

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
FOR THE
2019 COMPETITION FOR THE COMPETITIVE GRANTS FOR STATE
ASSESSMENTS (CGSA) PROGRAM**

These frequently asked questions (FAQs) are designed to provide applicants for funding from the Competitive Grants for State Assessments (CGSA) program with information about the competition for funding. The FAQs are organized into the following six sections:

- (A) Overview of the CGSA Program and the 2019 Competition
- (B) Absolute Priorities, Invitational Priorities, and Selection Criteria
- (C) Requirements, Definitions, Procurement, and Other Topics
- (D) The Application Process
- (E) Managing a Grant and Establishing a Consortium
- (F) Resources

Section A – Overview of the CGSA Program and the 2019 Competition

A1: What is the purpose of the CGSA program?

The purpose of the CGSA program is to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and assessment systems used by States to measure the academic achievement of elementary and secondary school students.

This program is similar to the Enhanced Assessment Grant (EAG) program authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act, but there are some important differences between the CGSA and EAG programs. Most importantly, the CGSA has a different set of absolute priorities. We encourage applicants to carefully read the CGSA absolute priorities to ensure that their applications are responsive to the CGSA absolute priorities.

A2: What is the focus of the 2019 CGSA competition?

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) will make CGSA grant awards to States to support the development or enhancement of assessment instruments, assessment research, or tools that support the administration of assessment instruments. Section 1203(b)(1) of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), authorizes the CGSA program.

On January 28, 2019, ED published in the *Federal Register* a notice inviting applications (NIA) for the FY 2019 CGSA competition (<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2019-00217>). The NIA includes the program authority, the specific priorities, and the selection criteria that apply to this competition. The NIA also includes due date and instructions on how to obtain an application package.

ED will consider only applications that meet one or more of the six announced absolute

priorities. These absolute priorities are from section 1203(b)(1) of the ESEA. The 2019 CGSA competition also includes two invitational priorities that are from the Secretary's Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs (Supplemental Priorities) published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018 ([83 FR 9096](#)).

The absolute and invitational priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1: Developing or improving State academic assessments for English learners, including assessments of English language proficiency as required under section 1111(b)(2)(G) of the ESEA and academic assessments in languages other than English to meet the State's obligations under section 1111(b)(2)(F) of the ESEA.

Absolute Priority 2: Developing or improving models to measure and assess student progress or student growth on State academic assessments under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA and other assessments not required under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.

Absolute Priority 3: Developing or improving State academic assessments for children with disabilities, including alternate assessments aligned to alternate academic achievement standards for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities described in section 1111(b)(2)(D) of the ESEA, and using the principles of universal design for learning.

Absolute Priority 4: Allowing for collaboration with institutions of higher education, other research institutions, or other organizations to improve the quality, validity, and reliability of State academic assessments beyond the requirements for such assessments described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.

Absolute Priority 5: Measuring student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.

Absolute Priority 6: Evaluating student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments (such as performance and technology-based academic assessments, computer adaptive assessments, projects, or extended performance task assessments) that emphasize the mastery of standards and aligned competencies in a competency-based education model.

Invitational priorities signal areas of particular interest to ED; applicants may choose to address one or both invitational priorities; however, applicants who meet an invitational priority do not earn extra points and are not given a competitive or absolute preference over other applicants.

Invitational Priority 1: Promoting Literacy. Projects that are designed to address facilitating the accurate and timely use of data by educators to improve reading instruction and make informed decisions about how to help children or students build literacy skills while protecting student and family privacy.

Invitational Priority 2: Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) Education, With a Particular Focus on Computer Science. Projects designed to improve student achievement or other educational outcomes in one or more of the following areas: science, technology, engineering, math, or computer science (as defined in the NIA).

A3: What is the intended impact of CGSA grant awards?

The CGSA is a competitive grant program for States and consortia of States designed to enhance State academic assessments and assessment systems. An essential part of educating students involves assessing students' progress toward meeting the high academic standards students need to be ready for college and the workplace. Assessments provide necessary information for States, districts, educators, families, the public, and students themselves to measure progress and improve outcomes for all learners. It is important to continuously improve and innovate to ensure that these assessments are fair, of high quality and not duplicative, and reflect the expectation that students will be prepared for success in college and careers.

