

Application Submittal Checklist

The following items are required for submittal of the grant application. Please verify and check off that the items have been included in the application packet.

- ☒ 1) Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate (If the Applicant is an Organization)
- ☒ 2) Declaration Statement
- ☒ 3) Verify that grant shall be used for a public purpose
- ☒ 4) Background and Summary
- ☒ 5) Service Summary and Outcomes
- ☒ 6) Budget
 - a) Budget request by source of funds ([Link](#))
 - b) Personnel salaries and wages ([Link](#))
 - c) Equipment and motor vehicles ([Link](#))
 - d) Capital project details ([Link](#))
 - e) Government contracts, grants, and grants in aid ([Link](#))
- ☒ 7) Experience and Capability
- ☒ 8) Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing



AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

Nam Vu, President

PRINT NAME AND TITLE

1/17/2025

DATE

THE THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE
APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
CHAPTER 42F, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES

Type of Grant Request:

☐

Operating

☐

Capital

Legal Name of Requesting Organization or Individual: Dba:

Hawaii Center for AI LLC

Amount of State Funds Requested: \$ 167,150

Brief Description of Request (Please attach word document to back of page if extra space is needed):

Hawaii Center for AI respectfully requests FY 2026 State Grant in Aid funding totaling \$167,150. The "Islands of Innovation: AI Training for Honolulu" program will offer 20 free workshops focused on teaching residents and businesses to use AI tools effectively. This addresses the urgent need to close the digital divide, improve employment opportunities, and support business efficiency. By equipping participants with AI skills, the program promotes financial stability and community development.

Amount of Other Funds Available:

State: \$ _____

Federal: \$ _____

County: \$ _____

Private/Other: \$ 7700

Total amount of State Grants Received in the Past 5
Fiscal Years:

\$ 0

Unrestricted Assets:

\$ 7700

New Service (Presently Does Not Exist): ☒

Existing Service (Presently in Operation) : ☐

Type of Business Entity:

☒

501(C)(3) Non Profit Corporation

☐

Other Non Profit

☐

Other

Mailing Address:

643 Ilalo St

City:

Honolulu

State:

HI

Zip:

96813

Contact Person for Matters Involving this Application

Name:
Nam Vu


Title:
President

Email:
nam@hawaii.ai.org

Phone:
808-277-2555

Federal Tax ID#:
99-1292750

State Tax ID#



Authorized Signature

Nam Vu, President

Name and Title

1/17/2025

Date Signed



STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

CERTIFICATE OF VENDOR COMPLIANCE

This document presents the compliance status of the vendor identified below on the issue date with respect to certificates required from the Hawaii Department of Taxation (DOTAX), the Internal Revenue Service, the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), and the Hawaii Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA).

Vendor Name: HAWAII CENTER FOR AI

Issue Date: 01/16/2025

Status: Compliant

Hawaii Tax#:

New Hawaii Tax#:

FEIN/SSN#: XX-XXX2750

UI#: No record

DCCA FILE#: 330425

Status of Compliance for this Vendor on issue date:

Form	Department(s)	Status
A-6	Hawaii Department of Taxation	Compliant
8821	Internal Revenue Service	Compliant
COGS	Hawaii Department of Commerce & Consumer Affairs	Exempt
LIR27	Hawaii Department of Labor & Industrial Relations	Compliant

Status Legend:

Status	Description
Exempt	The entity is exempt from this requirement
Compliant	The entity is compliant with this requirement or the entity is in agreement with agency and actively working towards compliance
Pending	A status determination has not yet been made
Submitted	The entity has applied for the certificate but it is awaiting approval
Not Compliant	The entity is not in compliance with the requirement and should contact the issuing agency for more information

**DECLARATION STATEMENT OF
APPLICANTS FOR GRANTS PURSUANT TO
CHAPTER 42F, HAWAII REVISÉD STATUTES**

The undersigned authorized representative of the applicant certifies the following:

- 1) The applicant meets and will comply with all of the following standards for the award of grants pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is licensed or accredited, in accordance with federal, state, or county statutes, rules, or ordinances, to conduct the activities or provide the services for which a grant is awarded;
 - b) Complies with all applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability;
 - c) Agrees not to use state funds for entertainment or lobbying activities; and
 - d) Allows the state agency to which funds for the grant were appropriated for expenditure, legislative committees and their staff, and the auditor full access to their records, reports, files, and other related documents and information for purposes of monitoring, measuring the effectiveness, and ensuring the proper expenditure of the grant.
- 2) If the applicant is an organization, the applicant meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is incorporated under the laws of the State; and
 - b) Has bylaws or policies that describe the manner in which the activities or services for which a grant is awarded shall be conducted or provided; and
- 3) If the applicant is a non-profit organization, it meets the following requirements pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes:
 - a) Is determined and designated to be a non-profit organization by the Internal Revenue Service; and
 - b) Has a governing board whose members have no material conflict of interest and serve without compensation.
- 4) The use of grant-in-aid funding complies with all provisions of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii (for example, pursuant to Article X, section 1, of the Constitution, the State cannot provide "... public funds ... for the support or benefit of any sectarian or nonsectarian private educational institution...").

