

**U.S. Department of Education
Office of Elementary and Secondary Education
Office of State Support
Washington, D.C. 20202-6200**

Fiscal Year 2016

**Application for New Grants Under
the Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grant
Program (EAG)**

CFDA 84.368A



**Dated Material - Open Immediately
Closing Date: September 22, 2016**

Since the estimated number of applicants is fewer than 10, this collection does not require an OMB control number under the Paperwork Reduction Act.

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United States Department of Education
OFFICE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
OFFICE OF STATE SUPPORT

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in the Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grants (EAG) program, administered by the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education of the U.S. Department of Education (Department). The purpose of this program is to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and systems used by States for measuring student achievement. It is authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).¹

Please take the time to review the applicable priorities, selection criteria, and all of the application instructions thoroughly. An application will not be evaluated for funding if the applicant does not comply with all of the procedural rules that govern the submission of the application or the application does not contain the information required under the program (34 CFR §75.216(b) and (c)).

The purpose of the program as articulated in the statutory priorities is to enable State educational agencies (SEAs) to:

- (a) collaborate with institutions of higher education, other research institutions, or other organizations to improve the quality, validity, and reliability of state academic assessments;
- (b) measure student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources;
- (c) chart student progress over time; and
- (d) evaluate student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments, such as performance and technology-based academic assessments.

An applicant for EAG funds must address one or more of these statutory priorities to be eligible for an award.

The 2016 EAG competition includes three competitive preference priorities. A grantee may receive extra points for writing to any of these competitive preference priorities. An applicant may address one or more of the competitive preference priorities. The three competitive preference priorities are:

¹ The EAG program is also authorized under section 1203(b)(1) of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (Pub. L. No. 114-95). Because the awards made through this competition will be with FY 2016 funds, which were appropriated under the NCLB authority, statutory references will be made to the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, throughout the remainder of this document.

- Priority 1—Developing Innovative Assessment Item Types and Design Approaches.
- Priority 2—Improving Assessment Scoring and Score Reporting.
- Priority 3—Inventory of State and Local Assessment Systems.

For this competition it is **mandatory** for applicants to use the government-wide website, Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>), to apply. Please note that the Grants.gov site works differently than the U.S. Department of Education’s e-Application System. We strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with Grants.gov and strongly recommend that you register *and* submit early.

Applications submitted to Grants.gov for the Department of Education will now be posted using Adobe forms. Therefore, applicants will need to download the latest version of Adobe reader (Grants.gov recommends Adobe Reader 10.1.14). Please review the **Submitting Applications with Adobe Reader Software** and **Education Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants** forms found within this package for further information and guidance related to this requirement.

The Department expects to award \$8,860,000 for new grants under this competition. We will award discretionary grants on a competitive basis for a project period of up to 48 months. Please note that projects that address competitive preference priority three may not exceed 12 months (but other aspects of the grant applicant’s plan may for up to 48 months). We expect to award grants in January 2017.

Please visit our program website at www.ed.gov/programs/eag for further information. If you have any questions about the program after reviewing the application package, please contact Donald Peasley by e-mail at donald.peasley@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

Patrick Rooney
Acting Director
Office of State Support

Part I. Program Background Information

Program Overview

An essential part of educating students involves assessing students' progress toward meeting the high standards they 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 assessments are fair, of high quality and not duplicative, and reflect the expectation that students will be prepared for success in college and careers. In view of the critical importance of assessments, section 6112 of the ESEA authorizes the Department to make competitive grant awards to SEAs and consortia of SEAs to help them enhance the quality of their assessment instruments and assessment systems.

Background for this Competition

In 2016, the Department will hold a competition that will support the enhancement of States' assessment instruments and systems under one of the program's four statutory priorities. Competitive preference points will be awarded to projects focusing on developing innovative assessment item types and design approaches, improving assessment scoring and reporting, and inventories of State and local assessment systems.

This application package contains the instructions for submitting an application for the 2016 Enhanced Assessment Instruments discretionary grant competition.

Overview of Competition

- Eligible Applicants: SEAs, as defined in section 9101(41) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, and consortia of such SEAs.
 - Estimated Available Funds: \$8,860,000
 - Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000 to 4,000,000
 - Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$2,500,000
 - Estimated Number of Awards: 3-6
- Note: The Department is not bound by these estimates.
- Budget Periods: For Competitive Preference Priority 1 and Competitive Preference Priority 2, applicants should submit a single budget and propose a project period of up to 48 months. Applicants should propose a project period that is up to 48 months, based on a timeline that takes into account the urgency of the need of the final project findings and products to be accessible to the field. Subject to the availability of future years' funds, the Department may make supplemental grant awards to grants awarded in this competition. Applicants that address Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not propose a project period of greater than 12 months or a budget of greater than \$200,000. If an applicant addresses Competitive Preference Priority 3, as well as one of the other competitive preference priorities, then that portion of the proposed project period attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed 12 months; and that portion of the proposed budget attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed \$200,000.

Program Authority

Section 6112 of the ESEA.

Applicable Regulations

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidelines to Agencies on Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The notice of final priorities published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2016.

The requirements for this competition are from the notice of final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the *Federal Register* on April 19, 2011 (76 FR 21985) (2011 NFP). The definitions are from the 2011 NFP and the notice of final priorities, requirement, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the *Federal Register* on May 23, 2013 (78 FR 31343).

More information on this program is available on the program website at www.ed.gov/programs/eag.

Absolute and Competitive Preference Priorities

This competition includes four absolute priorities and three competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), absolute priorities 1 through 4 are based on section 6112 of the ESEA. The three competitive preference priorities are from the notice of final priorities that was published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2016. We consider only applications that meet the one or more of the Absolute Priorities.

Absolute Priorities

The absolute priorities should be addressed as part of the project narrative. These priorities are listed below and in the Notice Inviting Applications for this competition that was published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2016, and is included in this package. The absolute priorities for this competition are:

- Absolute Priority 1—Collaborations. Collaborating 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)(3) of the ESEA.
- Absolute Priority 2—Use of Multiple Measures of Student Academic Achievement. Measuring student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.

- Absolute Priority 3—Charting Student Progress Over Time. Charting student progress over time.
- Absolute Priority 4—Comprehensive Academic Assessment Instruments. Evaluating student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments, such as performance and technology-based academic assessments.

Competitive Preference Priorities

In accordance with 34 CFR § 75.105(b), the Secretary has established three competitive preference priorities. For Competitive Preference Priority 1, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 15 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional 10 points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). An applicant may choose to respond to either or both parts (a) and (b) of this priority.

For Competitive Preference Priority 2, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 10 points, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). An applicant may choose to respond to either or both parts (a) and (b) of this priority.

For Competitive Preference Priority 3, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

An applicant may choose to respond to and earn points for how well the application meets multiple competitive preference priorities. These preference points will be in addition to points an applicant earns under the selection criteria. A competitive preference priority should be addressed as part of the project narrative. These competitive priorities are set forth below and are listed in the Notice Inviting Applications for this competition that was published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2016, and is included in this package. The competitive preference priorities for this competition are:

- Competitive Preference Priority 1--Developing Innovative Assessment Item Types and Design Approaches. (Up to 15 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

- (a) Develop, evaluate, and implement new, innovative item types for use in summative assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science;
 - (1) Development of innovative item types under paragraph (a) may include, for example, performance tasks; simulations; or interactive, multi-step, technology-rich items that can support competency-based assessments or portfolio projects;

(2) Projects under this priority must be designed to develop new methods for collecting evidence about a student’s knowledge and abilities and ensure the quality, validity, reliability, and fairness (such as by incorporating principles of universal design for learning) of the assessment and comparability of student data;
or

(b) Develop new approaches to transform traditional, end-of-year summative assessment forms with many items into a series of modular assessment forms, each with fewer items than the end-of-year summative assessment.

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must develop modular assessment approaches which can be used to provide timely feedback to educators and parents as well as be combined to provide a valid, reliable, and fair summative assessment of individual students.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

- Competitive Preference Priority 2--Improving Assessment Scoring and Score Reporting.
(Up to 10 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

(a) Develop innovative tools that leverage technology to score assessments;

(1) To respond to paragraph (a), applicants must propose projects to reduce the time it takes to provide test results to educators, parents, and students and to make it more cost-effective to include non-multiple choice items on assessments. These innovative tools must improve automated scoring of student assessments, in particular non-multiple choice items in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science; or

(b) Propose projects, in consultation with organizations representing parents (including parents of English learners and parents of students with disabilities), students, teachers, counselors, and school administrators to address needs related to score reporting and improve the utility of information about student performance included in reports of assessment results and provide better and more timely information to educators and parents;

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must include one or more of the following in their projects:

(i) Developing enhanced score reporting templates or digital mechanisms for communicating assessment results and their meaning (such as by providing clear and actionable next steps for parents);

(ii) Improving the assessment literacy of educators and parents to help them interpret test results and to support teaching and learning in the classroom (such as by providing training on test development and interpretation of test scores); and

(iii) Developing mechanisms for secure transmission and individual use of assessment results by students and parents.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

- Competitive Preference Priority 3--Inventory of State and Local Assessment Systems.
(Up to 5 points.)
 - (a) Under this priority, SEAs must--
 - (1) Review statewide and local assessments to ensure that each test is of high quality, maximizes instructional goals, has a clear purpose and utility, and is designed to help students demonstrate mastery of State standards;
 - (2) Determine whether assessments are serving their intended purpose to measure student achievement and identify gaps in students' knowledge and skills and to eliminate redundant and unnecessary testing; and
 - (3) Review State and LEA strategies and activities related to test preparation to make sure those strategies and activities are focused on academic content and not on test-taking skills.
 - (b) To meet the requirements in paragraph (a), SEAs must ensure that tests, including statewide and local assessments are--
 - (1) Worth taking, meaning that assessments are a component of good instruction and require students to perform the same kind of complex work they do in an effective classroom and the real world;
 - (2) High quality, resulting in actionable, objective information about students' knowledge and skills, including by assessing the full range of relevant State standards, eliciting complex student demonstrations or applications of knowledge, providing an accurate measure of student achievement, and producing information that can be used to measure student growth accurately over time;
 - (3) Time-limited, in order to balance instructional time and the need for assessments, for example, by eliminating duplicative assessments and assessments that incentivize low-quality test preparation strategies that consume valuable classroom time;
 - (4) Fair for all students and used to support equity in educational opportunity by ensuring that accessibility features and accommodations level the playing field so tests accurately reflect what all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, know and can do;
 - (5) Fully transparent to students and parents, so that States and districts can clearly explain to parents the purpose, the source of the requirement (if appropriate), and the use by teachers and schools, and provide feedback to parents and students on student performance; and
 - (6) Tied to improving student learning as tools in the broader work of teaching and learning.
 - (c) Approaches to assessment inventories under paragraph (a) must include:
 - (1) Review of the schedule for administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels;
 - (2) Review of the purpose of, and legal authority for, administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels; and
 - (3) Feedback on the assessment system from stakeholders, which could include information on how teachers, principals, other school leaders, and administrators use assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction, how much time teachers spend on assessment preparation and administration, and the assessments

that administrators, teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, and students do and do not find useful.