Proficiency on State assessments required under Title I, Part A, of the ESEA is the primary indicator in the ESEA of student academic achievement and, hence, the primary measure of State success in meeting the goals of ESEA. In view of the critical importance of these State assessments, section 1201 of the ESEA provides formula grants to all State educational agencies (SEAs), and section 1203 authorizes the Secretary to make competitive grant awards to SEAs to help them enhance the quality of assessment and accountability systems.

An eligible applicant under this program must propose activities that meet one or more of the absolute priorities listed above in *FAQ A2*.

A4: Who may apply for a CGSA grant?

An SEA, as defined in section 8101(49) of the ESEA, or a consortium of SEAs, of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico may apply for a CGSA grant. Section 8101(49) of the ESEA defines an SEA as the agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools. Please see *FAQ C5* for information about contracted vendor guidelines.

A5: How does a consortium of SEAs apply for a grant?

If a consortium of SEAs applies for a grant, the members of the consortium must either designate one member to apply for the grant on behalf of the consortium or establish a separate, eligible legal entity to apply for the grant. See [34 CFR 75.128\(a\)](#). The consortium must consist of only SEAs. While an applicant may work in collaboration with institutions of higher education (IHEs), research institutions, or other organizations in carrying out grant activities (see section [1203\(b\)\(1\)\(A\)](#) of the ESEA), only SEAs or consortia of SEAs are eligible to apply for a CGSA grant. IHEs, research institutions, or other organizations may partner with the consortium, so long as they comply with any applicable State procurement laws and consortium governance rules; however, these institutions and organizations may not be members of the applicant

consortium. See *FAQ E5* through *FAQ E11* for more information on a consortium applying for a CGSA grant.

A6: May an SEA that has received a Federal grant to develop or enhance an assessment instrument or assessment system apply for funding through the 2019 CGSA competition?

Yes. An SEA developing an assessment instrument or an assessment system with funds from another ED grant, including an EAG award, is eligible to apply for a 2019 CGSA grant. However, applicants must propose activities that would not duplicate activities funded by another Federal grant. Applicants must submit a clear management plan to show how work to be accomplished through the CGSA 2019 competition enhances, but does not duplicate, work already paid for with other Federal funds.

A7: What are ED’s estimate amounts for new awards?

As outlined in the NIA, approximately \$17,622,000 is available for awards in the 2019 CGSA competition. ED estimates that it will make four to eight awards, with each award falling within an estimated range of \$1,000,000 to \$4,000,000 total over a 48-month project period. ED further estimates that the average size of awards will be \$2,500,000. Please note that ED will not make an award for less than the amount specified in section 1203(b)(1)(C) of the ESEA. Please see the chart below and the application package for more information about minimum award sizes by State. The minimum amounts for each State are based on each State’s proportionate share of school aged children in the United States divided by the total amount of the funds available for this program.

State	Minimum Award Amount	State	Minimum Award Amount	State	Minimum Award Amount
ALABAMA	\$263,238	LOUISIANA	\$261,414	OKLAHOMA	\$228,320
ALASKA	\$42,952	MAINE	\$61,756	OREGON	\$209,316
ARIZONA	\$392,674	MARYLAND	\$322,062	PENNSYLVANIA	\$641,972
ARKANSAS	\$168,760	MASSACHUSETTS	\$331,334	RHODE ISLAND	\$50,082
CALIFORNIA	\$2,162,780	MICHIGAN	\$526,320	SOUTH CAROLINA	\$266,226
COLORADO	\$303,846	MINNESOTA	\$309,688	SOUTH DAKOTA	\$50,256
CONNECTICUT	\$183,992	MISSISSIPPI	\$172,792	TENNESSEE	\$360,710
DELAWARE	\$49,072	MISSOURI	\$331,048	TEXAS	\$1,751,074
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	\$26,082	MONTANA	\$54,360	UTAH	\$220,426
FLORIDA	\$1,005,752	NEBRASKA	\$56,243	VERMONT	\$28,490
GEORGIA	\$608,720	NEVADA	\$82,004	VIRGINIA	\$445,614
HAWAII	\$70,784	NEW HAMPSHIRE	\$31,889	WASHINGTON	\$389,842
IDAHO	\$107,260	NEW JERSEY	\$478,372	WEST VIRGINIA	\$89,036
ILLINOIS	\$697,268	NEW MEXICO	\$118,156	WISCONSIN	\$310,782
INDIANA	\$378,232	NEW YORK	\$981,526	WYOMING	\$32,646
IOWA	\$174,946	NORTH CAROLINA	\$555,624	PUERTO RICO	\$167,028

KANSAS	\$170,498	NORTH DAKOTA	\$39,958		
KENTUCKY	\$240,830	OHIO	\$625,812		

A8: Where can I find information about the priorities and selection criteria for the CGSA 2019 competition?