Pursuant to Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes, for grants used for the acquisition of land, when the organization discontinues the activities or services on the land acquired for which the grant was awarded and disposes of the land in fee simple or by lease, the organization shall negotiate with the expending agency for a lump sum or installment repayment to the State of the amount of the grant used for the acquisition of the land.

Further, the undersigned authorized representative certifies that this statement is true and correct to the best of the applicant's knowledge.

Hawaii Center for AI

(Typed Name of Individual or Organization)

Nam Vu

Digitally signed by Nam Vu
Date: 2025.01.16 18:29:19 -10'00'

1/17/2025

(Signature)

(Date)

Nam Vu

President

(Typed Name)

(Title)

Public Purpose

42F-102: Application for Grants.

Requests for grants shall be submitted to the appropriate standing committee of the legislature at the start of each regular session of the legislature. Each request shall state:

- (1) The name of the requesting organization or individual;
- (2) The public purpose of the grant;
- (3) The services to be supported by the grant;
- (4) The target group; and
- (5) The cost of the grant and the budget.

Public Purpose:

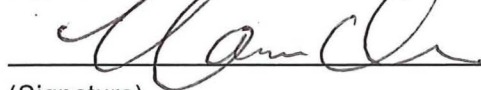
Hawaii Center for AI's request for FY 2026 State Grant in Aid funding aims to support the Islands of Innovation: AI Training in Hawaii program. This program will offer 20 bi-weekly free workshops focused on teaching residents and businesses to use AI tools effectively. This addresses the urgent need to close the digital divide, improve employment opportunities, and support business efficiency. By equipping participants with AI skills, the program promotes financial stability and community development.

The undersigned authorized representative of the applicant certifies the following:

The applicant will utilize a State Grant in Aid granted for FY2026 for a public purpose pursuant to Section 42F-102, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

Hawaii Center for AI

(Typed Name of Individual or Organization)



(Signature)

1/17/2025

(Date)

Nam Vu

(Typed Name)

President

(Title)

Application for Grants

If any item is not applicable to the request, the applicant should enter "not applicable".

I. Certification – Please attach immediately after cover page

1. Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate (If the Applicant is an Organization)

If the applicant is an organization, the applicant shall submit one (1) copy of a Hawaii Compliance Express Certificate from the Comptroller of the Department of Accounting and General Services that is dated no earlier than December 1, 2024.

2. Declaration Statement

The applicant shall submit a declaration statement affirming its compliance with [Section 42F-103, Hawaii Revised Statutes](#).

3. Public Purpose

The applicant shall specify whether the grant will be used for a public purpose pursuant to [Section 42F-102, Hawaii Revised Statutes](#).

II. Background and Summary

This section shall clearly and concisely summarize and highlight the contents of the request in such a way as to provide the State Legislature with a broad understanding of the request. Please include the following:

1. A brief description of the applicant's background;

Hawaii Center for AI (HCAI), established in February 2024 in Honolulu, is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to empowering Hawaii residents and businesses to ethically and effectively utilize artificial intelligence. Our mission is to bridge the digital divide by providing equitable access to AI education, fostering financial stability, and creating pathways for success for all in our community.

2. The goals and objectives related to the request;

The Need for "Islands of Innovation: AI Training for Hawaii"

The rapid integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into industries globally has created unprecedented opportunities—and challenges—for workforce development. In Hawaii, the lack of accessible AI education and training hinders local residents' ability to compete in an increasingly technology-driven global economy. The **"Islands of**

Innovation: AI Training for Hawaii" program addresses this urgent need by equipping the community with essential AI skills.

Demonstrating the Problem: AI Skills Gap and Economic Impact

AI technologies, from generative models to data analysis tools, are redefining how businesses operate and innovate. Yet, many residents of Hawaii face barriers to acquiring the necessary knowledge to utilize these tools effectively. Learning to leverage AI will be the difference between job loss and job transformation in Hawaii's workforce.