(d) Projects under this priority—

(1) Must be no longer than 12 months;

(2) Must include a longer-term project plan, understanding that, beginning with FY 2017, there may be dedicated Federal funds for assessment audit work as authorized under section 1202 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, and understanding that States and LEAs may use other Federal funds, such as the State assessment grant funds, authorized under section 1201 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, consistent with the purposes for those funds, to implement such plans; and

(3) Must have a budget of \$200,000 or less.

PART II: APPLICATION PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Application Submission Procedures

The deadline for submission of EAG program applications through Grants.gov is September 22, 2016.

Application Transmittal Instructions

Attention Electronic Applicants

This program **requires** the electronic submission of applications--specific requirements and instructions can be found in the Federal Register notice. Please note that you **must** follow the Application Procedures as described in the Federal Register notice announcing the grant competition.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described in the Federal Register notice for this competition, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions.

Applications Submitted Electronically

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Government-wide Grants.gov. Apply site at <http://www.Grants.gov>. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may **not** e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system **no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date**. Except as otherwise noted in Federal Register notice for this competition, we will not consider your application if it is date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in this application package to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system.

Please note the following:

- You must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a **.pdf** (Portable Document) format. **If you upload a file type other than a .pdf file, or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.**
- Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission.

- When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters. The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.
- Your electronic application must comply with the 65 page-limit requirement described in this application package.
- 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.

According to the instructions found in the Federal Register notice, only those requesting and qualifying for an exception to the electronic submission requirement may submit an application via mail, commercial carrier, or by hand delivery.

Submission of Paper Applications by Mail

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
 Application Control Center
 Attention: CFDA Number 84.368A
 LBJ Basement Level 1
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
 Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- 1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- 2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- 3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- 4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- 1) A private metered postmark.
- 2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: CFDA Number 84.368A
550 12th Street, SW
Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications

If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

- 1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and
- 2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

Submitting Applications with Adobe Reader Software

The Department of Education, working with Grants.gov, is currently using Adobe Reader software exclusively and applications submitted to Grants.gov for the Department of Education will be posted using Adobe forms. Applicants will no longer need to use the PureEdge software to create or submit an application.

Please note: The compatible version of Adobe Reader is **required** for viewing, editing and submitting a complete grant application package for the Department of Education through Grants.gov. Applicants should confirm the compatibility of their Adobe Reader version **before** downloading the application. To ensure applicants have a version of Adobe Reader on their computer that is compatible with Grants.gov, applicants are encouraged to use the test package provided by Grants.gov that can be accessed at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

Important issues to consider:

- If the applicant opened or edited the application package with any software other than the compatible version of Adobe Reader, the application package may contain errors that will be transferred to the new package even if you later download the compatible Adobe Reader version.
- Applicants **cannot** copy and paste data from a package initially opened or edited with an incompatible version of Adobe Reader and will need to download an **entirely new package** using the compatible version of Adobe Reader.
- Some applicants using an incompatible version of Adobe Reader **may have trouble** opening and viewing the application package while others may find they can open, view and complete the application package but **may not be able to submit** the application package through Grants.gov.
- Grants.gov **does not** guarantee to support versions of Adobe Reader that are not compatible with Grants.gov.
- Any and all edits made to the Adobe Reader application package **must** be made with the compatible version of Adobe Reader.

For your convenience, the latest version of Adobe Reader is available for free download at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

We strongly recommend that you review the information on computer and operating system compatibility with Adobe available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html> **before** downloading, completing, or submitting your application.

Applicants are reminded that they should submit their application a day or two in advance of the closing date as detailed in the Federal Register Notice. If you have any questions regarding this matter please email the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.

Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this document includes important submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the Department of Education.

ATTENTION – Adobe Forms and PDF Files Required

Applications submitted to Grants.gov for the Department of Education will be posted using Adobe forms. Therefore, applicants will need to download a compatible version of Adobe reader. 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 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 email the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.

- 1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration on 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 entered into the SAM database by an applicant. 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 24-48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov, and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov. For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>. [Note: 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, the Department of Education has prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet which you can find at: <http://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/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. Washington, DC time on the deadline date.

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 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/time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time, on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned. Once the Department of Education 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 the date/time received is later than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time, on the deadline date, your application is late. 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:

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Error Messages document at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/encountering-error-messages.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 e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>, or access the Grants.gov Self-Service web portal at: <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>.

If electronic submission is optional and you have problems that you are unable to resolve before the deadline date and time for electronic applications, please follow the transmittal instructions for hard copy applications in the Federal Register notice and get a hard copy application postmarked by midnight on the deadline date.

If electronic submission is required, you must submit an electronic application before 4:30:00 p.m., unless you follow the procedures in the Federal Register notice and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please note, once you download an application from Grants.gov, you will be working offline and saving data on your computer. Please be sure to note where you are saving the Grants.gov file on your computer. You will need to logon to Grants.gov to upload and submit the application. **You must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov.**

Please go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html> for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Submit Application FAQs found on the Grants.gov <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-resources.html>.

Dial-Up Internet Connections

When using a dial up connection to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g., cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take

a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection. **If you do not have access to a high-speed connection and electronic submission is required, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.** (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

MAC Users

For MAC compatibility information, review the Operating System Platform Compatibility Table at the following Grants.gov link: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/recommended-software.html>. **If electronic submission is required and you are concerned about your ability to submit electronically as a non-windows user, please follow instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.** (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

Attaching Files – Additional Tips

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application, especially the requirement that applicants **only include read-only, non-modifiable .PDF files** in their application:

1. Ensure that you attach **.PDF files only** for any attachments to your application, and they must be in a **read-only, non-modifiable format**. PDF files are the only Education approved file type accepted as detailed in the Federal Register application notice. Applicants must submit individual .PDF files only when attaching files to their application. Specifically, the Department will not accept any attachments that contain files within a file, such as PDF Portfolio files, or an interactive or fillable .PDF file. Any attachments uploaded that are not .PDF files or are password-protected files will not be read.
2. Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.
3. When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded files must be less than 50 characters in the file name, contain no spaces, no special characters (example: -, &, *, %, /, #, \) including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to the Department.
4. Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can result in difficulties opening the files. For reference, the average discretionary grant application package totals 1 to 2 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

Application Instructions

Electronic Application Format

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically, unless you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement in accordance with the instructions in this application package.

In accordance with EDGAR §75.216 (b) and (c), an application will not be evaluated for funding if the applicant does not comply with all of the procedural rules that govern the submission of the application or the application does not contain the information required under the program.

Important note: Applications submitted to Grants.gov for the Department of Education will be posted using Adobe forms. Therefore, applicants will need to download a compatible version of Adobe reader.

Information on computer and operating system compatibility with Adobe and links to download the latest version is available on Grants.gov. Also, please review the **Submitting Applications with Adobe Reader Software** and **Education Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants** forms found within this package for further information and guidance related to this requirement.

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 closing date as detailed below. If you have any questions regarding this matter please email the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.

Note: Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to any forms unless it is specifically required by the instructions for the individual section of the application. Although several forms accept attachments, the Department of Education will only review materials/files attached in accordance with the instructions provided within this application package.

Electronic Application Submission Checklist

It is recommended that your electronic application be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process. Instructions for all parts and forms of the application are found either on the following pages of the application package or individually for each form on Grants.gov.

Review your electronic application to ensure you have completed the following forms and sections:

Part 1: Preliminary Documents

- Application for Federal Assistance (form SF 424)
- ED Supplemental Information for SF 424

Part 2: Budget Information

- ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524)

Part 3: ED Abstract

- Project Abstract

Part 4: Project Narrative Attachment

- Project Narrative

Part 5: Budget Narrative Attachment

- Budget Narrative

Part 6: Other Attachments

- Individual Resumes for Project Directors & Key Personnel

Part 7: Assurances and Certifications

- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B Form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form LLL)
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form
- General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements – Section 427 (ED GEPA427 form)

Part 8: Intergovernmental Review (Executive Order 12372)

- State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) List

Part 1: Preliminary Documents

- Application for Federal Assistance (Form SF 424)
- ED Supplemental Information for SF 424

These forms require basic identifying information about the applicant and the application. Please provide all requested applicant information (including name, address, e-mail address and DUNS number).

When applying electronically via Grants.gov, you will need to ensure that the DUNS number you enter on your application is the same as the DUNS number your organization used when it registered with the System for Award Management.

Applicants are advised to complete the Application for Federal Assistance (Form SF 424) first. Grants.gov will automatically insert the correct CFDA and program name automatically wherever needed on other forms.

NOTE: Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the Standard Form (SF 424). Although this form accepts attachments, the Department of Education will only review materials/files attached in accordance with the instructions provided within this application.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SF-424

This is a standard form required for use as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications and applications and related information under discretionary programs. Some of the items are required and some are optional at the discretion of the applicant or the federal agency (agency). Required fields on the form are identified with an asterisk (*) and are also specified as "Required" in the instructions below. In addition to these instructions, applicants must consult agency instructions to determine other specific requirements.

Item	Entry:	Item:	Entry:
1.	Type of Submission: (Required) Select one type of submission in accordance with agency instructions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-application • Application • Changed/Corrected Application – Check if this submission is to change or correct a previously submitted application. Unless requested by the agency, applicants may not use this form to submit changes after the closing date. 	10.	Name Of Federal Agency: (Required) Enter the name of the federal agency from which assistance is being requested with this application.
		11.	Catalog Of Federal Domestic Assistance Number/Title: Enter the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number and title of the program under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement, if applicable.
2.	Type of Application: (Required) Select one type of application in accordance with agency instructions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New – An application that is being submitted to an agency for the first time. • Continuation - An extension for an additional funding/budget period for a project with a projected completion date. This can include renewals. • Revision - Any change in the federal government's financial obligation or contingent liability from an existing obligation. If a revision, enter the appropriate letter(s). More than one may be selected. If "Other" is selected, please specify in text box provided. <p>A. Increase Award D. Decrease Duration B. Decrease Award E. Other (specify) C. Increase Duration</p>	12.	Funding Opportunity Number/Title: (Required) Enter the Funding Opportunity Number (FON) and title of the opportunity under which assistance is requested, as found in the program announcement.
		13.	Competition Identification Number/Title: Enter the competition identification number and title of the competition under which assistance is requested, if applicable.
		14.	Areas Affected By Project: This data element is intended for use only by programs for which the area(s) affected are likely to be different than the place(s) of performance reported on the SF-424 Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form. Add attachment to enter additional areas, if needed.
3.	Date Received: Leave this field blank. This date will be assigned by the Federal agency.	15.	Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project: (Required) Enter a brief descriptive title of the project. If appropriate, attach a map showing project location (e.g., construction or real property projects). For pre-applications, attach a summary description of the project.
4.	Applicant Identifier: Enter the entity identifier assigned by the Federal agency, if any, or the applicant's control number if applicable.		
5a.	Federal Entity Identifier: Enter the number assigned to your organization by the federal agency, if any.	16.	Congressional Districts Of: 16a. (Required) Enter the applicant's congressional district. 16b. Enter all district(s) affected by the program or project. Enter in the format: 2 characters state abbreviation – 3 characters district number, e.g., CA-005 for California 5th district, CA-012 for California 12 district, NC-103 for North Carolina's 103 district. If all congressional districts in a state are affected, enter "all" for the district number, e.g., MD-all for all congressional districts in Maryland. If nationwide, i.e. all districts within all states are affected, enter US-all. If the program/project is outside the US, enter 00-000. This optional data element is intended for use only by programs for which the area(s) affected are likely to be different than place(s) of performance reported on the SF-424 Project/Performance Site Location(s) Form. Attach an additional list of program/project congressional districts, if needed.
5b.	Federal Award Identifier: For new applications, enter NA. For a continuation or revision to an existing award, enter the previously assigned federal award identifier number. If a changed/corrected application, enter the federal identifier in accordance with agency instructions.		
6.	Date Received by State: Leave this field blank. This date will be assigned by the state, if applicable.		
7.	State Application Identifier: Leave this field blank. This identifier will be assigned by the state, if applicable.		
8.	Applicant Information: Enter the following in accordance with agency instructions:		
	a. Legal Name: (Required) Enter the legal name of applicant that will undertake the assistance activity. This is the organization that has registered with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Information on registering with CCR may be obtained by visiting www.Grants.gov .	17.	Proposed Project Start and End Dates: (Required) Enter the proposed start date and end date of the project.
	b. Employer/Taxpayer Number (EIN/TIN): (Required) Enter the employer or taxpayer identification number (EIN or TIN) as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service. If your organization is not in the US, enter 44-4444444.	18.	Estimated Funding: (Required) Enter the amount requested, or to be contributed during the first funding/budget period by each contributor. Value of in-kind contributions should be included on appropriate lines, as applicable. If the action will result in a dollar change to an existing award, indicate only the amount of the change. For decreases, enclose the amounts in parentheses.

