

**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools**

**Models Grant Program Applicant Technical Assistance Call
March 10, 2010
3:30 pm ET**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time, all participants are in a listen-only mode. During the question and answer session, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone.

Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. Now I will turn today's meeting over to Ms. Amalia Cuervo. You may now begin, ma'am.

Amalia Cuervo: Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. I am Amalia Cuervo, competition manager with the Department of Education's Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools. I'd like to welcome you to our National Technical Assistance conference call for this year's campus-based models program grant competition for this fiscal year.

Before I get started with all of the specifics regarding this year's grant program, I'd like to take a minute to review the agenda and the structure of the call that we have organized. First, I'm going to review the agenda, I'm going to give an overview and very brief history of the program. Then I will discuss the goals and purpose of this grant competition and program; the eligibility requirements; and review how the application package is organized.

At that time, I will stop, pause and open it up for questions. We have an operator who will assist us with managing the questions. Then I will go on to discuss the three selection criteria.

Then again we'll stop and take questions and then move on to a discussion of a number of issues including the budget, project period, IDC rates, incentives, IRBs and other issues related to the competition. Then I will discuss grant writing tips and organizing your application package, ending by identifying some key resources and how to find them.

Okay, so let us begin. We're going to provide an overview, a quick overview of the program. Some of you are probably familiar with this initiative. It has been funded through the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools since 1999. It was authorized by Congress in 1998. The purpose has been and remains to identify and promote effective campus-based alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs.

By the year 2007, the Department of Education through OSDFS, had selected and identified 34 campuses for this honor. There have been a number of publications published through the Higher Ed Center Technical Assistance and those resources are still available through their Web site.

In 2007, OSDFS staff met with Congressional staff and were asked to review the program's effectiveness and future direction. As a result of this collaboration, the grant competition was enhanced, in a sense – by the introduction of multiple levels of recognition.

In addition, the Office published two monographs which emphasized the effectiveness of

certain AOD interventions based on our experience and disseminated the findings. Those two monographs, again, are available through the Higher Ed Center.

These were the Experiences in Effective Prevention monograph and additional case study analyses that were published under the title of Field Examples of Effective Prevention. These resources I have listed under the resource list in the application package and I encourage you to refer to them as you consider writing an application for this program.

In 2008, we initiated the new and revamped application package, basically identifying three different recognition levels. Those included exemplary, effective and promising programs. We felt that this was a way to encourage more participation in programs that have shown a strong theoretical base and limited initial research findings could also be recognized.

Since that time, we have in fact funded five model programs under the FY 2008 allocation. And just this past year, in 2009, we were able to recognize another five campuses.

This year we are opening the competition again under the same funding priorities and with the hopes of making about five, up to six, awards.

Let's now briefly review the goals and purpose of this competition. The goals of this program are to identify and disseminate information about exemplary and effective alcohol and other drug abuse prevention programs being implemented on college campuses. Through this grant program, the US Department of Education will also recognize colleges and universities whose programs, while not yet exemplary or effective, show evidence that they are promising.

All programs to be considered for recognition must have been implemented for a minimum of two years and have data to support the effectiveness of their interventions. The application's deadline date is March 31, 2010 at 4:30:00 pm Eastern Standard time.

Application submission, we are accepting applications either through electronic means via the Department's e-Grant eApplication or in hard copy. We have - this is a change from last year; we're no longer using www.grants.gov. Please note that if you have not used our particular electronic submission system, you become familiar with it before the deadline, at least a week before, so that it can be an easier process for you.

It is a very user-friendly system and we have provided a Help Desk phone number. If you have any questions, it's best to contact them directly, not our program office. We're best helpful in terms of the programmatic aspects of the competition but not the eApplication troubleshooting.

The project period for this competition has been changed; whereas last year and in 2008, we had a project period that was shorter for promising programs and one that was longer for exemplary or effective, we have changed it. This year, regardless of the recognition level, that we find your program to meet, you have up to 24 months. This means that it's up to you, your choice in developing your budget. You will choose whether you're going to develop the budget and agree to complete your work within 12 months, 18 months, up to 24 months.

The average estimated size of award will be about \$137,000 - \$137,500. The size of award is limited to \$100,000 plus indirect costs for promising programs and \$150,000 for exemplary and effective programs plus your indirect cost rate.

Now if we could take a minute, I'd like to review through the contents of application package and then pause to take questions. The application package this year has a few more sections than it did in 2008. We have a grant overview, sort of a grant fast sheet at the beginning. Then the second section presents the application submission procedures clearly; each of the specific addresses, if you're going to mail it, if you're going to hand deliver it.

We do not accept faxes or emailed applications directly to any of us that work here in the program office or in the Department of Education. And those instructions are clearly laid out at the beginning of the application package.

The third section presents the program background information. This is the heart of the application package in terms of the substance that must be addressed. We strongly recommend, first of all, that you read the entire application package several times and perhaps have your colleagues or your team also review it. Be sure that you're capturing all of the various details and nuances.

We have expanded the background section on the prevention of alcohol and other drug abuse amongst college students and added some new references. We clearly spell out the four elements of the funding priority; the selection criteria is the same. We have revamped the Frequently Asked Questions section. I strongly recommend that you read each of those very carefully and refer to them multiple times.