You may find information in the NIA published in the *Federal Register* on January 28, 2019, (<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2019-00217>). The application package describes the application requirements and selection criteria and includes the instructions for the forms an applicant must submit as part of the application. The electronic grant application is available through www.Grants.gov, as explained further in *FAQs D1* and *D2*. In addition, the NIA and instructions for how to access the application at www.Grants.gov are posted on the Applicant Info page of the CGSA program Web site at: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/cgsa/applicant.html>.

A9: Where can I learn more about the CGSA program?

Further information about the CGSA program is available on the program’s Website at: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/cgsa/index.html>.

Section B – Absolute Priorities, Invitational Priorities, and Selection Criteria

B1: What are absolute priorities, invitational priorities, and selection criteria?

The absolute priorities are from the statute for the CGSA program, section 1203(b)(1) of the ESEA. The 2019 CGSA competition has six absolute priorities. (See *FAQ A-2*) An applicant must describe how it will meet at least one of the absolute priorities in its application in order to be eligible to receive an award. If ED determines that an SEA has not met at least one of the absolute priorities, the SEA’s application will be deem ineligible for the competition and will not be eligible to receive an award.

Invitational priorities signal areas of particular interest to ED but do not impact applicants eligibility or scores. The 2019 CGSA competition has two invitational priorities. Applicants may choose to address one or both invitational priorities; however, applicants who meet an invitational priority do not earn extra points and are not given a competitive or absolute preference over other applicants.

The selection criteria are the qualitative factors that peer reviewers use to evaluate applications submitted to the competition. A panel of external, expert reviewers (peers) will review, score, and assign points to an application based on how SEAs address these selection criteria. For the 2019 competition, CGSA selection criteria are organized into seven key categories: need for project, significance, quality of the project design, quality of project services, adequacy of resources, quality of the management plan, and quality of the project evaluation.

B2: May activities pertaining to an invitational priority be included in the State’s budget?

Yes. To the extent applicable, the applicant’s budget under the 2019 CGSA competition may include work related to the invitational priorities.

Section C – Requirements, Definitions, Procurement, and Other Topics

C1: What regulations apply to the CGSA program and awards made under CGSA competitions?

The following parts of the [Education Department General Administrative Regulations](#) (EDGAR) apply to the CGSA program and the awards made under the program: 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. In addition, the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government-Wide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in [2 CFR 180](#), as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in [2 CFR 3485](#), apply to these awards. Furthermore, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in [2 CFR 200](#), as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in [2 CFR 3474](#), also apply to these awards. Finally, the Supplemental Priorities, published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018, ([83 FR 9096](#)) apply.

C2: What rules must grantees follow regarding procurement and contracting for services?

All procurement and contracting for services by grantees must follow the government-wide standards for procurement in [2 CFR 200.317](#). Under those requirements, an SEA must follow the same policies and procedures used for its procurement from non-Federal funds. Because grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, applicants should generally not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors to provide services or goods for a proposed project if a grant is awarded. If an applicant cannot name a contractor because of State procurement laws but wishes to include relevant information in its application for evaluation, an applicant can describe the objective characteristics that it will seek in a contractor should it receive a grant so that peer reviewers may evaluate that information.

C3. What is the Open Licensing requirement under this competition?

Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with ED grant funds. Grant deliverables are final versions of a work developed to carry out the purposes of the grant (*e.g.*, assessment tools or systems).

When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to

disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to [2 CFR 3474.20](#).

In addition, consistent with [2 CFR 200.315](#), ED reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal purposes, the copyright in any work developed under a grant (or contract under a grant) in this program, and any rights of copyright to which a grantee or contractor purchases ownership with grant support.

C4: What information should be provided for estimated costs submitted as part of the application budget?