Item	Entry:	Item:	Entry:																								
	c. Organizational DUNS: (Required) Enter the organization's DUNS or DUNS+4 number received from Dun and Bradstreet. Information on obtaining a DUNS number may be obtained by visiting www.Grants.gov .	19.	Is Application Subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372 Process? (Required) Applicants should contact the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Federal Executive Order 12372 to determine whether the application is subject to the State intergovernmental review process. Select the appropriate box. If "a." is selected, enter the date the application was submitted to the State.																								
	d. Address: Enter address: Street 1 (Required); city (Required); County/Parish, State (Required if country is US), Province, Country (Required), 9-digit zip/postal code (Required if country US).	20.	Is the Applicant Delinquent on any Federal Debt? (Required) Select the appropriate box. This question applies to the applicant organization, not the person who signs as the authorized representative. Categories of federal debt include; but, may not be limited to: delinquent audit disallowances, loans and taxes. If yes, include an explanation in an attachment.																								
	e. Organizational Unit: Enter the name of the primary organizational unit, department or division that will undertake the assistance activity.	21.	Authorized Representative: To be signed and dated by the authorized representative of the applicant organization. Enter the first and last name (Required); prefix, middle name, suffix. Enter title, telephone number, email (Required); and fax number. A copy of the governing body's authorization for you to sign this application as the official representative must be on file in the applicant's office. (Certain federal agencies may require that this authorization be submitted as part of the application.)																								
	f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application: Enter the first and last name (Required); prefix, middle name, suffix, title. Enter organizational affiliation if affiliated with an organization other than that in 7.a. Telephone number and email (Required); fax number.																										
9.	Type of Applicant: (Required) Select up to three applicant type(s) in accordance with agency instructions.																										
	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>A. State Government</td> <td>M. Nonprofit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B. County Government</td> <td>N. Private Institution of Higher Education</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C. City or Township Government</td> <td>O. Individual</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D. Special District Government</td> <td>P. For-Profit Organization (Other than Small Business)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E. Regional Organization</td> <td>Q. Small Business</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F. U.S. Territory or Possession</td> <td>R. Hispanic-serving Institution</td> </tr> <tr> <td>G. Independent School District</td> <td>S. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education</td> <td>T. Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Federally Recognized)</td> <td>U. Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions</td> </tr> <tr> <td>J. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Other than Federally Recognized)</td> <td>V. Non-US Entity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>K. Indian/Native American Tribally Designated Organization</td> <td>W. Other (specify)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>L. Public/Indian Housing Authority</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	A. State Government	M. Nonprofit	B. County Government	N. Private Institution of Higher Education	C. City or Township Government	O. Individual	D. Special District Government	P. For-Profit Organization (Other than Small Business)	E. Regional Organization	Q. Small Business	F. U.S. Territory or Possession	R. Hispanic-serving Institution	G. Independent School District	S. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)	H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Education	T. Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs)	I. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Federally Recognized)	U. Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions	J. Indian/Native American Tribal Government (Other than Federally Recognized)	V. Non-US Entity	K. Indian/Native American Tribally Designated Organization	W. Other (specify)	L. Public/Indian Housing Authority			
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[U.S Department of Education note: As of spring, 2010, the FON discussed in Block 12 of the instructions can be found via the following URL: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/find_grant_opportunities.jsp.]

**Instructions for U.S. Department of Education
Supplemental Information for the SF-424**

1. Project Director. Name, address, telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are mandatory.

2. Novice Applicant. Check “Yes” if you meet the definition for novice applicants specified in the regulations in 34 CFR 75.225 and included on the attached page entitled “Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424”). By checking “Yes” the applicant certifies that it meets these novice applicant requirements. Check “No” if you do not meet the definition for novice applicants.

This novice applicant information will be used by ED to: 1) determine the amount and type of technical assistance that a novice might need, if funded, and 2) determine novice applicant eligibility in discretionary grant competitions that give special consideration to novice applications. Certain ED discretionary grant programs give special consideration to novice applications, either by establishing a special competition for novice applicants or by giving competitive preference to novice applicants under the procedures in 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2). If special consideration is being given to novice applications under a particular discretionary grant competition, the application notice for the competition published in the Federal Register will specify this information

3. Human Subjects Research. (See I. A. “Definitions” in attached page entitled “Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424.”)

3a. If Not Human Subjects Research. Check “No” if research activities involving human subjects are not planned at any time during the proposed project period. The remaining parts of Item 3 are then not applicable.

3a. If Human Subjects Research. Check “Yes” if research activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the proposed project period, either at the applicant organization or at any other performance site or collaborating institution. Check “Yes” even if the research is exempt from the regulations for the protection of human subjects. (See I. B. “Exemptions” in attached page entitled “Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF-424.”)

3b. If Human Subjects Research is Exempt from the Human Subjects Regulations. Check “Yes” if all the research activities proposed are designated to be exempt from the regulations. Check the exemption number(s) corresponding to one or more of the six exemption categories listed in I. B. “Exemptions.” In addition, follow the instructions in II. A. “Exempt Research Narrative” in the attached page entitled “Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424.”

3b. If Human Subjects Research is Not Exempt from Human Subjects Regulations. Check “No” if some or all of the planned research activities are covered (not exempt). In addition, follow the instructions in II. B. “Nonexempt Research Narrative” in the attached page entitled “Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424.”

3b. Human Subjects Assurance Number. If the applicant has an approved Federal Wide Assurance (FWA) on file with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, that covers the specific activity, insert the number in the space provided. (A list of current FWAs is available at: <http://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/search/asearch.asp#ASUR>) If the applicant does not have an approved assurance on file with OHRP, enter “None.” In this case, the applicant, by signature on the SF-424, is declaring that it will comply with 34 CFR 97 and proceed to obtain the human subjects assurance upon request by the designated ED official. If the application is recommended/selected for funding, the designated ED official will request that the applicant obtain the assurance within 30 days after the specific formal request.

3c. If applicable, please attach your “Exempt Research” or “Nonexempt Research” narrative to your submission of the U.S Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424 form as instructed in item II, “Instructions for Exempt and Nonexempt Human Subjects Research Narratives” in the attached page entitled “Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424.”

Note about Institutional Review Board Approval. ED does not require certification of Institutional Review Board approval with the application. However, if an application that involves non-exempt human subjects research is recommended/selected for funding, the designated ED official will request that the applicant obtain and send the certification to ED within 30 days after the formal request.

No covered human subjects research can be conducted until the study has ED clearance for protection of human subjects in research.

Paperwork Burden Statement. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0007. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average between 15 and 45 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-0170. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form write directly to: Enhanced Assessment Grants Program, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

Definitions for U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424

Definitions:

Novice Applicant (See 34 CFR 75.225)

For discretionary grant programs, novice applicant means any applicant for a grant from ED that—

- Has never received a grant or subgrant under the program from which it seeks funding;
- Has never been a member of a group application, submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, that received a grant under the program from which it seeks funding; and
- Has not had an active discretionary grant from the Federal government in the five years before the deadline date for applications under the program. For the purposes of this requirement, a grant is active until the end of the grant's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's authority to obligate funds.

In the case of a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127-75.129, a group includes only parties that meet the requirements listed above.

PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH

I. Definitions and Exemptions

A. Definitions.

A research activity involves human subjects if the activity is research, as defined in the Department's regulations, and the research activity will involve use of human subjects, as defined in the regulations.

—Research

The ED Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects, Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 97, define research as “a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities which meet this definition constitute research whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program that is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

—Human Subject

The regulations define human subject as “a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains (1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or (2) identifiable private information.” (1) *If an activity involves obtaining information about a living person by manipulating that person or that person's environment, as might occur when a new instructional technique is tested, or by communicating or interacting with the individual, as occurs with surveys and interviews, the definition of human subject is met.* (2) *If an activity involves obtaining private information about a living person in such a way that the information can be **directly or indirectly** linked to that individual, the definition of human subject is met* [Private information includes information about behavior that occurs in a context in which an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or recording is taking place, and information which has been provided for specific purposes by an individual and which the individual can reasonably expect will not be made public (for example, a school health record).]

B. Exemptions.

Research activities in which the **only** involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following six categories of **exemptions** are not covered by the regulations:

(1) Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (b) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods. ***If an educational practice is being introduced to the site and is not widely used for similar populations, it is not covered by this exemption.***

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. ***If the subjects are children, exemption 2 applies only to research involving educational tests and observations of public behavior when the investigator(s) do not participate in the activities being observed.***

Exemption 2 does not apply if children are surveyed or interviewed or if the research involves observation of public behavior and the investigator(s) participate in the activities being observed. [Children are defined as persons who have not attained the legal age for consent to treatments or procedures

involved in the research, under the applicable law or jurisdiction in which the research will be conducted.]

(3) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under section (2) above, if the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.

(4) Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. *[This exemption applies only to retrospective studies using data collected before the initiation of the research.]*

(5) Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (a) public benefit or service programs; (b) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (c) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs. *[The standards of this exemption are rarely met because it was designed to apply only to specific research conducted by HHS at the time the regulations were established. We will strictly construe this exemption because it was not intended to apply to ED research.]*

(6) Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (b) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

II. Instructions for Exempt and Nonexempt Human Subjects Research Narratives

If the applicant marked “Yes” for Item 3.b. of the U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424, the applicant must attach a human subjects “exempt research” or “nonexempt research” narrative to the U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424 form. If you have multiple projects and need to provide more than one narrative, be sure to label each set of responses as to the project they address.

A. Exempt Research Narrative.

If you marked “Yes” for item 3.b. and designated exemption numbers(s), attach the “exempt research” narrative to the U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424. The narrative must contain sufficient information about the involvement of human subjects in the proposed research to allow a determination by ED that the designated exemption(s) are appropriate. The narrative must be succinct.