The fourth section, which begins on Page 38, if you have downloaded it from our Web or Higher Ed Center's Web site, includes the legal regulatory documents that govern this

particular program. We are limited in the sense that we need to be true to what was approved in 2008 and so there are certain things that we weren't able to add or tweak.

For example, the length of the application; I've had numerous emails about the page limit. Since this was not specified in the original notice, we cannot dictate a specific page limit. We recommend that you maintain a reasonable length of 25 to 30 typed, double-spaced pages.

The last chapter, which really talks about some general instructions and information regarding how to prepare the application, how to organize it, the standardized forms that you need to include and a checklist for preparing your application. We included the forms and instructions as well. The online version, I believe, has a link and the names of the required forms are included in the text of the application.

So I'm going to stop here and open it up for questions at this time.

Coordinator: Thank you, we will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Please unmute your phone and record your name clearly when prompted. I need your name to introduce who is asking a question. Once again, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone.

I have an individual; go ahead, you were asking a question? Mention your name please.

(Caller 1): This is (Caller 1) with Eastern Washington University.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, hi.

(Caller 1): Hi. I cannot find it at the moment, but it seems to me there's a projected start date that's a part of our program description. Can you review that for me please?

Amalia Cuervo: Yes, we had projected that the projects would start August 1, 2010.

(Caller 1): Great, thank you.

Coordinator: And at this time, there are no further questions.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay. So moving forward, we're going to review now two critical elements, the absolute funding priority and the elements within the funding priority and what they mean. We will also discuss the three recognition types. I do want to stress the fact that this is a recognition program. It was intended to, as we stated earlier, to identify and promote effective campus-based AOD prevention programs.

The funding priority established for this program, which again, is on Page 25, states that the absolute funding priority for this program includes four elements. First, the applicant must describe the program that has been implemented on their campus for at least two years, including the structure and the content of the program, the student population that is targeted by the program and any unique features of the program. So that's Funding Priority 1 or Sub 1.

The second part of that funding priority is to provide a detailed theoretical basis of the program's effectiveness. The third element of the funding priority is to provide data to demonstrate the program's impact on the target student populations, including evidence of cognitive or behavioral changes or both among the target population.

The fourth element of the funding priority that you must meet in order to be considered eligible for this competition is you must clearly state in your proposal that you consent to a site visit. The purpose of such a visit is to clarify information in the application and to verify evaluation data.

This site visit will occur after the end of the first phase of the peer review process, which will take place in April. We're projecting that the site visits will occur in May and each site visit will last a day. But there is pre-planning, which your university, if selected for a site visit, will need to agree to host. I mean, we actually pay for the site visit so you won't be spending any money on that. But you would agree to welcome the site visitors and basically provide them the information that they'll request from you and follow an agenda that they will send you in advance.

We train the site visitors, there's a protocol they need to follow but it is a critical component. It's not just critical, it's a requirement of the program. So no site has ever been funded under this program that has not received a site visit. The purpose of the site visit is to verify and clarify information that you provided in the application, the written application. And I'll go more into the site visit later on in the discussion but I just want to stress that.

Where you consent to the site visit in the proposal, you can do it in several places. It's up to you where you state that you clearly consent to the site visit but you need to do it proactively and state it. There were a number of applicants in a previous competition that were deemed ineligible because they did not openly and clearly state that they would host and consent to the site visit. We suggest that you put it up front in the abstract of your proposal.

Okay, now let's talk about the selection - I'm sorry - the recognition type, since we've talked about the fact that it's been expanded since 2007 and we now have a three-tier recognition program. We'll begin with the exemplary definition.

Sorry, hold on a sec. Okay, the first level of recognition is the effective program recognition. And for us, that's clearly spelled out on Page 15. And again, it was part of the national - of the notice of final priority for the program approved in 2008.

It means that the program has a strong theoretical base and has been evaluated using either an experimental or quasi-experimental research design, with the evaluation results suggesting effectiveness in reducing alcohol or other drug abuse among college students targeted by the program; and that the data also demonstrates that it has been effective - the program has been effective in reducing problems resulting from alcohol or other drug use among college students, as well as reducing risk factors, enhancing protective factors or resulting in some combination of those impacts.

I'm sorry - I've just made a mistake. I just gave you the definition for effective program. I apologize; let me back up - just delete everything I just said. That was an effective program definition.

An exemplary program - by that we mean that the program again has a strong theoretical base and has demonstrated effectiveness in reducing alcohol or other drug abuse amongst college students and reducing problems resulting from alcohol or other drug use - using a research design of the highest quality. That is most exemplary - all exemplary programs that we've recognized since 2008 have used an experimental design.

For the purposes of this grant competition, a research design of the highest quality means an experimental design in which students are randomly assigned to participate in a project being evaluated, such as a treatment group and those who do not participate in the project, the control group. So the effect of the project is the difference in the outcomes between the treatment and the control group.

If strong experimentally-determined evidence already exists in the literature and there is research on the effectiveness of a particular program that your campus is implementing, then the program that was implemented on the applicant's campus with (Fidelity) to the research, may show or demonstrate or submit in its application using a quasi-experimental design of that program implementation, and that will be considered acceptable for consideration under this exemplary category.

So for the purposes of this grant competition, we do allow for both experimental and quasi-experimental designs to be considered, including several designs that attempt to approximate a random assignment design.

