

Improved Reentry Education (IRE)

Frequently Asked Questions Addendum

A. Public Input

A1. Could you please explain the relevance of the PRSCEO Implementation Study to the proposal process?

IRE seeks to support demonstration projects in prisoner reentry education that develop evidence of reentry education's effectiveness. IRE seeks to demonstrate that high-quality, appropriately designed, integrated, and well-implemented educational and related services provided in institutional and community settings are critical in supporting educational attainment and reentry success for individuals who have been incarcerated. The IRE program builds upon the success and lessons learned from the PRSCEO program, especially the Reentry Education Model. The PRSECO Implementation Study examined the PRSCEO grantees and the Reentry Education Model and made recommendations to strengthen both the program and the model. The revised Reentry Education Model is an example of a model that IRE program applicants can propose to use to implement their program.

A2. Re career navigation: none of the websites we use to develop career plans can't be used inside the prisons because they are not considered secure. What thoughts do you have about how inmates can explore careers without access to career search websites?

The applicant should propose its best solutions given the local conditions in the area in which it proposes to provide services along with a rationale that clearly explains the appropriateness of the proposed approach including expected benefits/outcomes.

A3. Where will FAQs be published?

The FAQ's to the Improved Reentry Education Grant will be published on the Department's Office of Correctional Education [webpage](#).

B. Eligibility

B1. Are there a minimum or average number of individuals to be served?

There is no requirement of an average or minimum number of individuals served.

B2. Where can my organization find a list of eligible partners?

A list of eligible partners may be found in section III, Eligibility Information, of the IRE Notice Inviting Applicants.

B3. The notice mentions Federal and State prisons, but not County jails. Where might I find a listing of eligible correctional institutions?

County Jails, which are considered as a correctional institution, are an eligible applicant/partner in IRE. Please reference Section III. Eligibility Information, of the IRE Notice Inviting Applicants for specifics regarding eligible entities.

B4. Would you see older court-involved or institutionalized youth as being eligible participants?

The IRE program serves an adult education population, which is defined as individuals who have attained 16 years of age, are not enrolled in school and are not required to be enrolled in school. (WIOA pg20980)

C. Definitions

C1. What is the definition of low-skilled Adult and does the IRE grant program only serve that population?

As defined in the definition section of the IRE Notice Inviting Applicants, *Low-skilled adult* means an adult with low literacy and numeracy skills. Adult education population means individuals who have attained 16 years of age, are not enrolled in school and are not required to be enrolled in school. ([WIOA pg20980](#)). The IRE program only supports individuals in this target population.

D. Budget

D1. I am attempting to clarify the budgetary portion of the notice for the Improved Reentry Education notice (CFDA # 84.191D). Within the notice it is indicated that applicants are required to provide a detailed budget for each of the three years, while the estimated funds are for the first 12 months of this project period. My question to you is the estimated range of awards (\$200,000 - \$350,000) for a 12 month period or a 36 month period? Your clarification of this point is greatly appreciated.

The Department plans to award funds for the first twelve months of this project period by September 30, 2015. Funding for program years two and three is subject to the availability of funds and to the grantee meeting the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253. The Department anticipates making up to nine (9) FY15 awards with the average size of a single award totaling about \$300,000 for the first twelve months of the project period. Subject to the conditions noted

above, the Department plans to make continuation awards to the initial grantees for years two and three. Therefore, a grantee has the potential of receiving roughly \$900,000 over the course of the thirty-six month project performance period. The Department anticipates that continuation awards for years two and three will be consistent with initial awards made for year one of grant activities. Please Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

D2. Is there a flat rate for the indirect cost?

All information regarding the indirect cost rate as it applies to the Improved Reentry Education grant opportunity can be found in Part II: Budget in the Improved Reentry Education Application.

E. Allowable Costs

E1. Can we use grant funds to pay for expenses related to education such as books, lab or training materials and fees? Are college tuition and fees and/or course costs an allowable expense with the IRE grant program?

The IRE grant program is funded with Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds. AEFLA funds are provided for educational services below the postsecondary level. Therefore, tuition, books, lab, training materials and fees for services offered at this level are allowable costs in this grant program. IRE grant funds should be used to directly for programmatic functions and these items should be reflected in the budget and budget narrative requirement in the application package. Conversely, college tuition, fees, and cost are not allowable costs for program participants under the IRE grant program.

E2. Can we use grant funds to pay for other costs that can be barriers to enrollment and class participation, such as child care and transportation, for individuals on parole?

Please refer to 2 CFR §200.405 for information regarding allowable costs.

E3. Can we use grant funds for academic and non-academic support staff such as student success program staff, tutors and case managers?

Grant funds may be used to hire support staff necessary to adequately run IRE program activities and program management.

E4. It would also be beneficial if we could have events that build a cohesive peer group after participants leave incarceration. We have had several programs that successful increased student participation by having monthly gatherings. Could we provide food for gatherings with grant funds? Can we provide incentive items like movie tickets?

Food and entertainment are not allowable costs under this program. (2 CFR §200.438, §200.405)

F. Grant Activities

F1. Can these services be developed outside of the intuitions if there is a well-developed referral system from the intuitions to the community partner?

Yes, services can be developed by one of the partner entities outside of the institution. Information regarding the development of a referral system should be included in the applicant's proposed project plan.

F2. When is the start date for the project, October 1, 2015?

The beginning date of the awarded grantee's project period would be October 1, 2015.

F3. Should a project evaluator be in hand at the time of application, or can that be after the award is announced?