B. Nonexempt Research Narrative.

If you marked “No” for item 3.b. you must attach the “nonexempt research” narrative to the U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424. The narrative must address the following seven points. Although no specific page limitation applies to this section of the application, be succinct.

(1) Human Subjects Involvement and Characteristics:

Provide a detailed description of the proposed involvement of human subjects. Describe the characteristics of the subject population, including their anticipated number, age range, and health status. Identify the criteria for inclusion or exclusion of any subpopulation. Explain the rationale for the involvement of special classes of subjects, such as children, children with disabilities, adults with disabilities, persons with mental disabilities, pregnant women, prisoners, institutionalized individuals, or others who are likely to be vulnerable

(2) **Sources of Materials:** Identify the sources of research material obtained from individually identifiable living human subjects in the form of specimens, records, or data. Indicate whether the material or data will be obtained specifically for research purposes or whether use will be made of existing specimens, records, or data.

(3) **Recruitment and Informed Consent:** Describe plans for the recruitment of subjects and the consent procedures to be followed. Include the circumstances under which consent will be sought and obtained, who will seek it, the nature of the information to be provided to prospective subjects, and the method of documenting consent. State if the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has authorized a modification or waiver of the elements of consent or the requirement for documentation of consent.

(4) **Potential Risks:** Describe potential risks (physical, psychological, social, legal, or other) and assess their likelihood and seriousness. Where appropriate, describe alternative treatments and procedures that might be advantageous to the subjects.

(5) **Protection Against Risk:** Describe the procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential risks, including risks to confidentiality, and assess their likely effectiveness. Where appropriate, discuss provisions for ensuring necessary medical or professional intervention in the event of adverse effects to the subjects. Also, where appropriate, describe the provisions for

monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.

(6) **Importance of the Knowledge to be Gained:** Discuss the importance of the knowledge gained or to be gained as a result of the proposed research. Discuss why the risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits to subjects and in relation to the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result.

(7) **Collaborating Site(s):** If research involving human subjects will take place at collaborating site(s) or other performance site(s), name the sites and briefly describe their involvement or role in the research.

*Copies of the Department of Education's Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects, 34 CFR Part 97 and other pertinent materials on the protection of human subjects in research are available from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4331, telephone: (202) 245-8090, and on the U.S. Department of Education's Protection of Human Subjects in Research Web Site:
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html>*

NOTE: The **State Applicant Identifier** on the SF-424 is for State Use only. Please complete it on the SF-424 in the upper right corner of the form (if applicable).

Part 2: Budget Information

ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524)

This part of your application contains information about the Federal funding you are requesting. Remember that you must provide all requested budget information for each year of the project (up to 48 months) and the total column in order to be considered for Federal funding. Specific instructions for completing the budget forms are provided within this application package.

- Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000 to 4,000,000
- Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$2,500,000
- Estimated Number of Awards: 3-6
Note: The Department is not bound by these estimates.
- Budget Periods: For Competitive Preference Priority 1 and Competitive Preference Priority 2, applicants should submit a single budget and propose a project period of up to 48 months. Applicants should propose a project period that is up to 48 months, based on a timeline that takes into account the urgency of the need of the final project findings and products to be accessible to the field. Subject to the availability of future years' funds, the Department may make supplemental grant awards to grants awarded in this competition. **Applicants that address Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not propose a project period of greater than 12 months or a budget of greater than \$200,000.** If an applicant addresses Competitive Preference Priority 3, as well as one of the other competitive preference priorities, then that portion of the proposed project period attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed 12 months; and that portion of the proposed budget attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed \$200,000.

Instructions for completing ED Form 524 Section A:

Name of Institution/Organization: Enter the name of the applicant in the space provided.

Personnel (line 1): Enter project personnel salaries and wages only. Include fees and expenses for consultants on line 6.

Fringe Benefits (line 2): The institution's normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.

Travel (line 3): Indicate the travel costs of employees and participants only. Include travel of persons such as consultants on line 6.

Equipment (line 4): Indicate the cost of tangible, non-expendable personal property that has a usefulness greater than one year and acquisition costs that are the lesser of the capitalization level established by the applicant entity for financial statement purposes or \$5,000 per article. Lower limits may be established to maintain consistency with the applicant's policy.

Supplies (line 5): Show all tangible, expendable personal property. Direct supplies and materials differ from equipment in that they are consumable, expendable, and of a relatively low unit cost. *Supplies purchased with grant funds should directly benefit the grant project and be necessary for achieving the goals of the project.*

Contractual (line 6): The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant's services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.

Construction (line 7): Not applicable.

Other (line 8): Indicate all direct costs not covered on lines 1-6. For example, include costs such as space rental, required fees, honoraria and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. *Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.*

Total Direct Costs (line 9): The sum of lines 1-8.

Indirect Costs (line 10): Indicate the applicant's approved indirect cost rate, per sections 75.560 – 75.564 of EDGAR. If an applicant's approved indirect cost rate agreement with a cognizant Federal agency has expired and the applicant wishes to charge indirect costs to the grant, the applicant may use a temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages while it negotiates a rate with its cognizant agency, per section 75.560 of EDGAR. An applicant with no previous ICR can use a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC); these applicants do not need to negotiate for this rate (2 CFR 200.414(f)).

Training Stipends (line 11): This line item is not applicable to this program. The training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long term training programs and college or university coursework, not workshops or short-term training supported by this program. *Salary stipends paid to teachers and other school personnel for participating in short-term professional development should be reported in Personnel (line 1).*

Total Cost (line 12): This should equal to sum of lines 9-11 (total direct costs + indirect + stipends). The sum for column one, labeled *Project Year 1* (a), should also be equal to item 15a on the application cover sheet (SF Form 424).

Instructions for ED 524

General Instructions

This form is used to apply to individual U.S. Department of Education (ED) discretionary grant programs. Unless directed otherwise, provide the same budget information for each year of the multi-year funding request. Pay attention to applicable program specific instructions, if attached. You may access the Education Department General Administrative Regulations cited within these instructions at:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>. You may access requirements from 2 CFR 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards" cited within these instructions at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/12/26/2013-30465/uniform-administrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards>.

You must consult with your Business Office prior to submitting this form.

Section A - Budget Summary U.S. Department of Education Funds

All applicants must complete Section A and provide a break-down by the applicable budget categories shown in lines 1-11.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e): For each project year for which funding is requested, show the total amount requested for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f): Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If funding is requested for only one project year, leave this column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e): Show the total budget request for each project year for which funding is requested.

Line 12, column (f): Show the total amount requested for all project years. If funding is requested for only one year, leave this space blank.

Indirect Cost Information: If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, this information is to be completed by your Business Office.

(1): Indicate whether or not your organization has an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement that was approved by the Federal government. If you checked "no," ED generally will authorize grantees to use a temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted salaries and wages (**complete (4) of this section when using the temporary rate**) subject to the following limitations:

(a) The grantee must submit an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency within 90 days after ED issues a grant award notification; and

(b) If after the 90-day period, the grantee has not submitted an indirect cost proposal to its cognizant agency, the grantee may not charge its grant for indirect costs until it has negotiated an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.

(2): If you checked "yes" in (1), indicate in (2) the beginning and ending dates covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. In

addition, indicate whether ED, another Federal agency (Other) or State agency issued the approved agreement. If you check "Other," specify the name of the Federal or other agency that issued the approved agreement.

(3): If you check "no" in (1), indicate in (3) if you want to use the de minimis rate of 10 percent of MTDC (see 2CFR § 200.68). If you use the de minimis rate, you are subject to the provisions in 2 CFR § 200.414(f). Note: you may only use the 10 percent de minimis rate if you are a first-time Federal grant recipient, and you do not have an Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement. You may not use the de minimis rate if you are a State, Local government, or Indian Tribe, or if your grant is funded under a training rate or restricted rate program.

(4): If you are applying for a grant under a Restricted Rate Program (34 CFR 75.563 or 76.563), indicate whether you are using a restricted indirect cost rate that is included on your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, or whether you are using a restricted indirect cost rate that complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2). Note: State or Local government agencies may not use the provision for a restricted indirect cost rate specified in 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2). Check only one response. Leave blank, if this item is not applicable.

Section B - Budget Summary Non-Federal Funds

If you are required to provide or volunteer to provide cost-sharing or matching funds or other non-Federal resources to the project, these should be shown for each applicable budget category on lines 1-11 of Section B.

Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e): For each project year, for which matching funds or other contributions are provided, show the total contribution for each applicable budget category.

Lines 1-11, column (f): Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this column blank.

Line 12, columns (a)-(e): Show the total matching or other contribution for each project year.

Line 12, column (f): Show the total amount to be contributed for all years of the multi-year project. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this space blank.

Section C - Budget Narrative [Attach separate sheet(s)] Pay attention to applicable program specific instructions, if attached.

1. Provide an itemized budget breakdown, and justification by project year, for each budget category listed in Sections A and B. For grant projects that will be divided into two or more separately budgeted major activities or sub-projects, show for each budget category of a project year the breakdown of the specific expenses attributable to **each sub-project or activity**.
2. For non-Federal funds or resources listed in Section B that are used to meet a cost-sharing or matching requirement or provided as a voluntary cost-sharing or matching commitment, you must include:

a. The specific costs or contributions by budget category;

- b. The source of **the costs or contributions**; and
- c. In the case of third-party in-kind contributions, a description of how the value was determined for the donated or contributed goods or services.

[Please review cost sharing and matching regulations found in 2 CFR 200.306.]

3. If applicable to this program, provide the rate and base on which fringe benefits are calculated.
4. If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, this information is to be completed by your Business Office. Specify the estimated amount of the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied and the total indirect expense. Depending on the grant program to which you are applying and/or your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, some direct cost budget categories in your grant application budget may not be included in the base and multiplied by your indirect cost rate. For example, you must multiply the indirect cost rates of "Training grants" (34 CFR 75.562) and grants under programs with "Supplement not Supplant" requirements ("Restricted Rate" programs) by a "modified total direct cost" (MTDC) base (34 CFR 75.563 or 76.563). Please indicate which costs are included and which costs are excluded from the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied.

When calculating indirect costs (line 10) for "Training grants" or grants under "Restricted Rate" programs, you must refer to the information and examples on ED's website at: <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

You may also contact (202) 377-3838 for additional information regarding calculating indirect cost rates or general indirect cost rate information.

5. Provide other explanations or comments you deem necessary.

Paperwork Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **1894-0008**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to vary from 13 to 22 hours per response, with an average of 17.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to (insert program office), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

Part 3: ED Abstract Form

This section should be attached as a single document to the ED Abstract Form in accordance with the instructions found on Grants.gov and should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process.

Ensure that you only attach the Education approved file types detailed in the Federal Register application notice (read-only, non-modifiable .pdf files). Also, do not upload any password-protected files to your application.

Please note that Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission.

When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.

Project Abstract

The project abstract should not exceed **two** double-spaced pages and should include a concise description of the following information:

- Project objectives and activities
- Applicable priorities
- Proposed project outcomes
- Number of participants to be served
- Number and location of proposed sites

Note: Grants.gov may include a note that indicates that the project abstract may not exceed one page; however, an abstract of more than one page may be uploaded.