Okay, then the effective program is what I described just when I first began. So in the effective program designation, we're defining again as a program that has shown to have a strong theoretical basis and has been evaluated using either an experimental or a quasi-experimental approach design. And the evaluation results here can simply be suggestive in reducing alcohol or other drug abuse among college students. But perhaps they have definitive impacts in reducing risk factors or enhancing protective factors or resulting in some combination of those impacts, so it's a little bit more flexible.

Then the promising program recognition category - by that we mean that - the program has

a strong theoretical base in the literature and it has evidence that's been obtained using limited research methods, such as a pre-post test design. The program may show promise that it's reducing or may reduce alcohol or other drug abuse but it's not conclusive. And it may reduce problems resulting from AOD use amongst college students and maybe does reduce the risk factors and shows promise in enhancing protective factors.

So for the purpose of this grant competition, limited research methods are also acceptable and may be considered for recognition under the promising category and would include research designs that have simply a pre- and post treatment measurement of effects or a treatment of a single subject or a group of single subjects with no comparison groups.

I'd like to open the lines now for questions on these issues, the funding priorities, the four elements of the funding priority, how to meet them, how to address it in the application package and the three recognition types. So I'll pause for your questions.

Hello?

Coordinator: I'm sorry, I must have missed that, ma'am. Did you want questions at this time?

Amalia Cuervo: Yes.

Coordinator: Once again, to ask a question, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Please unmute your line and record your name when prompted. One moment, ma'am.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, thanks.

Coordinator: (Caller 1), go ahead.

(Caller 1): (Caller 1) again.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, hi.

(Caller 1): Hi. I have a couple questions related to the research design piece for a promising program. We're looking at a combination of programs from a couple different areas to sort of address the 3-in-1 framework pieces.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay.

(Caller 1): And one of the areas is the later night alternative programming area. And we haven't done - to my knowledge so far in our short research - we haven't found any mechanisms by which those students have been subject to any sort of assessment pieces at all. So we would obviously plan to integrate that in our proposal. Is that acceptable or is that not something we should do?

Amalia Cuervo: I guess the question would come back to you. I would ask you if you have data, since one of the funding priorities is that you have implemented the program for at least two years and you have data. It doesn't say how much data but you have data that suggests its effectiveness, including evidence of cognitive, behavioral changes for that target population.

That would be, you know, just - I would just question, ask you back, do you have any data that shows that the programs had some impact or are you saying it's shown impact, a limited

impact on some students and - but not on this group that you're mentioning and you want to research that as part of the design?

(Caller 1): For...

Amalia Cuervo: Of the grant - I'm sorry.

(Caller 1): For that piece of sort of this multi-tier program, we have absolutely no data on students who've attended any of the late night programs or attempts light night programs that we've had outside of attendance numbers.

Amalia Cuervo: Right. And that's - that would be the whole program you'd be submitting would not have any data to demonstrate the program's impact?

(Caller 1): No, no, other pieces of the approaches do; there's different - there's three different pieces that I'm considering to write as part of the program and that's one of the pieces. The other two do have limited information for the definition but this one, I - so far we haven't been able to find anything, outside of what I can find in the literature and, you know, outside of our institution.

Amalia Cuervo: Well, you know, I really can't make a determination, like, on this call. You could certainly email us and we could - as long as it meets the funding priority. I mean, you need to meet the four-pronged funding priority. And number three under the funding priorities is that you need to provide data to demonstrate the program's impact on the target student population.

(Caller 1): Okay.

Amalia Cuervo: So if you're submitting the whole program and you're saying it's three-pronged and we've got two prongs with data, it's limited, you know, I mean, obviously you're saying it has some data. So if you would like more targeted - a more targeted response, I think it's best to email us directly on that.

(Caller 1): Great, thank you.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay.

Coordinator: Our next question comes from (Caller 2). Go ahead.

(Caller 2): Hi, I'm just wondering, you just went over kind of what's exemplary, what's effective, what's promising. And we'd gone back and forth with whether what we'd like to submit is effective or promising. And in the narrative, it indicated that that determination will be made by the Department of Education. But we have to have a budget and that would affect how much we're eligible for in the budget. So do we submit a budget making an assumption and the assumption might get changed? How would that...

Amalia Cuervo: Right. That's a great question, (Caller 2). We actually recommend that you do not make the determination yourself, that you write the proposal and prepare the budget as if you were going to be an exemplary or effective. So we'll make the budget cuts and revisions according to what score and recommendation the peer reviewers determine that - if you're in the funding range, you would be eligible for.

But we clearly state that we do not - we're actually requesting that you do not make a determination prior to submitting and writing the proposal that you're going to get effective or you're eligible for exemplary or you're eligible only for promising.

So you know, just write the application being responsive to the selection criteria and all of the sub-elements - which I'll review in a minute - and then create the budget, up to \$150,000 and plus your indirect costs. And just know that if you're selected for funding, we are going to engage every single applicant to verify numbers and basically make some budget adjustments if needed.

And only those that are deemed effective and exemplary would be given the additional funds as stated in the notice of final priorities and the NIA. So does that help clarify the...?

(Caller 2): Yeah, absolutely, thank you.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, thanks.

Coordinator: Our next question then comes from Norris Dickard to go ahead.

