIS with a modern solution that supports program needs and delivers improved functionality, flexibility, and sustainability.

The FAMIS system is the system of record for OSAC grants, scholarships, college/career access, and outreach programs. The system was built in-house, over four decades, and heavily customized over time to provide the functionality required for business processes.

FAMIS Components/Features – Current vs. Future State

Component	Current State	Future State
Student Portal	• Provides mobile-friendly access for applications and award viewing • Limited self-service features	• Modern, mobile-friendly portal for consistent user experience • Intuitive workflows with real-time status tracking • Expanded support (live chat, knowledge base, support request) • Automated announcements, notifications, and reminders • Automated communication campaign including email and text options • Multilingual and WCAG 2.1 level AA -compliant • Publicly accessible grant and scholarship catalog with rich search and filtering capabilities
Partner Portal	• Access for schools, donors, committees, and agencies • Limited reporting tools • Limited self-service features	• Unified role-based portal for all partners • Holistic view of award lists, awards, and disbursements at the student level across all programs • Consistent means of providing required data to and from OSAC regardless of program • Expanded support (live chat, knowledge base, support request) • Intuitive, streamlined processes
Database & Internal Processing	• Core data management and administration • Maintains individual grant program lifetime eligibility tracking and usage balances • Rigid and hard to enhance • Limited automation and reporting • Weak external integrations	• Flexible, scalable platform • Configurable workflows and advanced reporting • Seamless integrations (e.g., FAFSA, SFMA) • Flexibility to accommodate unique program requirements and quickly add/adjust programs to respond to legislative priorities • Longitudinal views of students across all programs including tracking of lifetime eligibility and usage • Maintenance of accurate fund balances for each program/scholarship fund, with detailed tracking at the student and school level including usage balance, ensuring full reconciliation with transactions recorded

Component	Current State	Future State
	• Lack of case management capabilities	in the financial system of record. • Automated processes to reduce errors and staff workload • Consistent functionality for all programs • Ability to track interactions and manage relationships with both students and partners, including outreach programs

Current State Pain Points

OSAC faces several challenges with the current system. The three key issues outlined below highlight specific pain points and help illustrate the essential capabilities we are seeking in a future solution.

1. **Grant and Scholarship Award Processing**

The Office of Student Access and Completion ("OSAC") administers a wide range of financial aid programs, including multiple state grants and more than 600 scholarship programs. Each program has unique eligibility criteria, preferences, and administrative requirements. OSAC is currently challenged to meet these operational needs, and it requires a system that can support the full lifecycle of award processing with a high degree of flexibility, accuracy, and transparency.

2. **Financial Management in Financial Aid Administration**

Effective financial management is critical to the administration of financial aid. At OSAC, managing the flow of funds—from their source to disbursement—requires a system that can handle the complexity of hundreds of programs and funding sources. There are many to many relationships that must be built into the system. The current challenge lies in ensuring that every dollar is accurately tracked, transactions align with official state financial records (including integration with SFMA), and reporting is both transparent and actionable. Without these capabilities, OSAC risks inefficiencies, compliance issues, and limited visibility into the financial health of its aid programs.

3. **Financial Aid Application and SAI Calculation**

ORSAA requires a financial aid application that mirrors the structure, logic, and data requirements of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid ("FAFSA"), including the ability to calculate a Student Aid Index (SAI) in alignment with federal methodology. Solutions should be able to deliver a FAFSA-aligned application experience while ensuring compliance, data security, and operational efficiency.

OSAC is seeking information on solutions that can meet these requirements while ensuring compliance, operational efficiency, and a positive experience for both staff and applicants.

Specific Requirements Related to Pain Points

1. **Grant and Scholarship Award Processing**
    a. Support flexible program configurations to accommodate varying levels of complexity and scale.

b. Allow OSAC to update eligibility criteria in response to legislative, policy, or donor requested changes.

c. Manage frequent updates to applications and program requirements, with full version control and change tracking.

d. Assign students to specific cohorts for current and future award cycles for specific programs that may differ from other programs the student is eligible for and/or using.

e. Open and close applications by program and defined timeframes that differ across programs.

f. Track each student's lifetime eligibility and usage across all programs, accounting for enrollment status (less than half time, ½ time, ¾ time, full time), institutional term types (semester vs. quarter), and continuous enrollment requirements.

g. Enable staff to review applications and supporting documentation for accuracy and completeness, including bulk or individual cases.

h. Enable scholarship selection committees to see desired applications materials, review materials, and score scholarship applications leading to awarding of scholarships.

i. Provide secure mechanisms for uploading documents, files, and audio files with the ability to share confidential application materials with external partners.

2. Financial Management in Financial Aid Administration

a. Trace the origin and destination of all funds.

b. Ability to forecast awards based on various funding amounts for projections.

c. Reconcile transactions with state financial systems and partners.

d. Make corrections while maintaining a clear audit trail.

e. Generate dashboards and reports that support both detailed analysis and high-level decision-making.