Part 4: Project Narrative Attachment

This section should be attached as a **single** document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form in accordance with the instructions found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process.

Ensure that you only attach the Education approved file types detailed in the Federal Register application notice (read-only, non-modifiable .pdf files). Also, do not upload any password-protected files to your application.

When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.

Table of Contents

The Table of Contents shows where and how the important sections of your proposal are organized and should not exceed **one** double spaced page.

Project Narrative

The project narrative responds to the selection criteria found in this application package and should follow the order of the selection criteria.

Page Limit

The project narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 65 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The page limit applies to the project narrative, including the table of contents, which must include a discussion of how the application meets one or more of the absolute priorities; if applicable, how the application meets one or more of the competitive preference priorities; and how well the application addresses each of the selection criteria. The page limit also applies to any attachments to the project narrative other than the items mentioned in Part 6 of the application package, including the references/bibliography. In other words, the entirety of the project narrative, including the aforementioned discussion and any attachments to the project narrative, must be limited to the equivalent of no more than 65 pages. The only allowable attachments other than those included in the project narrative are outlined in Part 6, “Other Attachments Forms,” in the application package. Any attachments other than those included within the page limit of the project narrative and those outlined in Part 6 will not be reviewed.

The 65-page limit, or its equivalent, does not apply to the following sections of an application: Part 1 (including the response regarding research activities involving human subjects); Part 2 (two-page project abstract); Part 4 (the budget sections, including the chart and narrative budget justification); Part 5 (standard assurances and certifications); and Part 6 (memoranda of understanding or other binding agreement, if applicable; copy of applicant's indirect cost rate agreement; letters of commitment and support from collaborating SEAs and organizations; and other attachments forms, including, if applicable, references/bibliography for the project narrative and individual résumés for project director(s) and key personnel). Applicants are encouraged to limit each résumé to no more than five pages.

In addition, do not use hyperlinks in an application. Reviewers will be instructed not to follow hyperlinks if included. Our reviewers will not read any pages of your project narrative that exceed the page limit, or the equivalent of the page limit if you apply other standards. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications that meet the page limit following the standards outlined in this section rather than submitting applications that are the equivalent of the page limit applying other standards.

Selection Criteria for Program Narrative

The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210. We will award up to 120 points to an application under the selection criteria; the total possible points for each selection criterion are noted in parentheses.

(a) Need for project. (5 points)

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The magnitude of severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project.
2. The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project.
3. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(b) Significance. (25 points)

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The significance of the problem or issue to be addressed by the proposed project.
2. The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

3. The potential for generalizing from the findings or results of the proposed project.
4. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.
5. The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(c) Quality of the project design. (35 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.
2. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.
3. The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained, program of research and development in the field, including, as appropriate, a substantial addition to an ongoing line of inquiry.
4. The extent to which the proposed project is based upon a specific research design, and the quality and appropriateness of that design, including the scientific rigor of the studies involved.
5. The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.
6. The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
7. The quality of the methodology to be employed in the proposed project.
8. The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

(d) Quality of project services. (5 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

2. The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

(e) Quality of project personnel. (8 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

3. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

(f) Adequacy of resources. (12 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the application organization or the lead applicant organization.

2. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

3. The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

4. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(g) Quality of the management plan. (12 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.
2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.
3. The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.
4. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(h) Quality of the project evaluation. (10 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
3. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.
4. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
5. The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(i) Strategy to scale. (8 points)

The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.
2. The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

3. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

Priorities for Program Narrative

Absolute Priorities

Applicants must meet at least one of the absolute in order to be eligible for funding. Applicants must address at least one of these priorities in their project narrative. These priorities are listed below and in the Notice Inviting Applications for this competition that was published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2016, and are included in this package. The absolute priorities for this competition are:

- Absolute Priority 1—Collaboration. Collaborate 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 these assessments described in section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA.
- Absolute Priority 2—Use of Multiple Measures of Student Academic Achievement. Measure student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.
- Absolute Priority 3—Charting Student Progress Over Time. Chart student progress over time.
- Absolute Priority 4—Comprehensive Academic Assessment Instruments. Evaluate student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments, such as performance- and technology-based academic assessments.

Competitive Preference Priorities:

For Competitive Preference Priority 1, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 15 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional 10 points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). For Competitive Preference Priority 2, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 10 points, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). An applicant may choose to respond to either or both parts (a) and (b) of either of these priorities. For Competitive Preference Priority 3, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application meets this priority. An applicant may choose to respond to and earn points for how well the application meets multiple competitive preference priorities.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1--Developing Innovative Assessment Item Types and Design Approaches. (Up to 15 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

(a) Develop, evaluate, and implement new, innovative item types for use in summative assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science;

(1) Development of innovative item types under paragraph (a) may include, for example, performance tasks; simulations; or interactive, multi-step, technology-rich items that can support competency-based assessments or portfolio projects;

(2) Projects under this priority must be designed to develop new methods for collecting evidence about a student's knowledge and abilities and ensure the quality, validity, reliability, and fairness (such as by incorporating principles of universal design for learning) of the assessment and comparability of student data; or

(b) Develop new approaches to transform traditional, end-of-year summative assessment forms with many items into a series of modular assessment forms, each with fewer items than the end-of-year summative assessment.

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must develop modular assessment approaches which can be used to provide timely feedback to educators and parents as well as be combined to provide a valid, reliable, and fair summative assessment of individual students.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

Competitive Preference Priority 2--Improving Assessment Scoring and Score Reporting. (Up to 10 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

(a) Develop innovative tools that leverage technology to score assessments;

(1) To respond to paragraph (a), applicants must propose projects to reduce the time it takes to provide test results to educators, parents, and students and to make it more cost-effective to include non-multiple choice items on assessments. These innovative tools must improve automated scoring of student assessments, in particular non-multiple choice items in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science; or

(b) Propose projects, in consultation with organizations representing parents (including parents of English learners and parents of students with disabilities), students, teachers, counselors, and school administrators to address needs related to score reporting and improve the utility of information about student performance included in reports of assessment results and provide better and more timely information to educators and parents;

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must include one or more of the following in their projects:

(i) Developing enhanced score reporting templates or digital mechanisms for communicating assessment results and their meaning (such as by providing clear and actionable next steps for parents);

(ii) Improving the assessment literacy of educators and parents to help them interpret test results and to support teaching and learning in the classroom (such as by providing training on test development and interpretation of test scores); and

(iii) Developing mechanisms for secure transmission and individual use of assessment results by students and parents.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

Competitive Preference Priority 3--Inventory of State and Local Assessment Systems. (Up to 5 points.)

(a) Under this priority, SEAs must--

(1) Review statewide and local assessments to ensure that each test is of high quality, maximizes instructional goals, has a clear purpose and utility, and is designed to help students demonstrate mastery of State standards;

(2) Determine whether assessments are serving their intended purpose to measure student achievement and identify gaps in students' knowledge and skills and to eliminate redundant and unnecessary testing; and

(3) Review State and LEA strategies and activities related to test preparation to make sure those strategies and activities are focused on academic content and not on test-taking skills.

(b) To meet the requirements in paragraph (a), SEAs must ensure that tests, including statewide and local assessments are--

(1) Worth taking, meaning that assessments are a component of good instruction and require students to perform the same kind of complex work they do in an effective classroom and the real world;

(2) High quality, resulting in actionable, objective information about students' knowledge and skills, including by assessing the full range of relevant State standards, eliciting complex student demonstrations or applications of knowledge, providing an accurate measure of student achievement, and producing information that can be used to measure student growth accurately over time;

(3) Time-limited, in order to balance instructional time and the need for assessments, for example, by eliminating duplicative assessments and assessments that incentivize low-quality test preparation strategies that consume valuable classroom time;

(4) Fair for all students and used to support equity in educational opportunity by ensuring that accessibility features and accommodations level the playing field so tests accurately reflect what all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, know and can do;

(5) Fully transparent to students and parents, so that States and districts can clearly explain to parents the purpose, the source of the requirement (if appropriate), and the use by teachers and schools, and provide feedback to parents and students on student performance; and

(6) Tied to improving student learning as tools in the broader work of teaching and learning.

(c) Approaches to assessment inventories under paragraph (a) must include:

(1) Review of the schedule for administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels;

(2) Review of the purpose of, and legal authority for, administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels; and

(3) Feedback on the assessment system from stakeholders, which could include information on how teachers, principals, other school leaders, and administrators use assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction, how much time teachers spend on assessment preparation and administration, and the assessments that administrators, teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, and students do and do not find useful.

(d) Projects under this priority--

(1) Must be no longer than 12 months;

(2) Must include a longer-term project plan, understanding that, beginning with FY 2017, there may be dedicated Federal funds for assessment audit work as authorized under section 1202 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, and understanding that States and LEAs may use other Federal funds, such as the State assessment grant funds, authorized under section 1201 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, consistent with the purposes for those funds, to implement such plans; and

- (3) Must have a budget of \$200,000 or less.

Part 5: Budget Narrative

This section should be attached as a **single** document to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form in accordance with the instructions found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). It should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process.

Ensure that you only attach the Education approved file types detailed in the Federal Register application notice (read-only, non-modifiable .pdf files). Also, do not upload any password-protected files to your application.

When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.

Each application must also provide a Budget Narrative (which serves to meet the requirements of ED Form 524, Section C) for requested Federal funds. The Budget Narrative for requested Federal funds should provide a justification of how the money requested for each budget item will be spent.

This section requires an **itemized budget breakdown** for each project year and the **basis for estimating the costs** of personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs and any other projected expenditures. Be sure to complete an itemized budget breakdown and narrative for each year of the proposed project (up to 48 months).

The Budget Narrative provides an opportunity for the applicant to identify the nature and amount of the proposed expenditures. The applicant should provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers and project staff to understand how requested funds will be used, how much will be expended, and the relationship between the requested funds and project activities and outcomes.

Important Note

Applicants are encouraged to review the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Suggested Guidelines for the Budget Narrative

In accordance with 34 CFR 75.232, Department of Education staff perform a cost analysis of the each recommended project to ensure that costs relate to the activities and objectives of the project, are reasonable, allowable and allocable. We may delete or reduce costs from the budget during this review.

To facilitate the review of your Budget Narrative, we encourage each applicant to include the following information for each year of the project:

1. Personnel

- Provide the title and duties of each position to be compensated under this project.
- Provide the salary for each position under this project.
- Provide the amounts of time, such as hours or percentage of time to be expended by each position under this project.
- Explain the importance of each position to the success of the project.
- Provide the basis for cost estimates or computations. Clearly identify the key personnel for the project and indicate the percentage of time each will devote to the project. Applicants should designate at least the proposed principal investigator or project director, or both, as key personnel on a grant. The following factors also should be used to identify other proposed personnel as key personnel: the person's participation would have direct bearing on the outcome of the project; the person bears substantive responsibility for developing or achieving the scope or objectives of the project; the person possesses the experience, knowledge or skills that the project requires; and the individual is identified in the application and his or her qualifications are relevant to a selection criterion. Key personnel generally exclude supporting staff, such as administrative or special assistants.
- The following table is one example of how relevant information may be presented:

Personnel: The following proposed personnel will all be hired as employees of the project.	% FTE	Base Salary	Total
Project Director (1): John Doe will be responsible for the overall leadership and management of the project. His qualifications are described in the Quality of Project Personnel section of the application narrative.	40%	\$65,000	\$26,000

2. Fringe Benefits

- Give the fringe benefit percentages of all personnel included under Personnel.
- Provide the rate and base on which fringe benefits are calculated.