Norris Dickard: Hi, I'm Norris Dickard, I'm with the Department joining Amalia on the call. I just wanted to clarify one thing, which is under exemplary. The program that you submit may do one of two things, it's an either/or. You can discuss the demonstrative effectiveness in reducing alcohol or drug abuse among the college students or reducing the problems resulting from alcohol or drug use among college students. So you don't have to do both and I just wanted to chime in to make that clear.

Amalia Cuervo: Thanks. Are there any other questions about the levels of recognition or the funding priorities? I want to just state - I'm sorry, is there someone?

Coordinator: I have Caller 3 online. Go ahead, Caller 3.

(Caller 3): I just wanted to go back to the - (Caller 3) - I wanted to go back to the first lady's question. I think you answered that very properly but be sure that she could, as part of the grant do the further evaluate the late night program, that could be a part of it. But my experience sometime in working with a lot of programs is that they try to cover too many areas and actually it's one strategy that you're going to take throughout the grant.

And so even though she had three that she was considering, then I think what you said and I think that she will understand if she looks at the grant applications, that that certainly could be something that could be further evaluate. I think I'm right on that. Amalia, you may want to correct me.

Amalia Cuervo: No, you're absolutely right, (Mary). In order to - right, we'll discuss this more as we go through the selection criteria but that's exactly right; you need to identify the pieces of the program that you've implemented that you're submitting for recognition. You need to identify how you're going to enhance that program and how you're going to enhance the evaluation of that current program.

So you're application could address the fact that while these two components of the program you have in place, have data, you know, you propose or you would like to, you know, engage or propose how you're going to evaluate this other piece for which you have no data. So you would actually design a project. In your project evaluation section, you would address how you would evaluate that component, if you decided that's how you wanted to address your application package.

Coordinator: Thank you. At this time, there are no further questions.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, great, thank you. Now we're going to talk about the selection criteria because this - the selection criteria really represents the nuts and bolts. And this is where sort of the rubber meets the road, so to speak. We recommend that you organize your application package to respond to each of the selection criteria and sub-criteria.

The peer reviewers will be evaluating your application based on this criteria and exactly this point system that we've developed and published. And it is the same as the previous 2008 application. We do advise you to really carefully read each selection criteria and the note under each. Because again, that's what clarifies that selection criteria, and that's what will guide you in terms of what to write and respond to what we're asking.

The first selection criteria addresses the significance of your project. And in order to address significance, we're asking you to describe your program and the potential contribution that your program would make to the development and advancement of the current theory, knowledge and practice in the field of AOD prevention. And that's worth 15 points.

Then sub-criteria B asks you, the applicant, to develop a plan if you were selected for funding, on how you would disseminate the findings of this program in ways that will enable others to use, learn from, the information or strategies, including the evidence and the data of the program's readiness of replication.

So basically we're saying that in responding to this criterion, you will provide a detailed description of the AOD prevention program that has been implemented on your college campus for at least two full years. And I want to stress, at least two full years.

But since the application deadline is March 31 of 2010, you need to clock back two years from that date because the reviewers will be very exact. And programs that may only have been implemented for 18 months or when screening it, we see that the program wasn't implemented but maybe 14 months, that will basically deem you ineligible, just on that particular point alone. Because that is one of the sub-elements of the funding priority.

So you need to state very clearly the dates, how long this program has been implemented. You must describe why this program is different and would add to what's already known in the field of AOD prevention, what makes it special, how does it contribute to the state of knowledge and research in the field.

In addition, your application must describe the comprehensive dissemination plan that you would put in place in order to make that information on your program and your data available to others in the field and other campuses. And your plan may include but not be limited to writing articles for publications, providing consultations to other institutions or providing regional trainings, hosting conferences or creating a Web site or webinars related to your project.

I want to stop and just ask if there any questions on that criteria before I move forward because these are fairly detailed. Operator?

Coordinator: Yes, ma'am. Once again, to ask a question, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Please unmute your line and record your name clearly when prompted. One moment please.

(Caller 1), go ahead with your question.

(Caller 1): Thank you. My question is about the two years. Is there an expectation of how many times during those calendar years the program would have occurred or is it understood it's mostly during the academic year; if you could clarify that?

Amalia Cuervo: Right. There's no definition or criteria that you have to have implemented it five times over two years. No, that is simply been in place and been implemented over a two-year period, obviously during college calendar years. We wouldn't have expected you to be implementing it over the summers or during Christmas vacations or things like that. So you know, a full two years.

(Caller 1): Thank you.

Amalia Cuervo: Any other questions?

Coordinator: At this time, ma'am, no further questions.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, we'll discuss the project design. Project design is worth 40 points and there are 3 sub-criteria. The first sub-criteria under project design asks the applicant to describe the extent to which the design of the program reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices. This is worth 20 points.

Sub-criteria B asks that you describe the extent to which the plan to enhance the program reflects up-to-date knowledge of research and effective practice. For example, in the case that (Michelle) presented; if she were going to propose evaluating the late night project options, you would need to describe how the enhancements that you propose and the

evaluation of those enhancements would be reflective of what's the cutting edge research on programs like that and on other effective programs similar to it. And again, that's worth 10 points.