3. Financial Aid Application and SAI Calculation

a. Replicate the FAFSA's data collection structure, including all required fields, conditional logic, and validation rules.

b. Support updates to reflect annual changes in federal aid policy, including modifications to FAFSA questions, formulas, and eligibility criteria.

c. Calculate the SAI based on applicant data, using the most current federal formula.

d. Ability to have more than one aid year open at a time with separate federal formulas.

e. Allow for secure submission and storage of sensitive applicant data, including income, household size, and dependency status.

f. Provide tools for staff to review, verify, and override application data, when necessary, with full audit tracking.

g. Enable integration or data exchange with institutions authorized to receive student aid data.

h. Support multilingual access and accessibility standards to ensure equitable access for all applicants.

2.4 HIGH LEVEL FUNCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS

Component	Expectation
1. Customer-Centric Focus	The Solution shall: a. Offer a unified, user-friendly interface that delivers consistent experience for students, schools, partners, HECC staff, and program participants. b. Employ customer-centric and responsive web design principles for the front end. c. Include a secure portal for submission and processing of new and renewal applications and materials, supporting staff and/or partner evaluation against program guidelines. d. Provide role-based user accounts, multifactor authentication, and access through multiple channels (web and mobile). e. Support rapid configuration of processes, data elements, and security roles with minimal custom development. f. Communicate eligibility/denial status to students, schools, and partners, and include account administration, application management, data management, communications, and document management.
2. Contact Management	a. Provide comprehensive contact management capabilities with both user self-service and staff-managed updates, documenting and tracking all communications with students and partners, including phone calls and staff notes. b. Include automated notifications and reminders to improve communication. c. Offer multiple views of contact details (profiles, history, and related entities). d. Maintain relational data structures for complex associations between contacts, students, programs, and institutions. e. Support frequent updates with version control and audit trails. f. Provide visibility into how individual interactions relate to multiple programs, partners, and external impacted parties.
3. Workflow Processes	a. Ability to automate routine tasks to free staff for higher-value decision-making. b. Automatically initiate tasks and workflows related to the activities of internal and external users. c. Provide configurable workflows useable across multiple OSAC workstreams to standardize processes and data collection. d. Support notifications, communications, evaluations, data validations, work assignments, and auditing. e. Include templates, email, and text notifications triggered by configurable conditions