Currently, many tech-related roles in Hawaii remain unfilled due to a skills mismatch, while companies increasingly seek professionals trained in AI and data science. Without intervention, this gap will grow, leaving local talent unprepared for economic shifts and potentially limiting Hawaii's ability to diversify beyond tourism.

Community Prioritization and Support

Hawaii has seen efforts to integrate AI into education, such as school-business collaborations focused on data literacy. However, these initiatives are not yet widespread enough to address the full scope of the need. By prioritizing ethical, inclusive, and culturally relevant AI training, the "Islands of Innovation" program will empower residents to take full advantage of AI technologies while preserving the values and unique cultural identity of the islands.

Bridging the Gap Through Workshops

"Islands of Innovation: AI Training for Hawaii" will deliver 20 workshops over 12 months, directly addressing the skills gap. These workshops aim to:

- Prepare participants for careers in AI-powered industries,
- Foster economic resilience by retaining talent locally, and
- Strengthen community cohesion through technology education tailored to Hawaii's unique context.

This program will not only enhance individual opportunities but also build a tech-savvy workforce capable of driving Hawaii's economic transformation.

3. The public purpose and need to be served;

Hawaii Center for AI's request for FY 2026 State Gant in Aid funding aims to support the Islands of Innovation: AI Training in Hawaii program. This program will offer 20 bi-weekly free workshops focused on teaching residents and businesses to use AI tools effectively. This addresses the urgent need to close the digital divide, improve employment opportunities, and support business efficiency. By equipping participants with AI skills, the program promotes financial stability and community development.

4. Describe the target population to be served; and

AI will be very pervasive in our lives, and affect or enhance how we all do things. The **"Islands of Innovation: AI Training for Hawaii"** program will focus its efforts on these particular population target areas:

- **Workforce Development:** Professionals and individuals aiming to reskill or upskill in AI tools, with a focus on retaining local talent and preparing participants for careers in tech-driven industries like healthcare, education, and entrepreneurship.
- **Underserved Communities:** At least 50% of participants will come from underserved populations, including Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and low-income communities, ensuring equitable access to technology education.
- **Businesses and Entrepreneurs:** Local businesses will benefit from a talent pool skilled in AI, fostering economic resilience and reducing dependence on external hires.
- **Community at Large:** Through events, conferences, and outreach, the program will engage at least 2,000 individuals in AI literacy and its applications.

5. Describe the geographic coverage.

While certain aspects of the program, like in-person events and drop-in visits, will be concentrated in Honolulu on O'ahu, many aspects of the program will be applicable to all locations in Hawaii, particularly our outreach coordination and advocacy efforts. In the future, we envision the possibility of setting up physical outposts in other communities, depending upon the level of local uptake and demand in those communities.

SPECIAL STATEMENT ON PROJECT COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING MAUI RECOVERY

In response to the wildfires and subsequent human toll in Maui, as well as the State of Hawaii's prioritization of investments in Maui's recovery, Hawaii Center for AI is committed to actively supporting the island's revitalization efforts. We recognize the significant impact these fires have had on Maui's communities, economy, and people.

Islands of Innovation: AI Training for Hawaii will incorporate specific actions and initiatives aimed at aiding Maui's recovery, leveraging the potential of AI technology to enhance and support the tourism industry, which is a vital component of Maui's recovery. AI's role in personalizing customer experiences and streamlining operational processes will be transformative. Since we can see a strong connection between the technology and the industry, we expect to base our Maui-specific efforts in the next year on this nexus.

Our commitment includes:

- **Bi-Monthly Meetings/Small Events on Maui:** HCAI will develop and launch up to six bi-monthly meetings and/or small events on Maui, with a particular focus on supporting the leisure and tourism industries. These events will facilitate dialogue, share knowledge, and promote the use of AI in enhancing tourism experiences and operations, contributing to the economic recovery of the region.
- **Teleconferencing/Telepresence Technology Investment:** To ensure inclusivity and broad participation, HCAI will invest in state-of-the-art teleconferencing and telepresence technology. This will allow meetings and events held on Oahu to be broadcast with high fidelity to locations in Maui. We plan to explore partnering options to establish viewing rooms in Maui, ensuring the island's stakeholders have direct access to HCAI's resources and discussions.
- **Major In-Person Gathering in Maui:** HCAI will plan at least one major in-person gathering in Maui, with details and timing to be determined as the recovery progresses. This event will serve as a significant opportunity to bring together local and external stakeholders, fostering collaboration and showcasing Maui's resilience and potential in the post-recovery era.