Then the Sub-criteria 2C is also worth 10 points. And here, we're asking the applicants to determine or describe the extent to which the goals, objectives and outcomes to be achieved by the enhancement of the program are clearly specified and measurable. It's a little trickier and does require some very thoughtful thinking in terms of how to - for the readers to be able to understand how one would measure the impact of the various elements of the program you're proposing.

So the notes under this criterion indicate that if you're fully responsive to this criterion, you'll clearly describe how the program that's been implemented for at least two full years is based on current research and practice to prevent alcohol or other drug abuse among college students on campuses.

And you must provide a comprehensive description of the enhancements of the project. I'm sorry, of the enhancements that you propose to make to the program. As I just stated a little while ago, including how you selected the proposed enhancements, on what basis did you make those selections? Why are they the appropriate strategies and the specific outcomes that you hope to achieve after implementing the enhancements?

There's more discussion regarding enhancements that the program may include but are not limited to expanding the number of students served the program, identifying a new target, student population to be served that has not been served previously or implementing a totally new strategy to evaluate the same target students.

You should demonstrate how proposed enhancements will build and improve the program on your campus. You must also clearly describe the conceptual framework underlying the proposed enhancements to your program and explain how the enhancements reflect current research and practice to prevent alcohol and other drug abuse among college students. And in considering these criterion, I really encourage you to read in the background section where we discussed what the state of knowledge is in this field and that Ed - Department of Ed emphasizes that while there are specific differences and individual differences across campuses and what may be very effective for one campus may not fit all campuses. There are some critical elements of all effective AOD prevention programs on campuses that should be part of what you're proposing for recognition.

So the reviewers will be looking at, is this just a singular program on your campus, or is it part of a comprehensive approach to addressing AOD prevention, and is interested in programs that incorporate a variety of strategies both individually-based as well as including broader, more comprehensive approaches that include, you know, the various stakeholders on campus and integrate that input. Because research strongly supports that the use of comprehensive integrative programs with multiple complementary components are - have the most promise in making a lasting difference in these issues or these AOD problems.

So you know, I don't - while going through these criteria is very important, I also don't want you to lose the big picture in which this program that you're proposing to be recognized exists. You need to also address that in your application so that the readers, the peer reviewers have an understanding of how you are addressing AOD prevention on your campus, and the level of commitment and thoughtfulness that has gone into the program

planning and implementation and evaluation of your effort.

Any questions on that criteria? Operator?

Coordinator: As a reminder, if you'd like to ask a question, please press star 1.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay.

Coordinator: And I am showing no questions.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, very good. So we're going to proceed to the project evaluation, which is worth 40 points. And this is again a very significant component of your proposal. And it does again have three sub-elements which are specific and clearly stated, and there is a discussion note section underneath. These three sub-elements, the first one has to do with the extent to which the evaluation data that you provide - are providing us shows evidence of effectiveness of the program you're nominating for recognition, and how it has, in fact, reduced or suggested reductions in alcohol or other drug abuse or it has reduced problems resulting from the use and abuse of alcohol and other substances or reduced risk factors or enhanced protective factors or the combination of those impacts, and that's worth 25 points.

Criterion 2B has to do with the specific methods of evaluation that have been used during the implementation of the program and how, you know, these will guide your further evaluation about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings. That's worth 10 points. The last one then the extent to which the methods of evaluations used during the enhancement of the program will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes. That's worth five

points.

Again, let's just review. So this is project evaluation worth 40 points. And in response to this criterion, you, the applicant, would address the evidence of effectiveness of your campus' alcohol or other drug abuse program that you're nominating for consideration.

And you would explain and include a comprehensive explanation of the specific data that served as a clear indication of how your program's been effective. You should describe the methods that were used to evaluate your program, over what period of time, include the instruments that were used to measure the observed outcomes or provide an in-depth description of those instruments and provide quantitative and qualitative data that you collected before and after the program's implementation.

Your application must also specify the plan that you are proposing to use to evaluate the proposed enhancements, proposed program enhancements and the evaluation of how you, you've planned for how you will evaluate those program enhancements during the project period that you specify in your application.

Again, your evaluation should be designed to continue to collect data on existing program elements as well as any program enhancements that you're proposing. I'll stop there and open it up for questions. Operator?

Coordinator: I'm still showing no questions.

Amalia Cuervo: No questions, okay. The selection criteria are found on Pages 25 through 27. And then we follow it up with a long section on Frequently Asked Questions, which we strongly

encourage that you read carefully. We did indicate the proposed project start date on the page - at the bottom of Page 29. We expect to make the awards with a start-up date of August 1. And the latest possible end date, which will be 24 months after that, would be July 31, 2012. This is a change from the 2008 application package.

The budgets, we do provide some guidance regarding budgets on Page 13. And I believe there was an excellent question from (Michelle) regarding that. You should go ahead and prepare the budget with no attention to what level of recognition you may be found to be eligible for.

And regarding indirect cost rates, I do want to call your attention to the information that we've provided on Page 34; is there a restricted or direct cost rate for this program? And what we stated is no, there is none. But we do ask you to consider strongly to use the indirect cost rate for other sponsored activities. This office is not - the mission of this office is not to fund research. This is a recognition program; we're not funding research grants.