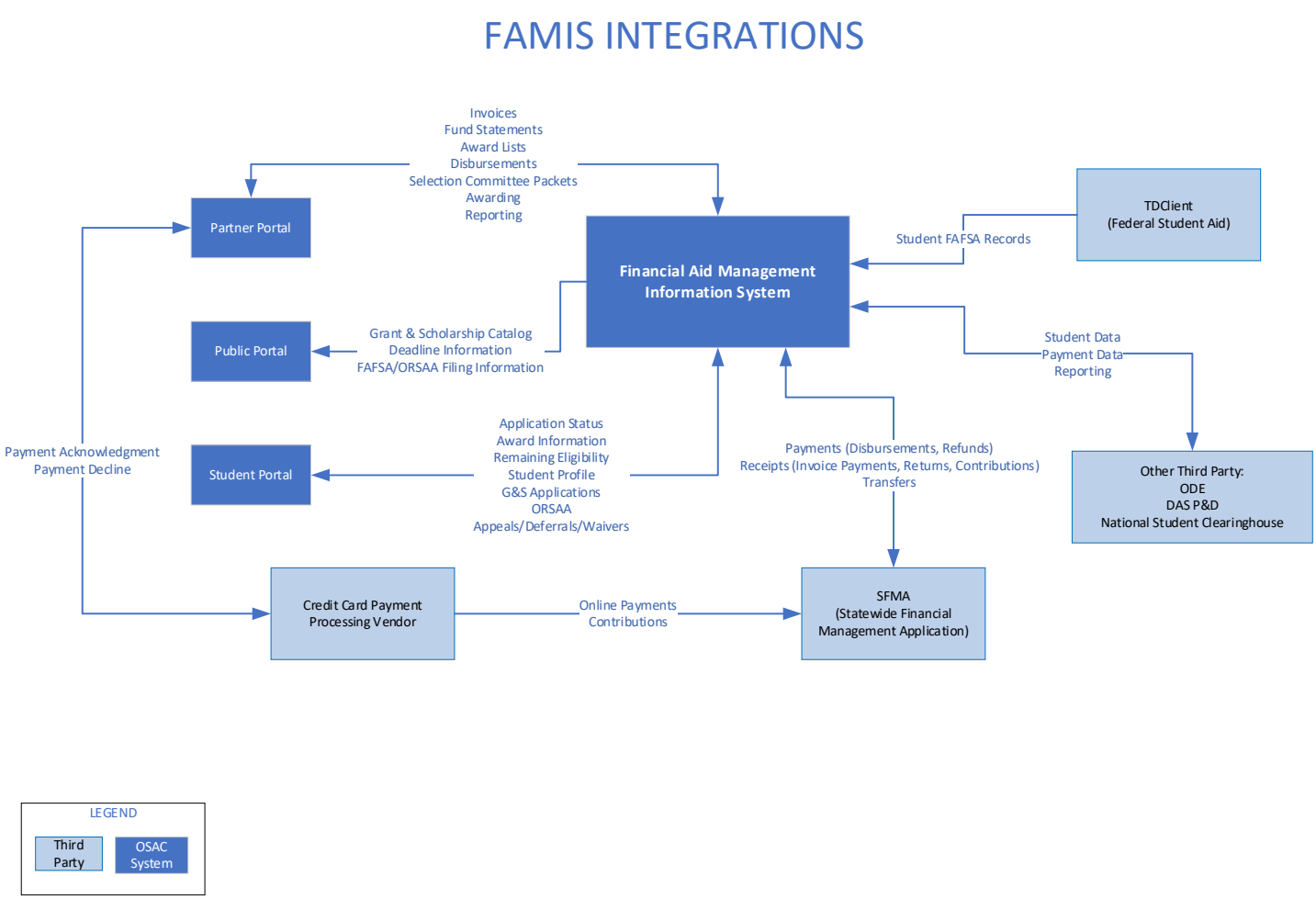
Component	Expectation
	and schedules. f. Provide activity tracking/logging of all changes and activities for both internal and external users including username, date, and time.
4. Data Management	a. Support submission, categorization, and access to documents through the system interface. b. Automatically apply metadata (provider, document type, date, status, etc.) to facilitate classification, analytics, search, and storage. c. Program eligibility tracking and utilization by program, per applicant, in accordance with maximum lifetime eligibility limit.
5. Data Integration	a. Integrate financial tools and data into OSAC's processing and reporting workflows. b. Track program expenditures and student awards, in sync with the Statewide Financial Management Application, and support reconciliation. c. Leverage data from other HECC offices and external partners through integration services and methods.
6. Reporting Tools	a. Provide dashboards and reporting tools to support large-scale data analysis, trend monitoring, projections, workload planning, and performance tracking. b. Include robust, flexible reporting capabilities for legislative reporting, ad-hoc analysis, and operational needs, supporting both user-built and system-built reports including visualization tools.
7. Additional Functions*	a. Payment processing: Accept online payments. b. Chatbot/online chat: Communicate with students and partners to answer questions or provide relevant information. c. Electronic signature: Allow students and partners to accept and sign documents online. d. Redaction tools: Ability to redact personal identifying information and other confidential information. e. Encryption: Ensure all personal identifying information is encrypted during data in motion, in use, or at rest. * List any third-party tools requiring separate licensing, subscriptions, or fees outside the core solution
8. Best Practices and Security Standards	a. Align with HECC IT Strategic Plan, and State of Oregon and Federal security standards to reduce risk. b. Follow industry best practices for architecture, coding, and security.

Component	Expectation
	c. Compliant with Federal and State standards and/or best practices regarding data integrity, confidentiality, and privacy.
9. Accessibility and Translation	a. Comply with WCAG 2.2 Level AA accessibility standards. b. Provide translation capabilities within the external portal.
10. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)	a. Increase accessibility of the website and application process for all Oregonians, with a focus on historically underserved populations, including those with limited broadband access.