3. Travel

- Explain the purpose of the travel, how it relates to project success, how it aligns with the project goals and objectives and which program participants or staff will participate.
- Submit an estimate for the number of trips, points of origin and destination, and purpose of travel.
- Submit an itemized estimate of transportation and/or subsistence costs for each trip.

- Provide the basis for cost estimates or computations.
- Please keep in mind that costs incurred by employees and officers for travel, including costs of lodging, other subsistence, and incidental expenses, shall be considered reasonable and allowable only to the extent such costs do not exceed charges normally allowed by the governmental unit in its regular operations as the result of the governmental unit’s written travel policy. (OMB Cost Circular A-87, attachment B(43))
- The following table is one example of how relevant information may be presented:

Purpose of Travel	Basis for Cost Estimate	# People Traveling	\$ per Person for Trip	Total
Kick-off and planning meeting of Lead State and 15 collaborating States (2 staff members from each attending) and “management partner” (3 staff members attending). Meeting will be held at the lead State’s offices in City X, State Y. The meeting will last 1 day and involve 2 additional half days of travel for participants. Because of the meeting’s western location, most participants will not be able to return home the day of the meeting. Travel costs will not be incurred by staff from the Lead State. Justification for the travel is included in section Z of the application narrative.	Average airfare of \$400 per person Lodging of up to \$100 per night per person Per diem of \$50 per person	33	Airfare: \$400 Lodging (2 nights): \$200 Per diem: \$100 (1 full day & 2 half days) TOTAL: \$700	\$23,100

4. Equipment

- Indicate the estimated unit cost for each item to be purchased.
- Identify each type of equipment.
- Provide adequate justification of the need for items of equipment to be purchased.
- Explain the purpose of the equipment, and how it relates to project success.
- Provide the basis for cost estimates or computations.

5. Supplies

- Provide an itemized estimate of materials and supplies by nature of expense or general category (e.g., instructional materials, office supplies, etc.).
- Explain the purpose of the supplies and how they relate to project success.
- Provide the basis for cost estimates or computations.

6. Contractual

- Provide the purpose and relation to project success.
- Describe the products to be acquired, and/or the professional services to be provided.
- Provide a brief justification for the use of the contractors selected.
- Identify the name(s) of the contracting party, including consultants, if available.
- Provide the cost per contractor.
- Provide the amount of time that the project will be working with the contractor(s).
- For professional services contracts, provide the amounts of time to be devoted to the project, including the costs to be charged to this proposed grant award.

- Include the basis for cost estimates or computations for the cost for each contractor, and subcontractor (as applicable). **NOTE:** It is strongly recommended that, per contractor and subcontractor, the applicant provide this information using the categories and guidelines outlined in this section for the applicant's budget.
- If the applicant will enter into a binding, written agreement to obtain a consultant's services, the consultant costs normally would be placed under the *contractual* category. If the applicant will not enter into a contract to procure for the consulting services, all costs associated with the consultant should be placed in the *other* category.
- Provide a brief statement that you have followed the procedures for procurement under 2 CFR 200.317-200.326.
- Provide the basis for cost estimates or computations.

7. Construction

- Not applicable.

8. Other

- List and identify items by major type or category (e.g., communications, printing, postage, equipment rental, etc.).
- Provide the cost per item (printing = \$500, postage = \$750).
- Provide the purpose for the expenditures and relation to project success.
- Provide the basis for cost estimates or computations.

9. Total Direct Costs

- The amount that is the sum of expenditures, per budget category, of lines 1-8.

NOTE: Applicants must not include in direct cost categories any items that are included in the indirect cost pool.

10. Indirect Costs

- Identify indirect cost rate (if the applicant will charge indirect costs to the grant)
- **NOTE:** Approved indirect cost rate agreements commonly allow a limited amount (e.g., \$25,000) per contract per year. In this example, this means the base rate may only include \$25,000 for a \$75,000 contract. An applicant should ensure that its proposed indirect costs are calculated in accordance with the specific terms of its approved indirect costs rate agreement.
- For more information about indirect cost rates, please refer to the Department's *Cost Allocation Guide for State and Local Governments*. This guide may be found at: www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/guideigcwebsite.pdf.

Important Information Regarding Indirect Cost Rates

The Department reimburses grantees for its portion of indirect costs that a grantee incurs on projects funded by the Enhanced Assessment Grants program (CFDA 84.368). In order to charge indirect costs to this program, a grantee must have a currently approved Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) agreement. The ICR must be negotiated with and approved by the grantee's cognizant agency, i.e., either (1) the federal agency from which it has received the most direct funding, subject to indirect cost support; (2) the federal agency specifically assigned cognizance by the Office of Management and Budget; or (3) the State agency that provides the most subgrant funds to the grantee (if no direct federal awards are received).

Note: Applicants should pay special attention to specific questions on the application budget form (ED 524) about their cognizant agency and the ICR being used in the budget. Applicants should be aware that ED is very often not the cognizant agency for its grantees. Rather, ED accepts the currently approved ICR established by the appropriate cognizant agency.

Applicants are encouraged to have an accountant calculate a proposed ICR using current information in the audited financial statements, actual cost data or the Internal Revenue Service Form 990. Applicants should use this proposed rate in the application materials and indicate the documentation used to calculate the rate. Guidance related to calculating an ICR can be found on ED's website at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgindex.html>.

An applicant selected for funding, that does not have a currently approved ICR, must review and follow the final regulations published at 34 CFR 75.560 in the Federal Register on December 7, 2007 (72 FR 69145). The rules allow for a temporary ICR of 10 percent of budgeted salaries and wages and require the grantee to submit an ICR proposal within 90 days after issuance of the grant award notification.

Applicants with no previous ICR can use a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC); these applicants do not need to negotiate for this rate. Should such an applicant decide to use this MTDC as its ICR, it must use this rate for a full fiscal year; it cannot negotiate for a different rate. 2 CFR 200.414(f).

Please note that, in accordance with OMB's Cost Principles at 2 CFR 200, applicants that have an expiring ICR agreement can apply to the cognizant agency for a one-time extension of up to four years. 2 CFR 200.414(g). If a successful applicant has an expiring ICR agreement, after the expiration date of the original agreement the grantee will be required to submit evidence to the Department that its cognizant agency granted an extension of the ICR agreement in order to charge indirect costs to the Demonstration grant at the approved rate.

Applicants with questions about charging indirect costs on this program should contact the program contact person noted elsewhere in this application package.

Note: Remember to provide a copy of the most recent approved indirect cost agreement in the Other Attachments form section of the application.

11. Training Stipends

- Not applicable.

12. Total Costs

- Sum total of direct costs, indirect costs, and stipends.
- Please provide total costs for each year of the project as well as grand total cost for the entire project (up to 48 months).

Part 6: Other Attachments

Attach one or more documents to the Other Attachments Form in accordance with the instructions found on Grants.gov. You may provide all of the required information in a single document, or in multiple documents.

Ensure that you only attach the Education approved file types detailed in the Federal Register application notice (read-only, non-modifiable .pdf files). Also, do not upload any password-protected files to your application.

Please note that Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission.

When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.

REQUIRED:

- Individual Resumes for Project Directors and Key Personnel:** Provide brief resumes or job descriptions that describe their qualifications for the responsibilities they will carry out under the project.

IF APPLICABLE:

- Memoranda of understanding or other binding agreement
- Copy of applicant's indirect cost rate agreement
- Letters of commitment and support from collaborating SEAs and organizations
- References/bibliography for the project narrative

Part 7: Assurances and Certifications

Be certain to complete all required assurances and certifications in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), and include all required information in the appropriate place on each form. The assurances and certifications required for this application are:

- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B Form)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF LLL Form)
- Certification Regarding Lobbying (ED 80-0013 Form)
- General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements – Section 427

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETION OF SF-LLL, DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

This disclosure form shall be completed by the reporting entity, whether subawardee or prime Federal recipient, at the initiation or receipt of a covered Federal action, or a material change to a previous filing, pursuant to title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. The filing of a form is required for each payment or agreement to make payment to any lobbying entity for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with a covered Federal action. Complete all items that apply for both the initial filing and material change report. Refer to the implementing guidance published by the Office of Management and Budget for additional information.

1. Identify the type of covered Federal action for which lobbying activity is and/or has been secured to influence the outcome of a covered Federal action.
2. Identify the status of the covered Federal action.
3. Identify the appropriate classification of this report. If this is a followup report caused by a material change to the information previously reported, enter the year and quarter in which the change occurred. Enter the date of the last previously submitted report by this reporting entity for this covered Federal action.
4. Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the reporting entity. Include Congressional District, if known. Check the appropriate classification of the reporting entity that designates if it is, or expects to be, a prime or subaward recipient. Identify the tier of the subawardee, e.g., the first subawardee of the prime is the 1st tier. Subawards include but are not limited to subcontracts, subgrants and contract awards under grants.
5. If the organization filing the report in item 4 checks "Subawardee," then enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the prime Federal recipient. Include Congressional District, if known.
6. Enter the name of the federal agency making the award or loan commitment. Include at least one organizational level below agency name, if known. For example, Department of Transportation, United States Coast Guard.
7. Enter the Federal program name or description for the covered Federal action (item 1). If known, enter the full Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for grants, cooperative agreements, loans, and loan commitments.
8. Enter the most appropriate Federal identifying number available for the Federal action identified in item 1 (e.g., Request for Proposal (RFP) number; Invitations for Bid (IFB) number; grant announcement number; the contract, grant, or loan award number; the application/proposal control number assigned by the Federal agency). Included prefixes, e.g., "RFP-DE-90-001."
9. For a covered Federal action where there has been an award or loan commitment by the Federal agency, enter the Federal amount of the award/loan commitment for the prime entity identified in item 4 or 5.
10. (a) Enter the full name, address, city, State and zip code of the lobbying registrant under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 engaged by the reporting entity identified in item 4 to influence the covered Federal action.

(b) Enter the full names of the individual(s) performing services, and include full address if different from 10(a). Enter Last Name, First Name, and Middle Initial (MI).
11. The certifying official shall sign and date the form, print his/her name, title, and telephone number.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act, as amended, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control Number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is OMB No. 0348-0046. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0046), Washington, DC 20503

Instructions for Meeting the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427 Requirements

All applicants for new awards **must** include information in their applications to address this new provision in order to receive funding under this program.

Section 427 **requires** each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age.

A general statement of an applicant's nondiscriminatory hiring policy is **not** sufficient to meet this requirement. Applicants must identify potential barriers and explain steps they will take to overcome these barriers.

Please review the Notice to all Applicants (included in the electronic application package in Grants.gov) for further information on meeting the provisions in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

Applicants are **required** to address this provision by attaching a statement (not to exceed three pages) to the **ED GEPA 427 form** that is included in the electronic application package in Grants.gov.

Part 8: Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs (Executive Order 12372)

This program falls under the rubric of Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to strengthen federalism – or the distribution of responsibility between localities, States, and the Federal government – by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This idea includes supporting processes that State or local governments have devised for coordinating and reviewing proposed Federal financial grant applications.