For each line item in an applicant's budget, the applicant should provide the basis for cost estimates or computations. In cases where the applicant proposes to contribute non-Federal funds to the implementation of a proposed project (*e.g.*, funding from collaborating States and/or organizations, in-kind contributions such as staff time or funding), the applicant must detail these in Form ED 524, Parts B and C of the application.

In cases where an applicant proposes contracting for a portion of the proposed project, the applicant should provide in its budget narrative (Form ED 524, Part C) the proposed cost per contract and the basis for cost estimates or computations for the cost for each contract and subcontracts, to the extent that information is available. Please note that grantees must use appropriate procurement procedures to select contractors, so applicants should generally not include information in their grant applications about specific contractors that may be used to provide services or goods for a proposed project. See *FAQ C2*.

More instructions for preparing a proposed budget for an application are included in the application package. Applicants are encouraged to carefully read and follow those instructions.

C5: What are a grantee's responsibilities when the grantee enters into a contract or other agreement to carry out grant-related activities for a CGSA grant?

As set forth in [34 CFR 75.701](#), a grantee must directly administer or supervise the administration of the project. Therefore, a grantee that enters into a contract or other agreement authorized under State procurement laws to carry out grant-related activities must have a contract administration system to ensure that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts or purchase orders. The grantee must have in place a plan for monitoring contractor performance to ensure that it meets all applicable requirements.

C6: May a CGSA grantee award a subgrant to another agency, organization, or institution to carry out grant-related activities?

No. A grantee does not have authority to award a subgrant under a CGSA grant. A grantee may, however, enter into a contract or other agreement authorized under State procurement laws with

an appropriate entity to carry out grant-related activities. This means, for example, that an SEA may not subgrant CGSA funds to a school district.

C7: What information regarding research activities involving human subjects must an applicant provide to ED in its application?

On the ED Supplemental Information for SF 424 Form in the application package, applicants must indicate whether research activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the project period. If human subjects research activities are planned, the applicant must indicate whether it believes that the activities are exempt or covered (nonexempt), and provide detailed information about research activities. The 2019 CGSA application package includes specific instructions for completing the ED Supplemental Information for SF 424 Form.

CGSA projects that involve nonexempt human subjects research will need to be covered by a Federal-Wide Assurance (FWA), under which the grantee agrees to abide by ED’s regulations for protection of human subjects in research. The project will also need to be reviewed by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) before beginning nonexempt activities. To check if a State agency has an FWA or IRB, go to: <http://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/search/FwaDtl.aspx>. FWAs are issued by the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. They issue FWAs and register IRBs for all 18 Common Rule departments and agencies. If the FWA is not activated, there is a link to renew the form.

ED will make the final determination regarding whether a CGSA project selected for funding requires IRB review.

Additional information about human research subjects and the need for IRB approval is available on ED’s protection of human subjects Web site at: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html>. An applicant with questions about these requirements also may contact ED’s Protection of Human Subjects Coordinator, Jeffery Rodamar, at 202-245-8090 or Jeffery.Rodamar@ed.gov.

Section D – The Application Process

D1: Where can a prospective applicant obtain an application package for the 2019 CGSA competition?

Through the [Grants.gov Web site](#), a prospective applicant can download a copy of the electronic application package for the 2019 CGSA competition, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application. A prospective applicant should search for the downloadable application package for the CGSA program by the CFDA number – 84.368A. You can also obtain a copy of the application package at: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/cgsa/applicant.html>.

Please note that applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in the NIA.

D2: What is the application deadline for this competition?

Applications are due at 4:30:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on March 29, 2019. Please see question *FAQ D3* for information and requirements about how to submit your application.

Please note that the intent to apply deadline is February 27. This notice is not required to apply but such information is helpful to the Department in preparing for the review process. Therefore, we strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of their intent to submit an application for funding. Submit this notification by email to Donald.Peasley@ed.gov with “Intent to Apply” in the email subject line or mail to Donald Peasley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 3E124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. Applicants that do not provide this notification may still apply for funding.

D3: What should a prospective applicant know about Grants.gov in order to register for and use Grants.gov to submit an application?