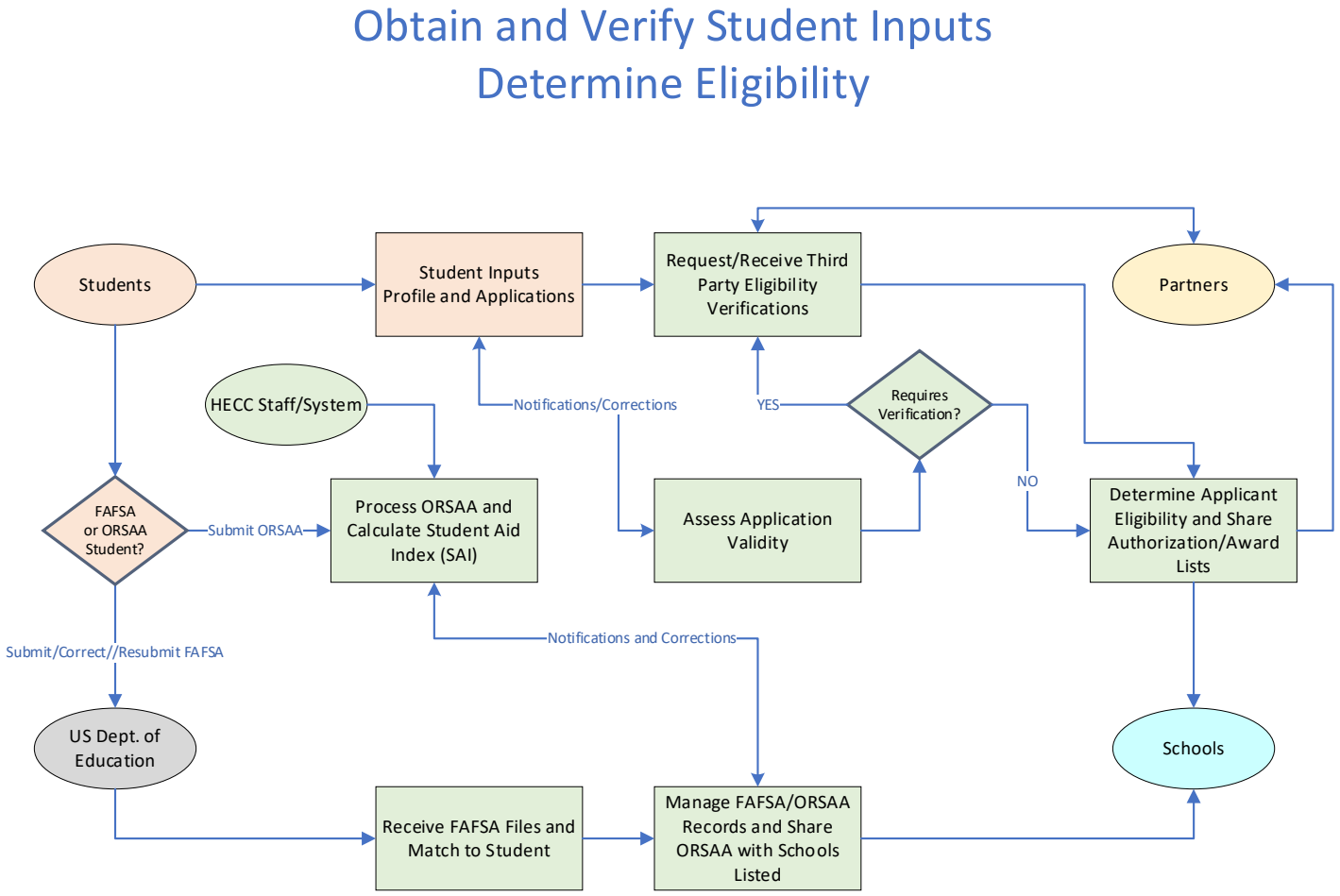
2.5 HIGH LEVEL REQUIREMENTS (spreadsheet attached)

2.6 REQUIRED INTEGRATIONS

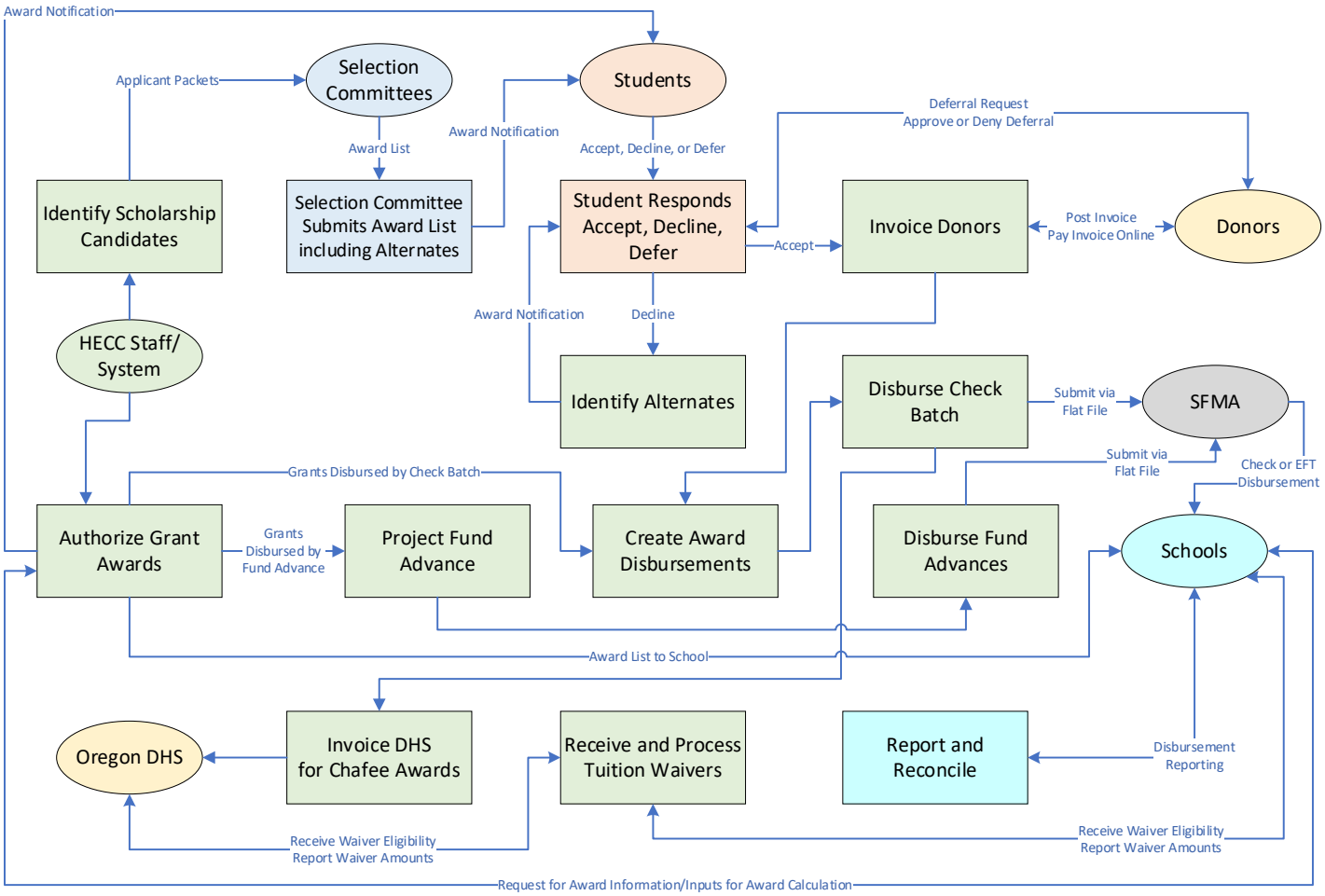
The Solution will have to interface with multiple databases and systems:



