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Proposals Sought for Keaukaha Community Cultural-Based Education Program on Hawai'i Island

HAWAII ISLAND – With funding provided by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) and in collaboration with the County of Hawai'i, the Island of Hawai'i Visitors Bureau (IHVB) is seeking proposals from non-profit organizations to develop and operate a community cultural-based education program in the Keaukaha area that will help balance the preservation of cultural and natural resources with mindful visitation.

The residential community of Keaukaha has endured increased visitation and overcrowding at Hilo's most-visited beaches, being minutes from Hilo Harbor and the island's east-side port for cruise ship passengers, and Hilo International Airport. During HTA's [Hawai'i Island Destination Management Action Plan \(DMAP\)](#) process which began in 2020, residents called out this growing need to mitigate visitor impacts to their community through place-based education of 'āina (place), mo'omeheu (culture), mo'olelo (history) and kānaka (people).

"HTA is working alongside the community to address residents' concerns and further support cultural and natural resource preservation in Keaukaha," said HTA's President and CEO John De Fries. "We are taking the community's lead in how they envision this cultural-based educational program to be developed and look forward to supporting the important work and stewards of this special place."

Keaukaha, which translates to "passing current," is where freshwater springs feed into the Hilo area's coastline, creating nutrient-rich brackish water environments for loko i'a (fishponds), plants, fish, and other marine life to thrive. Keaukaha is also one of the oldest Hawaiian Homestead communities in the state.

Place-based education curriculum aims to combine Native Hawaiian and local 'ike (knowledge) to weave past and present knowledge of aloha 'āina and its wahi pana (storied places) and/or wahi kapu (sacred places), with the goal of instilling a deeper understanding and appreciation for the place and its people amongst all those who visit.

"Throughout this DMAP process, IHVB is listening intently to the communities that are being impacted by the effects of tourism, such as the residents of Keaukaha," said Rachel Kaiama, IHVB Destination Manager. "We're involving the community every step of the way to ensure that historical 'ike and mo'olelo remain fundamental to the cultural preservation and visitor education of the area. Our hope is that this program can serve as a stewardship model that may be adapted for other hot spots on our island."

The Keaukaha Community Cultural-based Education Program also supports the 'Āina Aloha and Ho'okipa principles of the 'Āina Aloha Economic Futures declaration, as well as the goals of Hawai'i's Aloha+ Challenge and United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Those submitting proposals must be a licensed 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and develop a cultural-based education program that can be implemented by stewards and cultural and natural resource management ambassadors of the area.

Proposals must align with Action G of the Hawai'i Island DMAP, which aims to "Invest in community-based programs that enhance the quality of life for communities," and sub-actions G1, "Support community-led and activate efforts, offer capacity building/education opportunities to strengthen Hawai'i Island's product offerings," and G2, "Uplift approaches to tourism that are reflective of Hawai'i Island and its different communities."

Applicants' ability to demonstrate how they might meet secondary DMAP Actions B and C in their proposal will be positively considered. Those actions and sub-actions include the following:

- Action B: "Develop resources and educational programs to perpetuate authentic Hawaiian culture and 'Ōlelo Hawai'i."
 - Sub-action B5: "Increase support and opportunities for cultural practitioners and community members to interact. Educate the visitor industry and individual companies about place-based practices to become more place-based."
 - Sub-action B7: "Continue to support programs and projects that perpetuate the Hawaiian culture with the community and visitors."
- Action C, "Support and promote 'āina-based education and practices to protect and preserve our natural resources so that residents and visitors will aloha 'āina."
 - Sub-action C1: "Identify, support, and partner with existing and new 'āina-based groups that are protecting and stewarding wahi pana, cultural practices, and people."
 - Sub-action C3: "Support interested 'āina-based groups to serve as interpretive educators, trainers, and/or cultural ambassadors to share cultural knowledge with the guest and visitor industry, tour operators, and other business owners."

To view the request for proposals, visit <https://www.hvcb.org/island-of-hawaii-dmap-rfp/>.

Proposals are due by 4:30 p.m. HST on May 15, 2023, to IHVB Destination Manager Rachel Kaiama at rkaiama@hvcb.org. For more information, please call (808) 294-1737 or email rkaiama@hvcb.org.

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About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority is the state agency responsible for representing The Hawaiian Islands around the world, and for holistically managing tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with community desires, economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, and visitor industry needs. HTA works with the community and industry to Mālama Ku'u Home – care for our beloved home. For more information about HTA, visit www.hawaiitourismauthority.org or follow @HawaiiHTA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

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