Through these initiatives, HCAI aims to contribute meaningfully to Maui's recovery efforts, supporting the rejuvenation of its economy and communities. We are committed to working closely with local authorities, businesses, and community members to ensure our actions align with Maui's needs and priorities, and to make a positive and lasting impact.

III. Service Summary and Outcomes

The Service Summary shall include a detailed discussion of the applicant's approach to the request. The applicant shall clearly and concisely specify the results, outcomes, and measures of effectiveness from this request. The applicant shall:

1. **Describe the scope of work, tasks and responsibilities;**

Planning and Preparation

- **Define Objectives:** Clearly outline the goals and expected outcomes of the workshops.
- **Identify Target Audience:** Determine who will benefit most from the workshops (e.g., students, professionals, enthusiasts).
- **Develop Curriculum:** Create a detailed curriculum covering all the topics and tools to be taught. Potential topics include: GenAI Intro, ChatBots, AI

for Grant/Proposal/Contract Writing, Image/Logo Creation using AI, Infographic Creation, Video Creation and Editing Using AI, Powerpoint Presentations Using AI, Best Practises and Caution When Using AI

- **Select Dates and Venues:** Choose suitable dates and book venues for all 20 workshops.
- **Budget Allocation:** Allocate the budget as per the detailed breakdown provided earlier.

Content Development

- **Create Workshop Materials:** Develop handouts, presentations, and any other materials needed for the workshops.
- **Software and Tools:** Ensure all necessary software and tools are available and licensed.
- **Guest Speakers/Trainers:** Identify and confirm guest speakers or trainers for each workshop.

Marketing and Promotion

- **Create Marketing Plan:** Develop a comprehensive marketing plan to promote the workshops.
- **Online Advertising:** Utilize social media, email campaigns, and online ads to reach the target audience.
- **Printed Materials:** Design and distribute flyers, posters, and other promotional materials.

Logistics and Coordination

- **Venue Setup:** Arrange for the setup of venues, including seating, equipment, and refreshments.
- **Registration Process:** Set up an online registration system and manage participant registrations.
- **Technical Support:** Ensure technical support is available for any equipment or software issues.

Execution

- **Conduct Workshops:** Execute each workshop as per the schedule, ensuring all content is delivered effectively.
- **Engage Participants:** Encourage active participation and provide opportunities for hands-on practice.
- **Collect Feedback:** Gather feedback from participants to assess the effectiveness of each workshop.

Post-Workshop Activities

- **Review and Analyze Feedback:** Analyze the feedback to identify areas for improvement.
- **Follow-Up:** Send follow-up emails to participants with additional resources and information.
- **Report and Documentation:** Document the outcomes of each workshop and prepare a final report.

Continuous Improvement

- **Evaluate and Adjust:** Continuously evaluate the workshops and make necessary adjustments to improve future sessions.
- **Update Curriculum:** Update the curriculum based on feedback and new developments in AI tools.

2. Provide a projected annual timeline for accomplishing the results or outcomes of the service;

October 2025 – Program Launch

- **October 1–15:** Finalize staff hiring (Program Manager, AI Instructors, Administrative Support).
- **October 15–31:** Secure contracts for AI platforms and cloud hosting. Finalize workshop topics and schedule.
- **October 15–31:** Develop marketing strategy and materials for outreach.

November 2025 – Outreach and Registration

- **November 1–15:** Begin outreach via community events and conferences. Program staff will engage as speakers and panelists.
- **November 15–30:** Open online registration for workshops, distribute promotional materials, and use social media for community engagement.

December 2025 – First Workshops

- **December 1–15:** Host the first 2 workshops, focusing on introductory AI concepts and tools.
- **December 1–31:** Continue community outreach at local events to attract additional participants.

January 2026 – Workshop Series & Feedback Collection

- **January 1–15:** Host 2 additional workshops on hands-on AI tools, including machine learning and natural language processing.
- **January 15–31:** Collect feedback from participants and instructors to adjust content for upcoming workshops.

February 2026 – Mid-Program Review

- **February 1–15:** Host 2 workshops, focusing on practical AI applications.
- **February 15–28:** Conduct a mid-program review to assess participant progress and adjust curriculum based on feedback. Expand outreach efforts to encourage more sign-ups.

March–May 2026 – Advanced Workshops & Engagement

- **March 1–31:** Host 2 workshops on specialized topics such as AI in business, data analytics, and AI ethics.
- **April 1–30:** Host 2 workshops. Attend additional local events and conferences. Showcase participant success stories to raise program visibility.
- **May 1–31:** Host 2 workshops focused on advanced AI topics and career development.