2.7 SAMPLE DIAGRAMS:



Authorize and Disburse Awards



2.8 GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS – PROGRAM DETAILS FOR 2024-25

Program	Funding	Application	Annual Applicants/ Awardee Count	Annual Awards
Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) Oregon Opportunity Grant	State	FAFSA/ORSAA	150,000+/ 40,000	$160M
Scholarships (600+ programs) Scholarships Scholarship Catalog Scholarship Workbook	Private	FAFSA/ORSAA (financial need requirement varies by program) + App	16,000/ 3,000	$11.7M
Oregon Tribal Student Grant (OTSG) Oregon Tribal Student Grant	State	FAFSA/ORSAA + App	1,110/616	$8.7M
Oregon Promise Grant (OPG) Oregon Promise Grant	State	FAFSA/ORSAA + App	17,000/ 9,500	$8.6M
Oregon National Guard State Tuition Assistance (ONGSTA) Oregon National Guard State Tuition Assistance	State	FAFSA + App	644/363	$2.8M
Oregon Teacher Scholars Program (OTSP) Oregon Teacher Scholars Program Grant	State	FAFSA/ORSAA + App	333/204	$2.2M
Oregon Chafee Education and Training Voucher Program Chafee Education and Training Grant	Federal	FAFSA + App	1,118/312	$1.4M
Oregon Student Child Care Grant (OSCCG) Oregon Student Child Care Grant	State	FAFSA/ORSAA + App	446/100	$767,000
Tuition and Fee Waiver Programs for Foster Youth	Institutions	FAFSA/ORSAA	1,375/121	$345,000
Deceased or Disabled Public Safety Officer Grant (DDPSO) Deceased or Disabled Public Safety Officer Grant	State	FAFSA/ORSAA + App	19/17	$190,000
Oregon Barber and Hairdresser Grant (B&H) Oregon Barber and Hairdresser Grant Program	State	FAFSA/ORSAA + App	27/27	$39,000

2.9 DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **Application(s)** - an online form or front-end of a system that collects information from prospective students and clients for the purpose of Scholarships and Grants considerations as well as program approval.
- **ASPIRE** - HECC's college and career access program that matches trained adult volunteers with middle and high school students to develop a plan to meet their future career and education goals.
- **Cost of Attendance (COA)** - a standardized estimate of the total expenses a student is expected to incur while attending a college or university for a specific period – usually one academic year – including tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, and other related expenses. COA is used to determine a student's financial need and the amount of financial aid a student can receive.
- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM)** - a system that allows HECC staff to administer its interactions with clients, typically using data analysis to study large amounts of information.
- **Customization** - extending an integrated application platform capabilities by adding custom, one-of-a-kind, developed code (programs, class files, scripts) to meet the needs of specific requirements or processes (i.e., canvas approach).
- **Enterprise Information Services (EIS)** - the office responsible for ensuring alignment between statewide IT policy and operations, advising the governor on enterprise technology and telecommunications, implementing the IT Governance framework, and establishing the State of Oregon's long-term IT strategy.
- **Federal Tax Information (FTI)** – when students (and their parents or spouses, if applicable) complete the FAFSA, they authorize the U.S. Department of Education to access their IRS tax data, which is used to determine aid eligibility, calculate the Student Aid Index (SAI), and support financial aid processing by schools and state agencies.
- **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** - an application for aid from the federal government in the form of grants, loans, and/or work-study to assist students with college or career school. Students must complete the FAFSA® form to qualify for financial aid.
- **FAFSA Plus+** - a program that provides student-level FAFSA data for participating schools and organizations. This allows site staff to provide targeted assistance to their students who need to complete their FAFSA, make corrections, or go through the verification process.
- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** - a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student ("eligible student"). The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the FERPA regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99.
- **Financial Aid Management Information System (FAMIS)** - the primary system responsible for administering HECC's financial aid programs. FAMIS includes all front-end Student Portal Applications, a partner portal for financial aid and education partners, as well as all the back-end systems required to administer HECC's multiple financial aid programs. FAMIS also serves as the State of Oregon's repository for FAFSA/ORSAA data for Oregonians.
- **Grant** - funds that typically come from the federal and/or state government. Most eligibility for Grants is based on a student's and/or their family's financial need.

