

Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Program Competition – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Title VI National Resource Centers (NRC) (84.015A) and
Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) (84.015B) Fellowships

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General/Application Content

What does the U.S. Department of Education (the “Department”) consider helpful for presenting the application narrative and other important information?

Here are a few pieces of guidance that may be useful to new and returning applicants to the NRC and FLAS programs:

- First, carefully read the official Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) and the Application Instructions/Package Word document that will be posted on the NRC and FLAS programs’ “Applicant Info” webpages when they are available.
- Order your narratives to match the order of the criteria as they are listed on the Technical Review Form (TRF). The TRF is the form that reviewers use to score your application according to the selection criteria for that program. Reviewers appreciate when they can go through the form as they’re reading and easily find the answers to the various criteria on the TRF. Blank TRFs are provided in the application instructions for the NRC and FLAS programs.
- Use visuals (tables and charts) along with traditional “narrative” to tell the story of your center or institution. An application narrative does not mean that everything must be in narrative form.

For example, you could include a visual to show numbers related to outreach (e.g., “we conducted X number of things for K-12 outreach, we did Y number of things for postsecondary outreach, Z number of things for business media and the general public”). Using visuals will free up space for you to use narrative to explain other aspects of your project. Refer to [Funded NRC and FLAS Applications, FY 2018-2021](#) for the list of applications funded for FY 2018-2021 to see how some institutions used a balance between visuals and actual narration.

- Cross-reference your budget with page numbers and/or navigation indicators corresponding to the narrative.
- Read the selection criteria/TRF criteria closely and make sure you are responding to each element of the question. Sometimes a reviewer will say that an applicant generally answered the question but did not mention a specific element of the criterion, and they feel obliged to award fewer points in those instances. Be detailed yet succinct and use the TRF criteria crosswalk--which will be available under “Applicant Info” on the website alongside the application package--to make sure you are maximizing your points on each criterion.
- Review the successful past applications that are posted on our IRIS project monitoring website ([Funded NRC and FLAS Applications, FY 2018-2021](#)). That is a great place to start to see how other institutions have successfully applied in the past (how they've formatted budgets, how they have described projects in their narratives, etc.) so that you don't have to start from scratch.
- If you have applied before, look at the feedback you received via the Technical Review Forms that were sent to you last time. See where points were deducted and make sure those issues are addressed this time around.

Our center has received NRC and/or FLAS grants in the past. Is it appropriate to refer to this in our application?

It is appropriate to mention previous grants and what has been institutionalized or enhanced in terms of area studies, international studies, and language training as a result of previous Title VI grants. The discussion should be sufficiently succinct to “set the stage” for the current application narrative, and *not* be a lengthy retrospective.

We suggest refraining from referring to your proposal as an application for "renewal" of your grant. In selecting applications for funding, no preference is given to applicants who have received NRC and FLAS grants in the past.

May more than one center at an institution submit an NRC and/or a FLAS application?

Yes. More than one center or program or institute at an institution may submit applications to the NRC and/or FLAS program(s).

Do you have any advice for institutions planning to submit applications for multiple centers, each focused on a different world region?

How do we strike a balance between using resources efficiently and signaling the advantages of collaboration (e.g., teaming up on certain projects), but still having each application stand alone and be feasible in case not all applications are chosen for funding?

This question applies to institutions that have multiple centers on campus AND to applicants who are proposing to work with outside institutions on specific projects (e.g., several centers each contributing funds to support a collaborative project) where each request depends on the other in some way.

After applications are submitted, the panels review and score applications based on program selection criteria. We rank the applications and select as many quality applications as possible to fund at reasonable levels based on available funding. Program officers then work with selected applicants on budget negotiations and revisions. At that time, based on the results of the competition, you would be able to make modifications to projects if necessary. If a proposed project is no longer feasible in the same way as originally anticipated, you can decide at this time to adjust the project and/or budget (e.g., continue the project at a reduced level, secure additional funding from other sources, rethink how the project will be funded, etc.). Similarly, if multiple institutions included funding for a group project in their proposed budgets but not all institutions were selected for funding, the funded institutions will have an opportunity to reconsider the activity and reallocate or adjust funding as necessary during the budget negotiation process.

Note: Each application will be evaluated on its own merits. Accordingly, each application should stand alone and make its argument independently. Reviewers will only see the applications assigned to their specific world region; e.g., reviewers on an Africa panel will not be able to access applications in the East Asia world area, and vice versa. If your institution is submitting applications in 5 world areas, those applications will be reviewed by 5 different panels. You can repurpose collaboration-related language from one application and use it in another because the reviews will take place separately.

FY 2022 Competition

TIMING

When will the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) be available?

We cannot provide *ex-ante* a specific date on which the NIAs become available. Once IFLE drafts an NIA it goes to several other offices in the Department for review and approval. This review process seeks to ensure that the NIA policy statements, the absolute priorities, the competitive priorities, and other components are in alignment with the Secretary's agenda and the Department's agenda and mission more broadly. This review process is exhaustive and, given the number of stakeholders in Title VI programs, takes some time. However, once the review is completed, the NIA is provided a publication date for the *Federal Register*. That window can be as short as a week.