So we do not feel it's appropriate for you to include your institution's indirect cost rate for organized research as those rates are much higher. So we would be negotiating that with you if in fact you submitted that under your budget proposal. We want to tell you up front to please, you know, negotiate with your business office or your sponsor program's office so that you bring it more in line with what we're requesting.

There's more information there on our Web site where you can actually go to get some further assistance. We do allow for incentives; however, an incentive limit has been set, which has not been in previous applications, and that is provided in the application package under budget-specific questions on Page 33: Are Incentives an Allowable Expense? Yes,

you may use grant funds to provide modest incentives. But we set a cap value for an incentive limited to no more than \$10 per individual.

You're certainly welcome to augment your incentive's budget through other means at the university or through donations or contributions. But in terms of what we, the Department of Ed through this grant can fund, it cannot exceed \$10 per individual, per round of data gathering.

If you're considering using incentives in a kind of a group format, you may in that case be allowed to budget up to \$100 in value for lottery or group incentives.

We do encourage all of you, since all of these grants generally do trigger the human subjects research rules, that you consider going ahead and beginning the process, along with your application - we don't require it but we recommend it. In some instances, it has taken up to 12 months to get an IRB clearance at certain universities. And this does delay your project start-up time that you have for implementation. So we've provided some guidance on that in the body of the application, as well as on Page 33, top of the page, regarding what constitutes human subjects research and some guidance about that.

This brings us to the peer review process; what it is - let me just touch on that so everybody understands. When we get the applications here after the - we get them on the 31st, we start doing an - I'm sorry - a screening process, whereby we determine whether you've met the basic funding priorities of the competition, which are the four elements that I discussed.

If you're deemed ineligible, then we would be communicating with you right away within the first two to three weeks after we receive your application and we would do so in writing

so that if you're deemed ineligible, you'll find out right away.

If you're not, if you're deemed eligible, then you move to the second round of the peer review process, which is where we submit your application for review, where it's read by three independent reviewers that are hired through an independent contract that we manage through the office. As a result your application is reviewed and scored. We manage the peer review process, under Norris' and I in the National Programs Division.

It is a lengthy process. It takes, all of April for this phase, for example. Then once we've finished that component of the peer review process, the highest scoring applications are then selected for site visits. And so we would be contacting you directly by email or phone. So it's very important that you indicate on the forms that must accompany the application what's - who is the best person to contact and a phone number and an email that actually works because that can, you know, be very problematic and delay the process.

And also because the site visits are going to occur most likely in May, mid-May, maybe, as late as the third week in May, many folks at the various universities have already finished their spring semester and may be on travel. So do make plans if you're committed in being considered for this award of having a plan of who will respond to questions from the Department if you're selected for consideration for funding.

There are a number of deliverables, depending on what designation you're deemed eligible for. And that's spelled out on Page 18 of the application package. And you could address that in the deliverable section of your application.

Are there any questions about these issues I've just covered?

Coordinator: Again, if you'd like to ask a question, please press star 1. I am showing a question from (Caller 4). Your line is open.

(Caller 4): Hi, this is (Caller 4) from Purdue University. And I do have a question from within that general section about the state single point of contact.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay.

(Caller 4): I sent an email around to our state agencies, asking who that person is on our campus. And I received an email from one of our state agencies, saying that this specific agency is the state single point of contact and they are not reviewing contracts. So I asked - I sent an email to that agency directly, asking for confirmation of this and I haven't received any information back. And I realize I still have a couple of weeks to go on this. But if I don't hear from them, would that original email that I received be enough when I submit my application?

Amalia Cuervo: (Caller 4), that's an excellent question and we do address the intergovernmental review on Page 57. And as long as you submit your letter that you sent to them, or you're email and that information that you got back and just document the efforts that you've made to secure this review, that, you know, we'll accept that. But continue to try.

(Caller 4): Okay.

Amalia Cuervo: You know, don't give up because it is the - if your state participates, then, you know, you do need some official confirmation that they're no longer reviewing. And there is a Web site that you can go to, to see whether your state is actively participating. Did you know that?

That there's this Web site...?

(Caller 4): I did not.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, it's on Page 57 under Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs in the application package. It's basically www.whitehouse.gov/omd/grants/spoc/.

(Caller 4): Okay.

Amalia Cuervo: So that might give you an update on where your state is on that.

(Caller 4): Okay, thanks, Amalia.

Amalia Cuervo: Yes, thank you. Any other questions.

Coordinator: Yes, our next question is from (Caller 1). Go ahead.

(Caller 1): Thank you. I'm sorry to be so busy on this line but I do appreciate your information.

Amalia Cuervo: You're welcome.

(Caller 1): My question is about - you mentioned incentives as part of the research or research component. And maybe you'll get to this but I want to make sure I understand where incentives fit in other areas. For example - I'll stay with the late night program example - say we want to put in a social norms message on a pen or a pencil or something. And I wanted to make sure I note that's allowed.

Amalia Cuervo: Yes, that's a good question. Under OMB Circular A-21, we're really not allowed to fund - it's termed "trinkets". And we covered that in budget review. So I would discourage folks from adding those sorts of items in a budget because we end up deleting them. Incentives here are specifically allowed for evaluation purposes. So I don't know if Norris wants to expand on that, since he's our Director for National Programs and has been working with our Office of the General Counsel on what's allowable. Norris, are you still there?