The process for doing this requires grant applicants to contact State Single Points of Contact for information on how this works. Multi-State applicants should follow procedures specific to each state.

Further information about the State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) process and a list of names by State can be found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc

Absent specific State review programs, applicants may submit comments directly to the Department. All recommendations and comments must be mailed or hand-delivered by the date indicated in the actual application notice to the following address: The Secretary, EO 12372--CFDA# 84.368, U.S. Department of Education, room 7E200. 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202.

Proof of mailing will be determined on the same basis as applications (see 34 CFR §75.102). Recommendations or comments may be hand-delivered until 4:30 p.m. (eastern time) on the closing date indicated in this notice.

Important note: The above address is not the same address as the one to which the applicant submits its completed applications. **Do not send applications to the above address.**

Not all States have chosen to participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located in a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to the Department as described in the Federal Register notice.

Reporting and Accountability

Successful Applicants with multi-year grants must submit an **annual performance report** demonstrating their progress in meeting approved project objectives. Grantees must also provide the most current financial and performance measure data for each year of the project.

At the end of the project period, applicants will also be required to submit a **final performance report**.

Under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the following performance indicators have been established to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the EAG program:

- 1) The number of states that participate in EAG projects funded by this competition;
- 2) The percentage of grantees that at least twice during the period of their grants make available to SEA staff in non-participating states and to assessment researchers information on findings resulting from the EAG through presentations at national conferences, publications in refereed journals, or other products disseminated to the assessment community;
- 3) For each grant cycle and as determined by an expert panel, the percentage of EAG that yield significant research, methodologies, products, or tools regarding assessment systems or assessments; and
- 4) For each grant cycle and as determined by an expert panel, the percentage of EAG that yield significant research, methodologies, products, or tools specifically regarding accommodations and alternate assessments for students with disabilities and limited English proficient students.

For specific requirements on grantee reporting, please go to the ED Performance Report Form 524B at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

Legal and Regulatory Information

Notice Inviting Applications

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Enhanced Assessment Instruments
Grant Program--Enhanced Assessment Instruments

AGENCY: Office of Elementary and Secondary Education,
Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grant Program--Enhanced
Assessment Instruments

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY)
2016.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.368A.

Dates:

Applications Available: August 8, 2016.

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: August 29, 2016.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: September 22, 2016.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: November 21, 2016.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the Enhanced Assessment Instruments Grant program, also called the Enhanced Assessment Grants (EAG) program, is to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and assessment systems used by States for measuring the academic achievement of elementary and secondary school students.

Priorities: This competition includes four absolute priorities and three competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), the absolute priorities are from section 6112 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 20 U.S.C. 7301a. The competitive preference priorities are from the Department's notice of final priorities published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register.

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet one or more of the absolute priorities.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1--Collaboration.

Collaborate 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 these assessments described in section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB.

Absolute Priority 2--Use of Multiple Measures of Student Academic Achievement.

Measure student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.

Absolute Priority 3--Charting Student Progress Over Time.

Chart student progress over time.

Absolute Priority 4--Comprehensive Academic Assessment Instruments.

Evaluate student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments, such as performance- and technology-based academic assessments.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities

are competitive preference priorities. For Competitive Preference Priority 1, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 15 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional 10 points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). For Competitive Preference Priority 2, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional 10 points, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Specifically, the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (a) and (c), and up to an additional five points to an application depending on how well the application meets parts (b) and (c). An applicant may choose to respond to either or both parts (a) and (b) of either of these priorities. For Competitive Preference Priority 3, under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), the Department awards up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application meets this priority. An applicant may choose to respond to and earn points for how well the application meets multiple competitive preference priorities.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1--Developing Innovative Assessment Item Types and Design Approaches. (Up to 15 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

(a) Develop, evaluate, and implement new, innovative item types for use in summative assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science;

(1) Development of innovative item types under paragraph (a) may include, for example, performance tasks; simulations; or interactive, multi-step, technology-rich items that can support competency-based assessments or portfolio projects;

(2) Projects under this priority must be designed to develop new methods for collecting evidence about a student's knowledge and abilities and ensure the quality, validity,

reliability, and fairness (such as by incorporating principles of universal design for learning) of the assessment and comparability of student data; or

(b) Develop new approaches to transform traditional, end-of-year summative assessment forms with many items into a series of modular assessment forms, each with fewer items than the end-of-year summative assessment.

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must develop modular assessment approaches which can be used to provide timely feedback to educators and parents as well as be combined to provide a valid, reliable, and fair summative assessment of individual students.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

Competitive Preference Priority 2--Improving Assessment Scoring and Score Reporting. (Up to 10 points.)

Under this priority, SEAs must:

(a) Develop innovative tools that leverage technology to score assessments;

(1) To respond to paragraph (a), applicants must propose projects to reduce the time it takes to provide test results to educators, parents, and students and to make it more cost-effective to include non-multiple choice items on assessments. These innovative tools must improve automated scoring of student assessments, in particular non-multiple choice items in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science; or

(b) Propose projects, in consultation with organizations representing parents (including parents of English learners and parents of students with disabilities), students, teachers, counselors, and school administrators to address needs related to score reporting and improve the utility of information about student performance included in reports of assessment results and provide better and more timely information to educators and parents;

(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must include one or more of the following in their projects:

(i) Developing enhanced score reporting templates or digital mechanisms for communicating assessment results and their meaning (such as by providing clear and actionable next steps for parents);

(ii) Improving the assessment literacy of educators and parents to help them interpret test results and to support teaching and learning in the classroom (such as by providing training on test development and interpretation of test scores); and

(iii) Developing mechanisms for secure transmission and individual use of assessment results by students and parents.

(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.

Competitive Preference Priority 3--Inventory of State and Local Assessment Systems. (Up to 5 points.)

(a) Under this priority, SEAs must--

(1) Review statewide and local assessments to ensure that each test is of high quality, maximizes instructional goals, has a clear purpose and utility, and is designed to help students demonstrate mastery of State standards;

(2) Determine whether assessments are serving their intended purpose to measure student achievement and identify gaps in students' knowledge and skills and to eliminate redundant and unnecessary testing; and

(3) Review State and LEA strategies and activities related to test preparation to make sure those strategies and activities are focused on academic content and not on test-taking skills.

(b) To meet the requirements in paragraph (a), SEAs must ensure that tests, including statewide and local assessments are--

(1) Worth taking, meaning that assessments are a component of good instruction and require students to perform the same kind of complex work they do in an effective classroom and the real world;

(2) High quality, resulting in actionable, objective information about students' knowledge and skills, including by assessing the full range of relevant State standards, eliciting complex student demonstrations or applications of knowledge, providing an accurate measure of student achievement, and producing information that can be used to measure student growth accurately over time;

(3) Time-limited, in order to balance instructional time and the need for assessments, for example, by eliminating duplicative assessments and assessments that incentivize low-quality test preparation strategies that consume valuable classroom time;

(4) Fair for all students and used to support equity in educational opportunity by ensuring that accessibility features and accommodations level the playing field so tests accurately reflect what all students, including students with disabilities and English learners, know and can do;

(5) Fully transparent to students and parents, so that States and districts can clearly explain to parents the purpose, the source of the requirement (if appropriate), and the use by teachers and schools, and provide feedback to parents and students on student performance; and

(6) Tied to improving student learning as tools in the broader work of teaching and learning.

(c) Approaches to assessment inventories under paragraph (a) must include:

(1) Review of the schedule for administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels;

(2) Review of the purpose of, and legal authority for, administration of all assessments required at the Federal, State, and local levels; and

(3) Feedback on the assessment system from stakeholders, which could include information on how teachers, principals, other school leaders, and administrators use assessment data to inform and differentiate instruction, how much time teachers spend on assessment preparation and administration, and the assessments that administrators, teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, and students do and do not find useful.

(d) Projects under this priority--

(1) Must be no longer than 12 months;

(2) Must include a longer-term project plan, understanding that, beginning with FY 2017, there may be dedicated Federal funds for assessment audit work as authorized under section 1202 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, and understanding that States and LEAs may use other Federal funds, such as the State assessment grant funds, authorized under section 1201 of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, consistent with the purposes for those funds, to implement such plans; and

(3) Must have a budget of \$200,000 or less.

Requirements: The following requirements are from the notice of final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the Federal Register on April 19, 2011 (76 FR 21985) (2011 NFP). With respect to requirement (b), the Department notes that the Race to the Top Assessment program ended in 2015. As a result, while the grantees will be expected to meet this requirement broadly, they will not need to coordinate with the Race to the Top Assessment program.

An eligible applicant awarded a grant under this program must:

(a) Evaluate the validity, reliability, and fairness of any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition, and make available documentation of evaluations of technical quality through formal mechanisms (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) and informal mechanisms (e.g., newsletters), both in print and electronically;

(b) Actively participate in any applicable technical assistance activities conducted or facilitated by the Department or its designees, coordinate with the Race To The Top Assessment program in the development of assessments under this program, and participate in other activities as determined by the Department;

(c) Develop a strategy to make student-level data that result from any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition available on an ongoing basis for research, including for prospective linking, validity, and program improvement studies;²

(d) Ensure that any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition will be operational (ready for large-scale administration) at the end of the project period;

(e) Ensure that funds awarded under the EAG program are not used to support the development of standards, such as under the English language proficiency assessment system priority or any other priority;

(f) Maximize the interoperability of any assessments and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition across technology platforms and the ability for States to move their assessments from one technology platform to another by doing the following, as applicable, for any assessments developed with funds from this competition by--

(1) Developing all assessment items in accordance with an industry-recognized, open-licensed, interoperability standard that is approved by the Department during the grant period, without non-standard extensions or additions; and

(2) Producing all student-level data in a manner consistent with an industry-recognized open-licensed

² Eligible applicants awarded a grant under this program must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and 34 CFR part 99, as well as State and local requirements regarding privacy.

interoperability standard that is approved by the Department during the grant period;

(g) Unless otherwise protected by law or agreement as proprietary information, make any assessment content (i.e., assessments and assessment items) and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition freely available to States, technology platform providers, and others that request it for purposes of administering assessments, provided that those parties receiving assessment content comply with consortium or State requirements for test or item security; and

(h) For any assessments and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition, use technology to the maximum extent appropriate to develop, administer, and score the assessments and report results.

Definitions: The following definitions are from the 2011 NFP and the notice of final priorities, requirement, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2013 (78 FR 31343) (2013 NFP).

English learner means a child, including a child aged three and younger, who is an English learner consistent with the definition of a child who is "limited English proficient," as applicable, in section 9101(25) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. (2013 NFP)

Student with a disability means a student who has been identified as a child with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended. (2011 NFP)

Program Authority: Section 6112 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by NCLB, and section 1203(b)(1) of the ESEA, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (Pub. L. No. 114-95) (ESSA).

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted

and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The notice of final priorities published elsewhere in this issue of the Federal Register. (e) The 2011 NFP and the 2013 NFP.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$8,860,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2016 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000 to \$4,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$2,500,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 3-6.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 48 months.