When using Grants.gov, early registration is important. Grants.gov registration is a one-time process that may take five or more business days to complete. The document *Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants* in the application package provides important submission procedures and references to further instructions for using Grants.gov, including:

- 1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration on the System for Award Management (SAM) (www.sam.gov) which may take approximately one week to complete, but could take upwards of several weeks to complete, depending upon the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the registration steps are complete. Please note that once your SAM registration is active, it will take 24 to 48 hours for the information to be available in, and before you can submit an application through, Grants.gov. For detailed information on the registration steps, please go to: www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html. Your organization will need to update its SAM registration annually.

Primary information about SAM is available at www.sam.gov. However, to further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, ED has prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet which you can find at: www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html.

- 2) **SUBMIT EARLY** – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date and time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded. The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the

application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully to Grants.gov before 4:30:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on the deadline date, March 29, 2019. If the date and time received is later than 4:30:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on March 29, 2019, your application is late and will not be reviewed.

If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

Note: To submit successfully, you must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This DUNS number is typically the same number used when your organization registered with the SAM. If you do not enter the same DUNS number on your application as the DUNS number you registered with, Grants.gov will reject your application.

- 3) **VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK** – You will want to verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time and that it was validated successfully. To see the date and time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date and time received should be no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on March 29, 2019, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned. Once ED receives your application from Grants.gov, an Agency Tracking Number (PR/award number) will be assigned to your application and will be available for viewing on Grants.gov’s Track My Application link.

If your application has a status of “Received” it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs/tracking-an-application.html. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Error Messages document at www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html. If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below.

Note: You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on the e-mails to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully. You should also check online to ensure your application has been received and validated.

ATTENTION – Adobe Forms and PDF Files Required

Applications submitted to Grants.gov for ED will be posted using Adobe forms. Therefore, applicants will need to download the latest version of Adobe Reader (at least Adobe Reader

10.1.14).¹ Information on computer and operating system compatibility with Adobe and links to download the latest version is available on Grants.gov at [compatibility table link](#). We strongly recommend that you review these details on www.Grants.gov before completing and submitting your application. In addition, applicants should submit their application a day or two in advance of the March 29, 2019, closing date as detailed below. Also, applicants are required to upload their attachments in .pdf format only. (See details below under “Attaching Files – Additional Tips.”) If you have any questions regarding this matter please e-mail the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.

D4: May an applicant include hyperlinks in its application?

No. Hyperlinks to Web sites or other documents should not be included in a CGSA application. Reviewers will be instructed not to follow hyperlinks included in an application. ED understands that hyperlinks can be a convenient way to provide information; however, because they can be updated after the deadline for submitting applications, they cannot be considered as part of an application.

D5: May an applicant amend its application after the deadline?

No. An applicant may not submit amendments or updates to its application after the application deadline.

D6: How will applications be reviewed?

Expert, external peer reviewers will review and score all eligible applications using the selection criteria and points included in the NIA and application package. Reviewers also will make recommendations to ED as to whether an application meets one or more of the absolute priorities.

Section E – Managing a Grant and Establishing a Consortium

E1: When will awards from the 2019 competition be made?

ED will make every effort to make awards as soon as possible but the funds will be awarded no later than September 30, 2019.

E2: When may work begin on CGSA projects funded through the 2019 competition?

Work may begin on funded CGSA projects as soon as a grantee receives notification of a grant award from ED. An SEA may propose a planning period within its project period. In addition, under 34 CFR 75.263 and 2 CFR 200.308, no prior approval is required for pre-award costs

¹ In 2013, Grants.gov discovered an issue with the newest version of Adobe Reader XI; however, this issue has been resolved.

incurred within 90 days of the award. These expenditures, however, must be in the approved budget, properly documented, and meet other statutory and regulatory requirements, including those set out in the Uniform Guidance. Also, the applicant incurs these costs at its own risk. If the applicant does not receive an award, the Department will not reimburse the applicant for the pre-award costs.

E3: How long will a grantee have to spend funds from the 2019 competition?

The project period is up to 48 months from the first day of the award period. Applicants should request a time period that is up to 48 months, based on a timeline that takes into account the urgency of the need for the final product from this competition to be accessible to the field.

All work described in the grant application that the applicant intends to complete using grant funds, including dissemination activities, must be completed by the end of the project period. Note that, a grantee may propose to conduct some activities after the project period using non-Federal funds. The funding period also ends at the end of the project period. This means that all funds must be obligated by the last day of the project period and liquidated within 90 days following that date.