Coordinator: She's still there. Did you mute your line?

Amalia Cuervo: I didn't mute my line.

Coordinator: No, the other person.

Amalia Cuervo: He may not still be with us. Okay, so basically our guiding principle is we do not allow t-shirts, trinkets, pens. We've made some exceptions in very, you know, unique cases and we do it on a case-by-case basis.

For example, if a program we funded has a strong medical amnesty program and there is a number that is, you know, included on a key chain or something like that, that we would allow. But we don't allow social marketing trinkets to reinforce a campaign or - I don't know, you're on board, if you want to add to that, (Caller 3).

But I would caution you in your budget. It's just going to be deleted. So I would find other funding sources for that - for those items.

(Caller 1): Thank you.

Amalia Cuervo: And that's a federal-wide regulation. We also don't allow food. So if you're going to include it in your budget, delete it because these are very, I mean, think about the amount of money that we're talking about. It's rather modest, they're very modest awards. And we primarily are interested in your enhancing the current program and its evaluation and the dissemination of the findings of the program.

So there may be other sources of funding that you can tap into through your community coalition, through the university, through non-profit organizations that are part of your community. But these funds are very specific in this competition.

Coordinator: Norris has an open line.

Norris Dickard: Yes, this is Norris Dickard. I just wanted to - I'm sorry, I had to press, star 1 to get in, I wasn't totally open. But the incentive section on Page 33 of the application package are about increasing student participation and evaluation activities. It's often to enhance and further evaluate your program.

As many of you know, it's difficult to get students to participate, take the time, they're busy. And we realize this and they've gotten guidance from Office of General Counsel, given the parameters on Page 3 of the application package and what Amalia had discussed, that reasonable and modest incentives to increase participation and evaluation activities are allowable.

Amalia Cuervo: Thank you, Norris. Are there any other questions?

Coordinator: Just a moment, ma'am. Go ahead, you were asking a question. You didn't state who you were. You have an open line; is it muted on your end?

(Caller 5): There we go, is that better?

Coordinator: Thank you, yes, I can hear you now.

(Caller 5): I think I might have just missed the answer to this question - this is (Caller 5) - while I was getting on the line. My question was about student stipends to encourage student engagement.

Amalia Cuervo: In what way, what types of engagements?

(Caller 5): That their engagement in action research projects, in helping to do any number of activities that are part of the projects.

Amalia Cuervo: You know, that's very general so it's hard for us to respond, unless Norris wants to respond to that. As we said, it's they're very modest funds. And these are not funds to use really, I mean, you know, they're very specifically stated, they're congruent with the funding priority. It's a recognition program to identify effective programs.

We, you know, the funds were allocated so you could enhance the program, enhance the evaluation and disseminate the findings. The incentives that are allowed are for evaluation purposes, to encourage their participation in evaluation tasks that are generally not very

popular with students. Training stipends are different, if your program requires that the student be trained or that you employ a graduate assistant.

But without you giving me more specific information, I really don't feel that I can answer any more than I have, unless Norris, you feel you could add in on this?

Norris Dickard: No, I think it would have to be discussed within the proposal. We would have to consider the levels, whether it was reasonable and allowable.

(Caller 5): Right, okay.

Coordinator: At this time, there are no further questions.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay. The grant writing tips was the next item on my agenda and the mention of some resources on the Higher Ed Web site. Again, at the very back of the application package, we have addressed some tips on how to organize your application and we encourage you to take a look at that. There's also a checklist of the forms you need to make sure you include. You don't have these forms in the application package, then, you know, you run the risk of being - of being deemed ineligible.

So I strongly encourage all of you besides writing the proposal, if you're mailing the proposal, you download these forms and you make sure all the forms are included and we do need signatures on the form. If you're submitting electronically, then, you know, there is a way that it's - you can have the electronic signature pen. But they need to be faxed to us signed, afterwards. And we've provided fax numbers regarding that.

I think - this is really obvious - but sometimes I've been on your side writing grants and I know that it's, you know, there's never enough time to prepare. So if you can get maybe at least one or two colleagues to read through the application package in its entirety, looking at the selection criteria, making sure you've addressed every single sub element fully and that you follow the formatting guidelines.

I want to state again that although we did not state a page limit, we recommend that you keep it to 25 to 30 max - 35 pages max - for the main text of the application. And then eApplication does not have a limit on pages for appendices. However, it does present problems if you upload very large files. It sometimes does not allow us to download them on this end. So we discourage you from uploading huge files onto, you know, in other words, 200 pages of appendices to augment your main body of the application.

Just be frugal, be concise. And we can't stress enough how important it is not to wait until the last minute. We switched from www.grants.gov because there were so many problems with many of our grantees who did wait until the last minute and so forth. And so we're hoping to prevent those problems, choosing the Department's e-Grant system will improve submissions.

But again, no system is foolproof. And given that many of you may be using this system for the first time, we strongly encourage that you give yourself a good week to get it uploaded if that's the way you're going to go. We do accept applications sent by mail in hard copy.

If you want to cover yourself, you can submit electronically and you can also submit in hard copy. We do not have any prohibitions against that. That's really a big boon as some

offices will only accept eApplications.