Note: For Competitive Preference Priority 1 and Competitive Preference Priority 2, applicants should submit a single budget and propose a project period of up to 48 months. Applicants should propose a project period that is up to 48 months, based on a timeline that takes into account the urgency of the need of the final project findings and products to be accessible to the field. Subject to the availability of future years' funds, the Department may make supplemental grant awards to grants awarded in this competition. Applicants that address Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not propose a project period of greater than 12 months or a budget of greater than \$200,000. If an applicant addresses Competitive Preference Priority 3, as well as one of the other competitive preference priorities, then that portion of the proposed project period attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed 12 months; and that portion of the proposed budget

attributable to the project activities under Competitive Preference Priority 3 may not exceed \$200,000.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies (SEAs) as defined in section 9101(41) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB, and consortia of such SEAs.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. Other: An application from a consortium of SEAs must designate one SEA as the fiscal agent.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: Donald Peasley, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. Telephone: (202) 453-7982 or by email: Donald.Peasley@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission: Requirements concerning the content and form of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition.

Page Limit: The project narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 65 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The page limit applies to the project narrative, including the table of contents, which must include a discussion of how the application meets one or more of the absolute priorities; if applicable, how the application meets one or more of the competitive preference priorities; and how well the application addresses each of the selection criteria. The page limit also applies to any attachments to the project narrative other than the items mentioned in Part 6 of the application package, including the references/bibliography. In other words, the entirety of the project narrative, including the aforementioned discussion and any attachments to the project narrative, must be limited to the equivalent of no more than 65 pages. The only allowable attachments other than those included in the project narrative are outlined in Part 6, "Other Attachments Forms," in the application package. Any attachments other than those included within the page limit of the project narrative and those outlined in Part 6 will not be reviewed.

The 65-page limit, or its equivalent, does not apply to the following sections of an application: Part 1 (including the response regarding research activities involving human subjects); Part 2 (budget information); Part 3 (two-page project abstract); Part 5 (the budget narrative); Part 6 (memoranda of understanding or other binding agreement, if applicable; copy of applicant's indirect cost rate agreement; letters of commitment and support from collaborating SEAs and organizations; other attachments forms, including, if applicable, references/bibliography for the project narrative and individual résumés for project director(s) and key personnel); and Part 7 (standard assurances and certifications). Applicants are encouraged to limit each résumé to no more than five pages.

In addition, do not use hyperlinks in an application. Reviewers will be instructed not to follow hyperlinks if included. Our reviewers will not read any pages of your project narrative that exceed the page limit, or the equivalent of the page limit if you apply other standards. Applicants are encouraged to submit applications that meet the page limit following the standards outlined in this section rather than submitting applications that are the equivalent of the page limit applying other standards.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: August 8, 2016.

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: August 29, 2016.

We will be able to develop a more efficient process for reviewing grant applications if we have a better understanding of the number of applicants that intend to apply for funding under this competition. Therefore, we strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of the applicant's intent to submit an application for funding. This notification should be brief, and identify the SEA applicant and, if applicable, the SEA that it will designate as the fiscal agent for an award (e.g., in the case of consortia applicants). 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 email notification may still apply for funding.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: September 22, 2016.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to Other Submission Requirements in section IV of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: November 21 2016.

4. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management: To do business with the Department of Education, you must--

a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM), the Government's primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet at the following Web site: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. A DUNS number can be created within one to two business days.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

Note: Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24 to 48 hours before you can access the information in, and submit an application through, Grants.gov.

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

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

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined at the following Grants.gov Web page: www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html.

7. Other Submission Requirements:

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to

this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the EAG competition, CFDA number 84.368A, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

You may access the electronic grant application for the EAG competition at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.326, not 84.326A).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.
- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received--that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system--after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the

deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at www.G5.gov. In addition, for specific guidance and procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov, please refer to the Grants.gov Web site at:
www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-only, non-modifiable Portable Document Format (PDF). Do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable PDF (e.g., Word, Excel, WordPerfect, etc.) or submit a password-protected file, we will

not review that material. Please note that this could result in your application not being considered for funding because the material in question--for example, the application narrative--is critical to a meaningful review of your proposal. For that reason it is important to allow yourself adequate time to upload all material as PDF files. The Department will not convert material from other formats to PDF.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department. Grants.gov will also notify you automatically by email if your application met all the Grants.gov validation requirements or if there were any errors (such as submission of your application by someone other than a registered Authorized Organization Representative, or inclusion of an attachment with a file name that contains special characters). You will be given an opportunity to correct any errors and resubmit, but you must still meet the deadline for submission of applications.

Once your application is successfully validated by Grants.gov, the Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you an email with a unique PR/Award number for your application.

These emails do not mean that your application is without any disqualifying errors. While your application may have been successfully validated by Grants.gov, it must also meet the Department's application requirements as specified in this notice and in the application instructions. Disqualifying errors could include, for instance, failure to upload attachments in a read-only, non-modifiable PDF; failure to submit a required part of the application; or failure to meet applicant eligibility requirements. It is your responsibility to ensure that your submitted application has met all of the Department's requirements.

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: 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.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will contact you after we determine whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system because--

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Donald Peasley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3E124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. FAX: (202) 401-1557.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand-delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education

Application Control Center

Attention: (CFDA Number 84.368A)

LBJ Basement Level 1

400 Maryland Avenue, SW.

Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

(1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.

(2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.

(3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

(4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

(1) A private metered postmark.

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.368A)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza

Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210. We will award up to 120 points to an application under the selection criteria; the total possible points for each selection criterion are noted in parentheses.

(a) Need for project. (5 points)

The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The magnitude of severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project.

2. The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project.

3. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified

and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(b) Significance. (25 points)

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The significance of the problem or issue to be addressed by the proposed project.
2. The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.
3. The potential for generalizing from the findings or results of the proposed project.
4. The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.
5. The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(c) Quality of the project design. (35 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.
2. The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework.
3. The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained, program of research and development in

the field, including, as appropriate, a substantial addition to an ongoing line of inquiry.

4. The extent to which the proposed project is based upon a specific research design, and the quality and appropriateness of that design, including the scientific rigor of the studies involved.

5. The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

6. The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

7. The quality of the methodology to be employed in the proposed project.

8. The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the grant.

(d) Quality of project services. (5 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

2. The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous academic standards.

(e) Quality of project personnel. (8 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

3. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

(f) Adequacy of resources. (12 points)

The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the application organization or the lead applicant organization.

2. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

3. The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

4. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(g) Quality of the management plan. (12 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the

management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

3. The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.

4. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(h) Quality of the project evaluation. (10 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

3. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

4. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

5. The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(i) Strategy to scale. (8 points)

The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

1. The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

2. The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

3. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Risk Assessment and Special Conditions: Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2), we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through SAM. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

4. Performance Measures: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, the Department has developed four measures to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the EAG program: (1) the number of States that participate in EAG projects funded by this competition; (2) the percentage of grantees that, at least twice during the period of their grants, make available to SEA staff in non-participating States and to

assessment researchers information on findings resulting from the EAG through presentations at national conferences, publications in refereed journals, or other products disseminated to the assessment community; (3) for each grant cycle and as determined by an expert panel, the percentage of EAG that yield significant research, methodologies, products, or tools regarding assessment systems or assessments; and (4) for each grant cycle and as determined by an expert panel, the percentage of EAG that yield significant research, methodologies, products, or tools specifically regarding accommodations and alternate assessments for students with disabilities and limited English proficient students. Grantees will be expected to include in their interim and final performance reports information about the accomplishments of their projects because the Department will need data on these measures.

5. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Donald Peasley, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3e124, Washington, DC 20202-6132. Telephone: (202) 453-7982 or by email: Donald.Peasley@ed.gov.

If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to the program contact person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available via the Federal Digital System at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or PDF. To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the Federal Register by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated:

Ann Whalen,
Senior Advisor to the Secretary
Delegated the Duties of Assistant
Secretary for Elementary and
Secondary Education.

Program Statute

SEC. 6112 of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. GRANTS FOR ENHANCED ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS.

- (a) GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZED – From funds made available to carry out this subpart, the Secretary shall award, on a competitive basis, grants to State educational agencies that have submitted an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require, which demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretary, that the requirements of this section will be met, for the following:
- (1) To enable States (or consortia of States) to collaborate 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)(3).
 - (2) To measure student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.
 - (3) To chart student progress over time.
 - (4) To evaluate student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments, such as performance and technology-based academic assessments.
- (b) APPLICATION – Each State wishing to apply for funds under this section shall include in its State plan under part A of title I such information as the Secretary may require.
- (c) ANNUAL REPORT – Each State educational agency receiving a grant under this section shall submit an annual report to the Secretary describing its activities, and the result of those activities, under the grant.

Requirements: The following requirements are from the notice of final priorities, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the Federal Register on April 19, 2011 (76 FR 21985) (2011 NFP). With respect to requirement (b), the Department notes that the Race to the Top Assessment program ended in 2015. As a result, while the grantees will be expected to meet this requirement broadly, they will not need to coordinate with the Race to the Top Assessment program.

An eligible applicant awarded a grant under this program must:

- (a) Evaluate the validity, reliability, and fairness of any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition, and make available documentation of evaluations of technical quality through formal mechanisms (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) and informal mechanisms (e.g., newsletters), both in print and electronically;
- (b) Actively participate in any applicable technical assistance activities conducted or facilitated by the Department or its designees, coordinate with the Race To The Top Assessment program in the development of assessments under this program, and participate in other activities as determined by the Department;
- (c) Develop a strategy to make student-level data that result from any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition available on an ongoing basis

for research, including for prospective linking, validity, and program improvement studies;³

- (d) Ensure that any assessments or other assessment-related instruments developed under a grant from this competition will be operational (ready for large-scale administration) at the end of the project period;
- (e) Ensure that funds awarded under the EAG program are not used to support the development of standards, such as under the English language proficiency assessment system priority or any other priority;
- (f) Maximize the interoperability of any assessments and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition across technology platforms and the ability for States to move their assessments from one technology platform to another by doing the following, as applicable, for any assessments developed with funds from this competition by—
 - (1) Developing all assessment items in accordance with an industry-recognized, open-licensed, interoperability standard that is approved by the Department during the grant period, without non-standard extensions or additions; and
 - (2) Producing all student-level data in a manner consistent with an industry-recognized open-licensed interoperability standard that is approved by the Department during the grant period;
- (g) Unless otherwise protected by law or agreement as proprietary information, make any assessment content (i.e., assessments and assessment items) and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition freely available to States, technology platform providers, and others that request it for purposes of administering assessments, provided that those parties receiving assessment content comply with consortium or State requirements for test or item security; and
- (h) For any assessments and other assessment-related instruments developed with funds from this competition, use technology to the maximum extent appropriate to develop, administer, and score the assessments and report results.

Definitions: The following definitions are from the 2011 NFP and the notice of final priorities, requirement, definitions, and selection criteria for this program published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2013 (78 FR 31343) (2013 NFP).

English learner means a child, including a child aged three and younger, who is an English learner consistent with the definition of a child who is “limited English proficient,” as applicable, in section 9101(25) of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. (2013 NFP)

Student with a disability means a student who has been identified as a child with a disability under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended. (2011 NFP)

³ Eligible applicants awarded a grant under this program must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and 34 CFR part 99, as well as State and local requirements regarding privacy.