- **Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)** - the State of Oregon agency responsible for policy and funding coordination to support pathways to postsecondary education for all Oregonians.
- **Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR)** – document created by the U.S. Department of Education, based on FAFSA information, that helps determine eligibility for various financial aid programs.
- **Oregon Financial Aid Exchange (OFAX)** - a system for higher education institutions to exchange enrollment information for students who are enrolled at more than one eligible college.
- **Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA)** - an alternative to the FAFSA for undocumented Oregon students, including students who have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status or Temporary Protected Status.
- **Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC)** - the office that is part of the HECC that administers a variety of state, federal and privately funded student financial aid programs for the benefit of Oregonians attending institutions of postsecondary education. OSAC also administers student outreach and mentoring programs to support college and career readiness
- **Partner Portal** – a secure, web-based platform that enables high schools, community-based organizations, colleges and universities, and scholarship and grant partners to efficiently manage and exchange information related to student financial aid activities.
- **Scholarship** - private awards typically funded by private donors, civic organizations, employers, and foundations such as the Oregon Community Foundation. Awards are based on various criteria.
- **Solution** - the complete end product, which may include configuration, customization, and other third-party modules necessary to meet all of the requirements of the Program.
- **Statewide Financial Management Application (SFMA)** - the State of Oregon centralized accounting system.
- **Student Aid Index (SAI)** - a number calculated from information provided on the FAFSA—primarily using federal tax data—that determines a student's eligibility for federal student aid.
- **Student Portal** – a browser-based scholarships and grants system where Oregon students can submit an online application for financial aid, track their application status, accept awards, and manage related communications.

SECTION 3: SUBMISSION AND RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

3.1 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Respondent may submit their Response electronically through OregonBuys. Respondent should follow the procedures outlined in detailed instructions on how to submit an Response can be found at OregonBuys Vendor Formal Solicitation Response. Alternatively, Respondents may submit their Response via email to the SPC listed on the cover page to this RFI.

Respondents to this RFI must upload the following files in pdf format, in the form found in each Attachment. A Microsoft Word document is provided for each attachment for easy use. Once the documents are completed, save to pdf and upload:

- Attachment A – Respondent Information and Certification Sheet
- Attachment B – Disclosure Exemption Affidavit
- Attachment C – Response Cover Sheet
- Attachment C-1 - Questions and Answer

3.2 OWNERSHIP/PERMISSION TO USE MATERIALS

All Responses are public record and are subject to public inspection. Application of the Oregon Public Records Law will determine whether any information is actually exempt from disclosure.

All Responses submitted to this RFI become the property of Agency. By submitting a Response to this RFI, Respondent grants the State of Oregon a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free license for the rights to copy, distribute, display, prepare derivative works of and transmit the Response solely for the purpose of reviewing the Response, or as otherwise needed to administer the RFI process, and to fulfill obligations under Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.410 through 192.505). Responses, including supporting materials, will not be returned to Respondent.

If Respondent believes any of its Response is exempt from disclosure under Oregon Public Records Law (ORS 192.311 through 192.478), Respondent shall complete and submit the Disclosure Exemption Affidavit (Attachment B) and Respondent also shall submit a fully redacted version of its Response, clearly identified as the redacted version.

ATTACHMENT A — RESPONDENT INFORMATION AND CERTIFICATION SHEET

Legal Name of Respondent: _____

Address: _____ **City, State, Zip:** _____

State of Incorporation: _____ **Entity Type:** _____

Contact Name: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Any individual signing below hereby certifies they are an authorized representative of Respondent and that:

1. No attempt has been made or will be made by the Respondent to induce any other person or organization to submit or not submit a Response.
2. All contents of this Respondent Information and Certification Sheet are truthful and accurate and have been prepared independently from all other Responses, and without collusion, fraud, or other dishonesty.
3. Respondent acknowledges that the Response for any of the services described in this RFI will be used for planning and informational purposes only. Agency may issue a separate procurement in the future or directly negotiate for the services required by Agency, as state law allows.

_____ _____

Authorized Signature Date

_____

(Printed Name and Title)

ATTACHMENT B — DISCLOSURE EXEMPTION AFFIDAVIT

_____ (Affiant), being first duly sworn under oath, and representing [insert Respondent Name] (hereafter "Respondent"), hereby deposes and swears or affirms under penalty of perjury that:

1. I am an employee of the Respondent, I have knowledge of the Request for Information referenced herein, and I have full authority from the Respondent to submit this affidavit and accept the responsibilities stated herein.