In addition to that, we really can't stress enough that you structure your narrative according to the selection criteria so that you can make it easy to evaluate your proposal. Remember to be very clear, concise and specific. That your funding request, that you justify your funding request according to your project activities. Even though the selection criteria doesn't say, write a budget narrative, you need to write a budget narrative. It's just part of writing a good proposal.

So besides filling out the budget forms that are required, you need to have a narrative that explains and justifies your funding request, keeping in mind that costs need to be reasonable, necessary, and allowable.

We will review every single budget very carefully. And as Norris said, you know, there are going to be allowable and non-allowable costs involved. The reviewers will look at your budget. They don't assign points to budgets or take points away because of the way you prepare the budget. But they will look at how the entire application hangs together. How does it make sense? Is it a coherent package?

Check your budget figures for consistency. We've had folks that, you know, have made a mistake and asked less than they were entitled; for example, in indirect costs. And we can't change it. So once you've already submitted that number, you can't come back to us later and say, we made a mistake. And of course, anybody can make a mistake but that's just the regulations that governs the grant submission process. So be extra careful there, make sure that you, check against the checklist and make sure you have all your forms.

If you have any questions or you need additional information, by all means feel free to send me an email. You can also call me but in terms of being able to respond most quickly to you, I can do it by email. And then if we need to set up a time to speak, which I've done with a number of you that have called and so forth, we can, you know, we can do that. We're certainly here and available to support you in any way we can to clarify what we're asking for. Now, let me mention, there are further resources that we've listed in the application package.

But most importantly, I want to underscore the resources available at the Higher Ed Center. And that Web site, I think if you're not on their ListServ, it's a very easy Web site to go to, www.higheredcenter.org and it is in the application package. They will be - already on their main screen, they have a special box announcing this competition.

There you can find a link which will allow you to access the PowerPoints that Rich Lucey used in his regional meetings in 2008, Spring of 2008, when the new guidelines, funding guidelines as the three levels of recognition were defined.

So all those materials will be available, you can download them at your leisure. As well as I can't stress enough these two monographs that I've mentioned on effective prevention that was published in 2007 and also the field case studies from former model programs.

So you can see the kinds of programs that have been implemented in the past and just how they've addressed the various components, what types of programs we're funding or recognizing. Not that we want to fund only those because we're looking for new and innovative programs as well. But it will certainly give you some understanding. And if you, you may be able to contact some of the former grantees.

We do not have a model sample application online for you to look at. I know a number of you have asked me on calls and email. And because there's so little time left in terms of the competition is ending in two weeks, two and a half weeks, I don't know if we could - we can't really entertain FOIA information requests at this time that would help you meet that deadline.

In other words, if you write to us and ask us to send you a copy of an application previously funded, it takes us 30 days to process a request like that because we need to go back to the original applicant and so forth. But perhaps networking and so forth, you can find out more information directly from the various sites currently funded. That's certainly a possibility. But I think there's just a wealth of information at the Higher Ed Center Web site that could be useful. I'd want to stress that, you know, accessing that would be helpful.

Also, the TA call that Rich Lucey did two years ago is also posted on their Web site. And we hope to have an edited version of this transcript also posted on the Department's Web site by the beginning of next week, hopefully by Tuesday and as well on the Higher Ed Web site.

Before ending the call, I want to thank all of you for your commitment to this work and for your time today. If there are any additional questions, you know, Norris is still on the line, I'm here. We can open it up for more questions, we still have time. We'd love to hear from you.

Coordinator: Thank you. Once again, to ask a question, please press star 1 on your touchtone phone. Please unmute your phone and record your name clearly when prompted. One moment please for our next question.

Caller 6, go ahead.

Caller 6: Hi, I was asked to ask a question about on Page 6, where it's about mailing the hard copies.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay.

Caller 6: And the - it's - the phrase reads, you must show one of the following as proof of mailing. So the question is, if it's FedEx'd to you, is the proof of mailing implied by the date on the label or where - it was a little unclear how they're supposed to show the proof of mailing along with delivering the materials the first time.

Amalia Cuervo: Well, like, because you said Federal Express.

Caller 6: Yeah.

Amalia Cuervo: You would have a receipt from the Federal Express.

Caller 6: So we can just hold onto the receipt, we don't need to provide you a copy (unintelligible).

Amalia Cuervo: No, no...

Caller 6: Correct, as long as we - it's, like, we have to have that proof if you need to ask us for it.

Amalia Cuervo: Exactly...

Caller 6: Okay.

Amalia Cuervo: Exactly. If it's - for example, if it got lost and...

Caller 6: Yeah, I see.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay.

Caller 6: Perfect. Okay, thanks.

Amalia Cuervo: I'm glad you asked that though, because there's another issue here. Sometimes it does state that you will receive - if you mail your application, not by Federal Express but you mail it directly, that the application control center will send you just a confirmation that it's - that they received your application. Sometimes those are delayed and applicants get quite nervous, wondering if their application has come in or not.

And certainly you're welcome to email me too, to make sure that we've received it; feel free to do that. But I encourage you to give it a little time because it takes a good eight to ten working days sometimes to get that confirmation postcard back from them.

Caller 6: Okay, thanks.

Amalia Cuervo: Are there any other questions?

Coordinator: At this time, there are no further questions, ma'am.

Amalia Cuervo: Okay, thank you again everyone for joining us and best of luck and we look forward to hearing from you.

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