June–July 2026 – Data Collection and Workshops

- **June 1–30:** Host 2 workshops on career readiness, job search, and applying AI tools in various industries.
- **July 1–31:** Host 2 workshops. Begin data collection and conduct participant surveys for feedback on the program's effectiveness.

August 2026 – Evaluation and Reporting

- **August 1–15:** Host 2 workshops.
- **August 15–31:** Analyze data, evaluate program outcomes, and begin preparing final reports.

September 2026 – Final Workshops & Program Close-Out

- **September 1–15:** Wrap up final 2 workshops and provide certificates to participants who complete the program.
- **September 15–30:** Finalize data analysis and compile an impact report on participant skills, job placements, and community engagement. Finalize budget and financial documentation. Submit final reports to stakeholders, including financial summaries and program evaluation findings. Disseminate program outcomes and successes to local stakeholders and the broader community. Share findings through newsletters, events, and social media.

3. **Describe its quality assurance and evaluation plans for the request. Specify how the applicant plans to monitor, evaluate, and improve their results; and**

Measurable Outcomes

The "**Islands of Innovation: AI Training for Hawaii**" program will achieve the following measurable outcomes, directly benefiting the community and driving economic development:

1. **Workforce Preparedness**

- Train at least 420 participants in foundational and practical AI skills over 12 months.
- Achieve a 75% completion rate, with participants demonstrating competency in key AI applications such as data analysis and automation tools through pre- and post-workshop assessments.
- At least 50% of participants will report increased confidence in applying AI tools in their current jobs or entrepreneurial ventures within three months of program completion, as measured by follow-up surveys.

2. **Community Outreach**

- In addition to the workshops, the program will focus on **community outreach** by engaging Hawaii residents through **5 events or conferences** over the course of the year. These events will include speaker panels, workshops, and interactive demonstrations aimed at introducing at least **2,000 individuals** to AI tools and their real-world applications. Program representatives, including AI experts and past participants, will act as speakers or panelists to showcase AI's value in areas like community development, economic empowerment, and workforce innovation.

3. **Community Engagement and Equity**

- Ensure that at least 50% of participants come from underserved populations, such as Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and low-income communities.

4. **List the measure(s) of effectiveness that will be reported to the State agency through which grant funds are appropriated (the expending agency). The measure(s) will provide a standard and objective way for the State to assess the program's achievement or accomplishment. Please note that if the level of appropriation differs from the amount included in this application that the measure(s) of effectiveness will need to be updated and transmitted to the expending agency.**

The following table lists our proposed measures of effectiveness to be reported to the State agency. Please note that where possible, HCAI will also seek to transparently inform the public and fellow stakeholders with summaries of our effectiveness findings. Each description below contains numerical targets as of the writing of this grant

application; we will update all stakeholders with adjustments to quantitative measures resulting from more detailed planning.

Measure of Effectiveness	Description
Workshop Outcome Assessments	Number of educational programs conducted (20), participant numbers (420), and assessment of knowledge gained through surveys
Participation and Engagement Metrics	Number of events hosted (10), attendance figures (400), and participant engagement levels
Stakeholder Collaboration Metrics	Number and quality of collaborations with academic institutions, businesses, government agencies, and community groups. (10 or more total collaboration records)
Community Feedback and Satisfaction Scores	Feedback scores from participants and community members, measuring satisfaction and perceived value of HCAI's offerings.
Online Engagement Metrics	Growth and engagement statistics for HCAI's website and social media platforms. (100 monthly views)
Policy Impact	Annual subjective self-reflection on HCAI's contributions to local (regional, national, etc.) policy fora; to include details of any positions or statements generated on behalf of the entity. (Subjective report)
Innovation and Entrepreneurship Support Metrics	Number of startups and entrepreneurs supported (10), including mentorship, resource allocation, and success stories.

Careful self-observation and continuous improvement are core values for our team. We expect that our planning and launch activities will generate new Measures of Effectiveness. Our organization pledges to comply with State requirements and the requirements of the expending agency with respect to our relevant reporting obligations.