2. I am aware that the Respondent has submitted a Response, dated on or about [insert date] (the "Response"), to the State of Oregon ("State") in response to Request for Information HECC# 25-113A, for a replacement FAMIS System, and I am familiar with the contents of the RFI and Response.

3. I have read and am familiar with the provisions of Oregon's Public Records Law, Oregon Revised Statutes ("ORS") 192.311 through 192.478, and the Uniform Trade Secrets Act as adopted by the State of Oregon, which is set forth in ORS 646.461 through ORS 646.475. I understand that the Response is a public record held by a public body and is subject to disclosure under the Oregon Public Records Law unless specifically exempt from disclosure under that law.

4. I have reviewed the information contained in the Response. The Respondent believes the information listed in Exhibit A attached to this Disclosure Exemption Affidavit is exempt from public disclosure (collectively, the "Exempt Information"), which is incorporated herein by this reference. It is my opinion that the Exempt Information is exempt from disclosure under Oregon's Public Records Law under the specifically designated sections as set forth in Exhibit A or constitutes "Trade Secrets" under either the Oregon Public Records Law or the Uniform Trade Secrets Act as adopted in Oregon because that information is either:

   A. A formula, plan, pattern, process, tool, mechanism, compound, procedure, production data, or compilation of information that:

      i. is not patented,

      ii. is known only to certain individuals within the Respondent's organization and that is used in a business the Respondent conducts,

      iii. has actual or potential commercial value, and

      iv. gives its user an opportunity to obtain a business advantage over competitors who do not know or use it.

   or

   B. Information, including a drawing, cost data, customer list, formula, pattern, compilation, program, device, method, technique or process that:

      i. Derives independent economic value, actual or potential, from not being generally known to the public or to other persons who can obtain economic value from its disclosure or use; and

      ii. Is the subject of efforts by the Respondent that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy.

5. I understand that disclosure of the information referenced in Exhibit A may depend on official or judicial determinations made in accordance with the Public Records Law.

_____

Affiant's Signature

State of _____)

)

ss: County of

_____

)

Signed and sworn to before me on _____(date) by _____ (Affiant's name).

_____

Notary Public for the State of _____ My Commission Expires: _

EXHIBIT A TO DISCLOSURE TO EXEMPTION AFFIDAVIT

[ATTACH YOUR REDACTED RESPONSE HERE]

ATTACHMENT C - RESPONSE COVER SHEET

Respondent Information - RFI # 25-113A

Respondent Legal Entity Name:	
Primary Contact Person Name:	
Title:	
Address:	
City, State, Zip:	
Telephone:	
E-mail Address:	

Name and title of the person(s) authorized to represent the Respondent for any program follow up questions.

Name:	
Title:	
Telephone:	
E-mail Address:	

By signing this page and submitting a Response, the Authorized Representative certifies that the following statements are true:

1. No attempt has been made or will be made by the Respondent to induce any other person or organization to submit or not submit a Response.
2. Information included in this Response was valid at the time of Response submission and with the understanding that no Contract will be awarded as a result of this RFI.
3. The statements contained in this Response are true and complete to the best of the Respondent's knowledge and Respondent accepts as a condition Respondent and the Informational Response and information provided shall be in compliance with Respondent's knowledge that descriptions and suggested answers shall comply with the applicable state and federal requirements, policies, standards, and regulations as required. The undersigned recognizes that this is a public document and open to public inspection.
4. Respondent acknowledges that the Informational Response for any of the services described in this RFI shall be used for planning and informational purposes only. HECC may issue a separate procurement in the future for the services required by HECC.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____
(Authorized to Bind Respondent)

Printed Name: _____

ATTACHMENT C-1 - RESPONSE

Please provide the following information to the extent possible. No fields are mandatory, but the information is appreciated. If you do not answer a question leave that answer blank, do not delete.

A. Company Overview

1. Company background and size
2. Relevant experience with public sector or education clients - specifically with state agency-administered student financial aid
3. Example implementations of financial aid systems

B. Product Capabilities

1. Core system features and modules
2. CRM integration, communication tools, and workflow management
3. Student self-service and mobile access
4. Reporting and analytics tools (including fiscal reporting)
5. Security, compliance (e.g., FERPA, WCAG 2.1 Level AA), and accessibility
6. Support for multi-language and diverse student populations

C. Implementation Approach

1. Typical timeline for implementation
2. Project phases and deliverables
3. Staff training and change management support

D. Technical Architecture

1. Cloud/SaaS vs. on-premise options
2. Integration with existing systems (e.g., SFMA, FAFSA)
3. Data migration support

E. Cost Estimate (Non-Binding)

1. Licensing or subscription models
2. Implementation and configuration fees
3. Support and maintenance costs

F. Other Considerations

1. Innovation or AI tools (e.g., chatbots, automation)
2. Scalability and customization
3. Business continuity and disaster recovery

