## ****Proposed DOST Project: EduAssist – Student Financial Assistance Management System****

### **A. GENERAL/CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS**

**1. What specific problem or gap does the proposed project aim to address in science, technology, or society?**  
EduAssist addresses key challenges in managing student financial assistance in the Philippines:

* **Inefficient financial assistance processes** due to fragmented systems, manual paperwork, and unclear guidelines, causing delays and unequal access.
* **Limited accessibility** for students in rural or underserved areas who lack centralized, digital platforms for application and tracking.
* **Poor data management** among scholarship offices, resulting in weak transparency, monitoring, and policy support.

This project modernizes and digitizes ensuring equitable access, efficiency, and transparency in financial aid distribution.

**2. How does the proposed project align with DOST’s research priorities and national development goals?**

* Supports **ICT for Education** under DOST’s priority research areas.
* Aligns with the **Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2023–2028** by promoting digital transformation and inclusive education.
* Contributes to **Ambisyon Natin 2040** by enabling Filipinos to complete education without financial barriers.
* Advances the **Digital Philippines Roadmap 2030** through data-driven, tech-enabled governance.

**3. What are the unique innovations or technologies introduced by this project compared to existing solutions?**

* **All-in-One Platform** for application, status tracking, and notifications.
* **Automated application and evaluation system** for eligibility screening and ranking.
* **Smart Recommendations** that match students to suitable aid programs based on their profiles.
* **Cloud-based architecture with offline access**, ensuring usability in low-connectivity areas.
* **Data dashboards** that enable transparent fund monitoring and reporting.

**4. How will the project contribute to advancing local research and development capacity?**

* Establishes a **Digital Education Innovation Hub** at CHMSU.
* Builds **local expertise** in ICT and educational technology.
* Encourages **research on digital financial assistance systems** and education equity.
* Provides **training programs** for IT developers, administrators, and researchers.

**5. What potential economic, environmental, or social impacts can be expected from the project?**

* **Economic:** Reduced administrative costs and processing time through automation.
* **Social:** Greater access to education for marginalized groups and reduced dropout rates.
* **Policy:** Reliable, data-driven insights for improving financial aid distribution and program design.

### **B. TECHNICAL/DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS**

**6. What methodologies and tools will be used to implement the proposed project?**

* **Methodologies:** Agile software development, participatory design with students and scholarship officers, user-centered testing.
* **Tools/Technologies:**
  + Flutter (mobile app)
  + Mysql(backend)
  + Data visualization libraries for reporting

**7. How will the project ensure reliability, efficiency, and scalability?**

* **Reliability:** Comprehensive unit, integration, and user acceptance testing; 99.9% uptime.
* **Efficiency:** Automated screening, caching mechanisms, and optimized database indexing.
* **Scalability:** Cloud-native design for easy regional and national expansion.

**8. What is the proposed project’s scope, timeline, and key deliverables?**

* **Scope:** Development and pilot deployment of EduAssist in selected universities within Region VI, serving approximately 5,000 students.
* **Timeline:** 18 months
  + Months 1–4: System design & prototyping
  + Months 5–9: Full development
  + Months 10–12: Pilot testing & training
  + Months 13–18: Deployment, evaluation, and policy formulation
* **Key Deliverables:**
  + EduAssist mobile application
  + Training materials and digital learning modules
  + Financial Assistance Network connecting agencies and schools
  + Research studies and policy briefs

**9. How will the project integrate emerging technologies?**

* **Cloud computing** for secure and scalable data storage.
* **Mobile-first design** for accessibility via smartphones and web browsers.
* **Offline-first capability** for students in areas with unstable internet access.

**10. What risks or challenges are anticipated in the project, and what mitigation strategies will be applied?**

* **Connectivity Issues:** Use of offline-first design with auto-syncing.
* **Low Digital Literacy:** Conduct localized training sessions and provide simple UI/UX.
* **Funding Constraints:** Phased implementation and collaboration with CHED, NGOs, and private institutions.
* **Data Privacy Concerns:** Implement encryption, role-based access control, and secure data protocols.

### **C. BENEFICIARIES/SOCIETAL IMPACT QUESTIONS**

**11. Who are the target beneficiaries of the project?**

* **Primary:** Students applying for financial aid.
* **Secondary:** Scholarship offices, universities, and government agencies.
* **Tertiary:** Policymakers, researchers, and partner institutions.

**12. How will the project improve productivity, accessibility, or quality of life?**

* Simplified and faster financial aid applications.
* Increased access to opportunities for underprivileged students.
* Reduced dropout rates due to timely and transparent support.

**13. What is the potential for technology transfer and commercialization?**

* **Software-as-a-Service (SaaS)** model for universities and organizations.
* **Licensing opportunities** for NGOs and private scholarship foundations.
* **Expansion** into student loan management and educational analytics platforms.

**14. How can the project support the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)?**

* **SDG 4:** Quality Education – by improving access to financial aid.
* **SDG 10:** Reduced Inequalities – through equitable scholarship allocation.
* **SDG 16:** Strong Institutions – by ensuring transparent and accountable processes.

**15. How will the project ensure inclusivity?**

* Multilingual mobile interface in major Philippine dialects.
* Simple, accessible design for users with limited digital skills.
* Prioritized support for low-income and marginalized students.

### **D. SUSTAINABILITY & FUTURE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

**16. How will the project sustain operations after completion?**

* Adoption of a **freemium model** with optional advanced institutional features.
* Partnerships with **CHED, NGOs, and private scholarship providers.**
* Continuous **institutional adoption** in State Universities and Colleges (SUCs).

**17. How will the project outputs be maintained, upgraded, or scaled up?**

* Regular updates and iterative enhancements based on feedback.
* Integration with **government platforms** for unified service delivery.

**18. What partnerships can strengthen the project?**

* **Government:** CHED,LGUs
* **Private Sector:** NGOs, EdTech companies, foundations
* **Academe:** CHMSU and partner universities
* **International:** Education-focused organizations

**19. How will the project measure and evaluate success?**

* User adoption rate: **Target 10,000 student users** in pilot phase.
* Processing efficiency: **70% faster application turnaround.**
* Transparency rating: **4.5/5 user satisfaction.**
* At least **three published research studies** and one policy brief.

**20. What possible future research directions can stem from this project?**

* Integration of **financial literacy tools** to help students manage stipends.
* Studies on the **impact of digitized assistance programs** on dropout reduction and student outcomes.
* Exploration of **AI-driven data analytics** for scholarship trend forecasting.
* Research on **cross-platform interoperability** with international donor databases.