IV. Financial

Budget

1. **The applicant shall submit a budget utilizing the enclosed budget forms as applicable, to detail the cost of the request.**
 - a. Budget request by source of funds ([Link](#))
 - b. Personnel salaries and wages ([Link](#))
 - c. Equipment and motor vehicles ([Link](#))
 - d. Capital project details ([Link](#))
 - e. Government contracts, grants, and grants in aid ([Link](#))
2. **The applicant shall provide its anticipated quarterly funding requests for the fiscal year 2026.**

Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total Grant
\$80,000	\$40,000	\$20,000	\$27,150	\$167,150

3. **The applicant shall provide a listing of all other sources of funding that they are seeking for fiscal year 2026.**

City of Honolulu GIA, corporate sponsors such as AWS, Cisco, OpenAI

4. **The applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits it has been granted within the prior three years. Additionally, the applicant shall provide a listing of all state and federal tax credits they have applied for or anticipate applying for pertaining to any capital project, if applicable.**

N/A

5. **The applicant shall provide a listing of all federal, state, and county government contracts, grants, and grants in aid it has been granted within the prior three years and will be receiving for fiscal year 2026 for program funding.**

N/A

6. **The applicant shall provide the balance of its unrestricted current assets as of December 31, 2024.**

\$7,700

V. Experience and Capability

1. Necessary Skills and Experience

The applicant shall demonstrate that it has the necessary skills, abilities, knowledge of, and experience relating to the request. State your experience and appropriateness for providing the service proposed in this application. The

applicant shall also provide a listing of verifiable experience of related projects or contracts for the most recent three years that are pertinent to the request.

Since the release of ChatGPT in late 2022, we have witnessed both the tremendous potential of this disruptive technology and the risk of deepening the digital divide, especially for underserved communities. This realization sparked our commitment to harnessing AI to create meaningful economic opportunities for the people of Hawaii—particularly those historically left behind by technological advances. Our mission is to bridge this gap, empowering individuals to leverage AI tools for their personal and professional development.

In late 2023, we laid the groundwork for our nonprofit, formalizing our efforts in February 2024. Since then, we have successfully hosted 36 events, including a diverse range of activities such as:

- **12 in-person workshops**
- **8 one-on-one consultations**
- **4 publications** that introduced AI concepts and use cases
- **4 outreach activities**, including community presentations and panel discussions
- **3 hybrid events** combining in-person and virtual participation
- **3 broadcast events**, reaching large audiences across various platforms
- **2 virtual workshops** for remote access to training.

These activities have allowed us to connect with thousands of individuals, businesses, and organizations across Hawaii. Our outreach efforts, including broadcast events, expos, and conference presentations, have directly engaged people across Oahu, Maui, and Kauai—regions with significant need for AI literacy and training.

Through our consultations with nonprofits, local businesses, and individuals, we have gained valuable insights into the specific needs of different sectors. This has informed our programming, enabling us to offer tailored solutions that address the digital skill gaps and economic challenges faced by these groups.

Our relationship with the **Veterans Affairs (VA)** and **AMVETS** has also been particularly promising. Through this collaboration, we have identified opportunities to support veterans by offering AI tools that can enhance their employability, provide new career pathways, and improve overall quality of life.

Currently, we operate entirely on a volunteer basis, with passionate individuals dedicated to making a tangible difference in our community. This volunteer-driven model has allowed us to scale quickly and efficiently, while also providing an authentic grassroots approach to community engagement.

The success of our outreach efforts, the depth of our consultations, and the positive feedback from attendees demonstrate that there is a strong demand for AI training and resources. These early achievements have positioned us as a trusted resource in

Hawaii's ongoing digital transformation. Our experience confirms the viability of our proposed program, showing that we can effectively deliver AI training and support to individuals and communities that stand to benefit most from this technology.

Advisors:

Ryley Higa

Ryley Higa is a machine learning engineer working for Sumo Logic, an app and web security, monitoring, and troubleshooting platform company based in Redwood City, CA. Graduating in computer engineering from University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Ryley specializes in using machine learning to detect anomalies and vulnerabilities in software systems. Ryley holds a patent and published research paper and currently runs an AI enthusiast meetup in Honolulu, HI called AI Hawaii. AI Hawaii currently has monthly meetings at Hub Coworking Hawaii.

Duncan Hsia

Duncan Hsia stands out as a leader in the convergence of financial services and artificial intelligence (AI), making him an exemplary figure in sectors that prioritize innovative integration of technology. His educational background from the Wharton Business School, coupled with a degree in systems engineering from the University of Pennsylvania, equips him with a rare combination of financial insight and technical skill, crucial for innovation in today's business environment.