G. Provide detailed information about how your system accommodates the following core functionality:

1. **Grant and Scholarship Program Administration**

   OSAC administers multiple state and federal grant programs and over 600 scholarship programs, each with distinct eligibility requirements, preferences, administrative rules, and inputs from various external sources, including federal ISIR data. Please describe how your solution supports the administration of a large and diverse portfolio of financial aid programs. In your response, address the following:

   a. Program Configuration

   - How does your system support flexible configuration of programs with varying eligibility criteria, award rules, and application requirements over multiple aid years/cohorts?
   - Can program settings be customized without vendor intervention?

   b. Eligibility Management

   - How does your system allow for updates to eligibility guidelines, including those driven by legislative, policy, or donor requested changes?
   - Can eligibility be defined using multiple variables (e.g., GPA, major, residency, financial need, enrollment level)?
   - Detail how your system ingests and uses external data sources (e.g., ISIR, institutional data, third-party verifications) to support eligibility determination and award processing

   c. Application and Requirement Updates

   - How does your system support frequent updates to application forms and program requirements?
   - Is there version control or change tracking for audit purposes?

   d. Cohort and Award Management

   - Can your system assign students to specific cohorts for current and future award cycles?
   - How does it track lifetime eligibility across multiple programs, accounting for enrollment status and institutional term types?

   e. Review and Selection

   - What tools are available for staff and external scholarship selection committees to review applications and supporting documents?
   - Can materials be securely shared with external reviewers or selection committees?

   Please include examples or case studies demonstrating how your system has supported similar large-scale, multi-program financial aid operations.

2. **Financial Transaction Tracking**

   Please describe how your system supports robust and complex financial functionality, including invoicing, payment processing, disbursement, reconciliation, and financial reporting. In your

response, address the following technical requirements and use cases:

a. Transaction-Level Tracking

How does your system track financial transactions by:

- Fund
- Student
- Institution
- Disbursement type
- Academic year and term

Can your system support programs that draw from multiple funding sources for a single award?

b. Fund and Disbursement Management

Describe how your system would handle the following scenario:

- A $3,000 scholarship is awarded from the "STEM Scholars Fund."
- The donor is invoiced, and payment is received.
- The award is split into three equal disbursements.
- $1,000 is sent to University A for Student B for Fall Term 2025.
- A full or partial return is received from University A.
- The returned funds are either reissued to University C or returned to the donor during reconciliation.

How does your system track and report each step in this process?

c. Forecasting and Fund Allocation

How does your system support award forecasting based on:

- Historical data
- Awarding parameters
- Disbursement schedules
- Student enrollment patterns

Can your system allocate funds from multiple sources to a single program (e.g., Oregon Opportunity Grant) and adjust projections based on usage trends?

d. Institutional Advances and Reconciliation

Describe how your system supports:

- Sending advances to institutions based on projected eligibility and pick-up rates.
- Receiving and processing actual disbursement reports from institutions.
- Performing quarterly or semester-based reconciliations to adjust future advances or recover unused funds.

How does your system handle discrepancies and ensure accurate fund reconciliation?

e. Auditability and Reporting

What tools are available for OSAC staff to:

- View and audit the full lifecycle of a transaction?
- Generate reports by fund, student, institution, term, and disbursement status?
- Export data for compliance, legislative reporting, or internal analysis?

3. **Student Aid Applications**

Please describe how your solution supports the development and maintenance of a financial aid application that mirrors the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), including the accurate calculation of the Student Aid Index (SAI). In your response, please address the following technical requirements:

a. **Structure and Logic**
   - How does your system replicate the structure, conditional logic, and validation rules of the FAFSA?
   - How frequently is your system updated to reflect changes in federal FAFSA requirements?

b. **SAI Calculation**
   - Describe how your system calculates the SAI using the most current federal formula.
   - Can the calculation logic be updated annually or as needed to reflect federal changes?
   - Is the SAI calculation transparent and auditable by OSAC staff?

c. **Data Security and Compliance**
   - What measures are in place to ensure the secure collection, transmission, and storage of sensitive applicant data (e.g., income, household size)?
   - How does your system comply with federal and state data privacy regulations, like FERPA?
   - How does your system purge data using data retention rules and policy?
   - Where is data stored until it is purged?

d. **Staff Tools and Overrides**
   - What tools are available for staff to review, verify, and override application data?
   - Is there an audit trail for all changes made by staff?
   - Does your application support multilingual access and meet WCAG 2.2 Level AA accessibility standards?

e. **Integration and Accessibility**
   - Can your system integrate with partner institutions through a secure partner portal to share relevant student application and eligibility information in real time?
   - What data-sharing protocols or APIs are supported to facilitate this integration?
   - How does your system ensure data privacy and security when sharing information with external institutional partners?
   - Please provide examples of how your system has been successfully integrated with institutional partners in other states or organizations. Include details such as type of data shared, the technologies used (e.g., SFTP, REST APIs), and any lessons learned or best practices.