E4: What other resources are available for managing a grant?

The CGSA resources website at <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/cgsa/resources.html> provides information about managing a grant and links to additional resources. In addition, ED staff will provide resources, information, and technical assistance to all grantees during the grant period.

E5: What factors might an applicant consider when forming a consortium for a CGSA?

In forming a consortium and determining the management structure for the consortium and the activities to be performed by each member, an applicant might consider such factors as the rationale for forming a consortium with this particular group of SEAs (*e.g.*, State personnel in the group have a beneficial combination of expertise, the diversity of student populations across the member SEAs would enhance the project); how the planned management structure for the consortium will be conducive to high-quality collaboration and provide for the effective involvement of the collaborating SEAs; and how services will be procured by the group.

E6: May a consortium include entities other than SEAs?

No. A consortium may include only SEAs. However, a consortium of SEAs may collaborate, under a contractual or other relationship, with entities other than SEAs (*e.g.*, IHEs, nonprofit organizations, or for-profit companies) for purposes of carrying out activities under a grant.

E7: May an SEA enter or leave the consortium during the project period?

Yes. A consortium should establish protocols for member SEAs to change roles in the consortium, including leaving or joining the consortium and the consortium has flexibility in

developing those protocols. However, a grantee must promptly notify ED in writing when there are any changes to the membership of the consortium.

E8: Members of a consortium must enter into a binding agreement that is signed and submitted along with their application for a CGSA. What terms must be included in that agreement?

Each member of a consortium must enter into a binding agreement that: (1) details the activities that each member of the consortium plans to perform; and (2) binds each member of the consortium to every statement and assurance made by the applicant in its application. See [34 CFR 75.128\(b\)](#). It is important to note that the binding agreement must be between the SEA that would serve as the fiscal agent for the grant (usually the applicant SEA) and each SEA in the consortium. The applicant for the group is legally responsible for the use of all grant funds and ensuring that the project is carried out by the consortium in accordance with Federal requirements. Each other member of a consortium is legally responsible for carrying out the activities it agrees to perform and using the funds that it receives under the agreement in accordance with all applicable Federal requirements. [34 CFR 75.129](#).

Additionally, a consortium may wish to include in its binding agreement a description of the consortium's structure and operation, including: the organizational structure of the consortium (*e.g.*, differentiated roles that a member SEA may hold); the consortium's method and process (*e.g.*, consensus, majority) for making different types of decisions (*e.g.*, policy, operational); the protocols by which the consortium will operate, including protocols for member SEAs to change roles or leave the consortium and for new member SEAs to join the consortium; the consortium's plan, including the process and timeline, for setting key policies and definitions for implementing the proposed project; and the consortium's plan for managing grant funds received under the 2019 competition.

E9: May an SEA participate in more than one consortium applying for a CGSA or carrying out an existing EAG?

Yes. An SEA may participate in more than one consortium applying for a grant under the CGSA competition or carrying out an existing EAG.

E10: May an SEA participate in a CGSA awarded to a consortium of SEAs in ways other than as a consortium member?

Yes. An SEA may participate in a grant in ways other than as a consortium member. For example, an SEA may participate as a collaborator, and the applicant SEA or consortium may describe what such collaboration means.

E11: What is the minimum award amount that a consortium of SEAs can receive?

SEAs applying as part of a consortium must ensure that the amount requested is at least the amount specified for the largest State in the consortium; the amount requested does *not* need to

be the cumulative amount for all States in the consortium. Please refer to *FAQ A7* and the application package for minimum amounts for SEAs.

Section F – Resources

F1: What ED resources are available to assist States in the research and development of assessment instruments?

Assessment instruments created with CGSA program funds should be developed in ways that are consistent with current research and best practices in the field. The Regional and National Comprehensive Centers, particularly the Center on Standards and Assessments Implementation (available at <http://csai-online.org/>), can provide support to States as they develop and implement new assessments instruments. Contact information for all centers is available at www.ed.gov/programs/newccp/contacts.html. Please be aware, however, that the centers may not assist SEAs or consortia in preparing applications for the CGSA competition.

F2: Who can I contact for clarification or additional information on the CGSA program?

For clarification or additional information, please contact:

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