As the founder of Infinite Financial, Duncan has been instrumental in offering unique real estate financing services. His approach is characterized by a synergistic blend of sophisticated financial strategies and advanced technological solutions, particularly in the realm of AI. Duncan's enthusiasm for AI is deep-rooted and extends beyond his professional endeavors. He established the Honolulu ChatGPT Meetup group which meets at Hub Coworking Hawaii, creating a community space for AI enthusiasts to collaborate, share knowledge, and explore new applications of AI technology. He also has taught 8 different groups in the real estate industry about AI.

In his professional capacity at Infinite Financial, Duncan applies AI tools to optimize business processes, improve customer service, and offer innovative financial solutions. His application of AI in real-world business scenarios highlights the transformative impact of AI in the financial industry, demonstrating its potential to revolutionize traditional business models.

Nam Vu

Nam has been in technology for 38 years starting with his first computer: a Commodore VIC-20 with an audio cassette data drive. Nam is the founder of ShakaNet, a guest Internet service provider for most of the major airports and many hotels in Hawaii. While

traveling the world with his family for 15 months, he utilized many coworking spaces and recognized the need for such spaces, with amazing Internet, in Hawaii. He returned looking for a coworking space to get involved with and became the Hub's first angel investor. An entrepreneur at heart, Nam is passionate about helping other impact makers succeed and enabling community to gather for a purpose.

2. Facilities

The applicant shall provide a description of its facilities and demonstrate its adequacy in relation to the request. If facilities are not presently available, describe plans to secure facilities.

Facilities are being generously sponsored by Hub Coworking Hawaii and HTDC. These partnerships minimize overhead costs and provide us with spaces conducive to learning.

VI. Personnel: Project Organization and Staffing

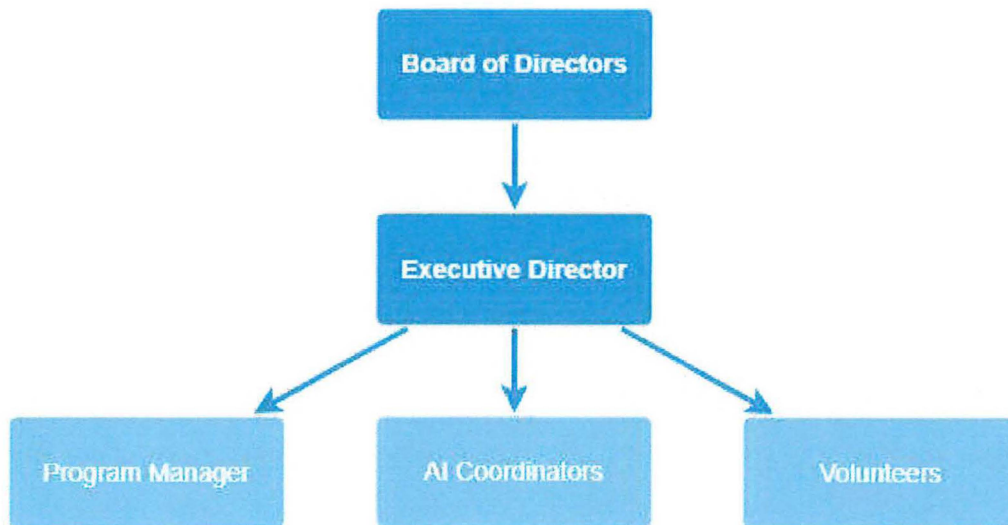
1. Proposed Staffing, Staff Qualifications, Supervision and Training

The applicant shall describe the proposed staffing pattern and proposed service capacity appropriate for the viability of the request. The applicant shall provide the qualifications and experience of personnel for the request and shall describe its ability to supervise, train and provide administrative direction relative to the request.

Although we are currently a volunteer-led organization, the program budget will allow us to hire a Program Manager. This hire will be crucial in ensuring that workshops are delivered smoothly, participants are supported, and program logistics are managed effectively. We also have a network of skilled volunteers who bring expertise in AI, education, and community engagement, and we plan to further recruit local talent to support the program's growth.

2. Organization Chart

The applicant shall illustrate the position of each staff and line of responsibility/supervision. If the request is part of a large, multi-purpose organization, include an organization chart that illustrates the placement of this request.



3. Compensation

The applicant shall provide an annual salary range paid by the applicant to the three highest paid officers, directors, or employees of the organization by position title, not employee name.

Program Manager - \$80,000

VII. Other

1. Litigation

The applicant shall disclose any pending litigation to which they are a party, including the disclosure of any outstanding judgement. If applicable, please explain.

N/A

2. Licensure or Accreditation

The applicant shall specify any special qualifications, including but not limited to licensure or accreditation that the applicant possesses relevant to this request.