A project evaluator does not need to be listed in the application package, but an evaluation plan will need included. If an applicant does have an evaluator selected, you should include that individual's resume in the application and list them as key personnel.

F4. Am assuming you mean for educational programs to enroll clients starting in the jail/prison...then support them in connecting directly with post-release educational services. Or are you saying that you expect some students to enroll for the first time after their release? Also, is there a minimal time required for incarceration?

IRE program participants should be actively engaged in the program prior to their release. The intention of the program is not to reach out to individuals who have not been served by the IRE program while incarcerated. The IRE grant program does not require a minimal time of incarceration. Program participants will need to be individuals currently institutionalized at the start of IRE programmatic activities.

F5. The RFP seems clear that services have to be provided both in the correctional and community services. If the applicant is a community-based organization, can the grant-funded education program be delivered only in the community (if intake / referral activities happen in the correctional setting)?

Yes

F6. The research we've seen from DOJ shows that there's a greater impact with focusing on inmates who are at medium-high risk of recidivating. Is DOE receptive to this kind of narrowing of the target group?

The final determination of which perimeters are set for currently incarcerated population served by the IRE program lies with the applicants. This information should be thoroughly discussed and explained in the project plan within the application narrative.

F7. Is it necessary to address all student needs such as English language acquisition, ABE, Career pathways, transition to college, etc or can you focus on just a few different areas?

The final determination of which areas to focus on for IRE program participants lies with the applicants. This information should be thoroughly discussed and explained in the project plan within the application narrative.

G. Performance Measures

G1. Clarification for the word "percentages" under the performance measures (Reporting and Accountability) - - Will this be established for us or will we need to propose percentages based on the number served?

OCTAE will not provide applicants with proposed percentages for performance measures. It is up to the applicant to propose their own percentages based on the number served. Grantees will be responsible for providing data to support evaluation of these objectives.

G2. Under the first two (2) performance measures, does "level of instruction" equate to (for example) someone entering the program performing on a "Beginning Basic Education" Level (i.e., 2.5 reading and math), and required to at least increase to a "Low Intermediate Basic Education" Level (i.e., 4.5 reading and math)?

Yes, "level of instruction" refers to a student's educational functioning level (EFL) as determined by appropriate standardized assessment according to current National Reporting System Guidelines.

G3. If question 4 is correct, will every level increase per participant count towards performance? Meaning, if a participant enrolls at a 2.5 reading level and after 6 months is at a 9.5 (Low Adult Basic Education Level), will that participant count 3 times towards performance measure #2?

No, each participant that achieves an educational gain—no matter the size of that educational gain—counts only once toward performance measure number 2.

G4. Clarification for performance measure #5, does this mean that they would have to be enrolled in the program at release of incarceration to qualify for inclusion of this measure? Also, will this measure be a low measure because the expectation is that through participation of the program, they will refrain from additional justice system involvement?

Performance Measure 5 states, “The percentage of adults served by the program who, within one year of release, have criminal justice system involvement (arrest, re-conviction, violation of parole conditions, or return to incarceration).” The individual served by the program must have been enrolled in the program prior to release of incarceration in order to 1) be served by IRE program funds and 2) count towards the percentage in Performance Measure 5.

IRE seeks to demonstrate that high-quality, appropriately designed, integrated, and well-implemented educational and related services provided in institutional and community settings are critical in supporting educational attainment and reentry success for individuals who have been incarcerated. With the intention to improve reentry success, it is the hope that participation in the IRE program would eventually lead to lower recidivism rates.

G5. Or does "one year of release" mean release from our program or from incarceration?

Performance Measure 5 states, “The percentage of adults served by the program who, within one year of release, have criminal justice system involvement (arrest, re-conviction, violation of parole conditions, or return to incarceration).” The phrase “within one year of release” refers to the release from incarceration, not the IRE program.

G6. Is there a follow-up requirement?

The requirements expected from IRE grantees are listed in the Application Requirements and General Requirements, which can be found in the Notice Inviting Applicants.

H. Application

H1. On page 40044 (first column, 2.a. Content and Form of Application Submission), it states “Double space...all text in the application narrative...as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs” and “use a font that is either 12 point or larger”. I just want to clarify that it is required that we double space all text even in charts, figures, and graphs and that font has to be 12 point for charts, figures, and graphs.

All text in the application narrative, including charts, figures, and graphs must be double spaced with a font that is 12 point or larger but no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch) Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

H2. Are we expected to also use double space for the one-page abstract?

Project abstracts are not subjected to the mandatory double space requirement for the application narrative.

H3. I was wondering whether the Logic Model required for the Improved Reentry Education application should be placed within the Project Narrative (and if so if it must adhere to the 30 page limit) or if it can be attached as an “Other Mandatory Attachment” on the Grants.gov package?

Ultimately, the decision of where to place the logic model is up to the applicant. However, the logic model must be referenced in the application narrative as it is an application requirement.

H4. Is the application narrative single or double spaced?

Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

H5. What are “mandatory attachments” and do they count towards the 30 pg limit?

The components of the mandatory attachments are listed in the Electronic Application Submission Checklist, located in the Improved Reentry Application Package. The mandatory attachments consist of the forms required in order for applications to be considered complete. These forms do not count towards the thirty page limit, which applies only to the Application Narrative section.

H6. How to provide original signatures on sf424 if electronically submitted

The uploaded SF424 document should contain the necessary original signatures. The document can be printed, signed, and uploaded as a PDF that is attached to the application package and submitted to www.grants.gov.