N/A

3. Private Educational Institutions

The applicant shall specify whether the grant will be used to support or benefit a sectarian or non-sectarian private educational institution. Please see [Article X, Section 1, of the State Constitution](#) for the relevance of this question.

N/A

4. Future Sustainability Plan

The applicant shall provide a plan for sustaining after fiscal year 2026 the activity funded by the grant if the grant of this application is:

- (a) Received by the applicant for fiscal year 2026, but
- (b) Not received by the applicant thereafter.

We intend on HCAI contributing to the AI economy in Hawaii for many years to come. As we gain traction and build a community around the program and prove it's value to the community we will look to fund the operations through a variety of sources:

Sponsorships from tech companies that have an interest in AI:

- AWS
- Cisco
- Google
- Microsoft

Federal Grants

- EDA
- USDA
- BEAD

Products and services

- AI Consulting
- AI development
- Community Membership fees

BUDGET REQUEST BY SOURCE OF FUNDS

Period: July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

Applicant: Hawaii Center for AI

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Total State Funds Requested (a)	Total Federal Funds Requested (b)	Total County Funds Requested (c)	Total Private/Other Funds Requested (d)
A. PERSONNEL COST				
1. Salaries	80,000			
2. Payroll Taxes & Assessments	32,000			
3. Fringe Benefits	12,000			
TOTAL PERSONNEL COST	124,000			
B. OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES				
1. Airfare, Inter-Island	1,750			
2. Insurance	2,000			
3. Lease/Rental of Equipment	5,000			
4. Lease/Rental of Space	5,000			
5. Staff Training	10,000			
6. Supplies	2,000			
7. Telecommunication	2,400			
8. Utilities				
9. Technology	15,000			
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
TOTAL OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES	43,150			
C. EQUIPMENT PURCHASES				
D. MOTOR VEHICLE PURCHASES				
E. CAPITAL				
TOTAL (A+B+C+D+E)	167,150			
SOURCES OF FUNDING		Budget Prepared By:		
(a) Total State Funds Requested	167,150	Nam Vu 808-277-2555		
(b) Total Federal Funds Requested		Name (Please type or print) Phone		
(c) Total County Funds Requested				
(d) Total Private/Other Funds Requested		1/17/2025		
		Signature of Authorized Official Date		
TOTAL BUDGET	167,150	Nam Vu, President		
		Name and Title (Please type or print)		

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - PERSONNEL SALARIES AND WAGES

Period: July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

Applicant: Hawaii Center for AI

POSITION TITLE		FULL TIME EQUIVALENT	ANNUAL SALARY A	% OF TIME ALLOCATED TO GRANT REQUEST B	TOTAL STATE FUNDS REQUESTED (A x B)
Program Manager		1	\$80,000.00	100.00%	\$ 80,000.00
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
					\$ -
TOTAL:					80,000.00
JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:					

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - EQUIPMENT AND MOTOR VEHICLES Period: July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

Applicant: Hawaii Center for AI

DESCRIPTION EQUIPMENT	NO. OF ITEMS	COST PER ITEM	TOTAL COST	TOTAL BUDGETED
N/A			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
TOTAL:				
JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:				

DESCRIPTION OF MOTOR VEHICLE	NO. OF VEHICLES	COST PER VEHICLE	TOTAL COST	TOTAL BUDGETED
N/A			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
			\$ -	
TOTAL:				
JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:				

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION - CAPITAL PROJECT DETAILS Period: July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026

Applicant: Hawaii Center for AI

FUNDING AMOUNT REQUESTED						
TOTAL PROJECT COST	ALL SOURCES OF FUNDS RECEIVED IN PRIOR YEARS		STATE FUNDS REQUESTED	OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDS REQUESTED	FUNDING REQUIRED IN SUCCEEDING YEARS	
	FY:2023-2024	FY:2024-2025	FY:2025-2026	FY:2025-2026	FY:2026-2027	FY:2027-2028
PLANS	N/A					
LAND ACQUISITION	N/A					
DESIGN	N/A					
CONSTRUCTION	N/A					
EQUIPMENT	N/A					
TOTAL:						
JUSTIFICATION/COMMENTS:						

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND / OR GRANTS IN AID

Applicant: Hawaii Center for AI

Contracts Total: -

	CONTRACT DESCRIPTION	EFFECTIVE DATES	AGENCY	GOVERNMENT ENTITY (U.S./State/Hawaii/ Honolulu/ Kauai/ Maui County)	CONTRACT VALUE
1	N/A				-
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
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