Is there anything we can monitor to anticipate the release of the NIA?

You can monitor this site for the NIA: [Federal Register Documents | U.S. Department of Education](#). The site also includes an RSS feed if you want to subscribe to updates.

When are applications due?

Applications will be due 60 days after the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) is published in the *Federal Register*.

When would award announcements be made?

We hope to announce the new cohort of NRC/FLAS grants by early August 2022.

CONTENT

Could you list the order of content for the FY 2022 NIAs, please?

The order is available under the "Selection Criteria" section.

COVID-19

How should we address COVID-19 in our applications? Will the effects of potentially lower course enrollments/remote teaching/travel restrictions due to COVID, etc. be taken into consideration? Should we account for a continued pandemic in our proposed activities and budget?

Everyone is in the same position with regards to the pandemic, and we encourage you to do your best to present the information that will be most relevant to the reviewers to determine the strengths of your center or program. We suggest you modify or adjust your application as necessary to factor in the pandemic environment while still making your case for why your application merits funding.

It is reasonable to mention the effects that COVID-19 had on activities and numbers in 2020-2021 and to provide additional information that would be useful to reviewers to demonstrate your “normal” capacity and capabilities in non-pandemic times. You can mention the ways in which your center pivoted or made changes to continue your work during the pandemic.

You may propose “normal” activities like travel and in-person programming in your budgets as we do not know what the landscape will look like for the next 4 years. You may ALSO provide information about contingency plans and/or virtual/hybrid offerings in case of future disruptions.

Use common sense to address these questions. Think about what you would want to see if you were a reviewer to allay concerns. Reviewers will understand the context of COVID-19, but will also still want to see that your center is ready and able to achieve what you are proposing in the application.

Remember that it is not only pandemics that can disrupt activities, but also natural disasters, geopolitical issues, etc. We always work with our NRC and FLAS grantees to find reasonable and allowable solutions to adapt activities and plans as necessary in response to unexpected events.

Regarding using academic year (AY) 20-21 data and explanations relating to COVID to explain some of the variation, can we mention AY 21-22 positive enrollment trends?

Yes, of course. This information would be of use to reviewers as they consider your proposal.

Priorities

What are the priorities for the FY 2022 NRC and FLAS competitions?

For the **FY 2022 NRC competition**, there are two Absolute Priorities and one Competitive Preference Priority.

- **Absolute Priority 1.**
Applications that (1) explain how the activities funded by the grant will reflect diverse perspectives and a wide range of views and generate debate on world regions and international affairs; and (2) describe how the applicant will encourage government service in areas of national need, as identified by the Secretary, as well as in areas of need in the education, business, and non-profit sectors.
- **Absolute Priority 2.**
Applications that propose teacher training activities on the language, languages, area studies, or thematic focus of the Center.
- **Competitive Preference Priority:** For FY 2022 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the priority.

This priority is:

Partnership with Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) or Community Colleges (up to 5 additional points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the project will be implemented by or in partnership with one or more of the following entities:

- (1) Community colleges (as defined in this notice).
- (2) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in this notice).
- (3) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in this notice).
- (4) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in this notice).

For the **FY 2022 FLAS competition**, there are two Competitive Preference Priorities.

Under 34 CFR 75.105(C)(2)(i), we award an additional five points to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 1, and an additional five points to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 2. An applicant may receive a total of up to 10 additional points under the competitive preference priorities.

These priorities are:

- Competitive Preference Priority 1: Fellowships for Students Who Demonstrate Financial Need. (0 or 5 points)
Applications that propose to give preference when awarding fellowships to undergraduate students, graduate students, or both, to students who demonstrate financial need as indicated by the students' expected family contribution, as determined under part F of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA). This need determination will be based on the students' financial circumstances and not on other aid. The applicant must describe how it will ensure that all fellows who receive such preference show potential for high academic achievement based on such indices as grade point average, class ranking, or similar measures that the institution may determine.
- Competitive Preference Priority 2--Academic Year FLAS Fellowships Awarded in the Less Commonly Taught Languages. (0 or 5 points)
Applications that propose to award at least 25 percent of academic year FLAS fellowships in modern foreign languages other than French, German, and Spanish.

A full description of the priorities may be found in the Notice Inviting Applications published in the *Federal Register* and in the NRC and FLAS program application instructions documents.

Is there only one competitive preference priority for the NRC program this time?

Yes, there is only one competitive preference priority for the FY 2022 NRC competition. Please see **Priorities for the FY 2022 NRC and FLAS competitions** above.

For the NRC competitive preference priority, how do we determine if an institution meets the definition of a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) or community college?

Applicants should visit the following website, where they can download the “2021 Eligibility Matrix”:

- Website: www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/itudes/eligibility.html
- 2021 Eligibility Matrix: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/itudes/2021eligibilitymatrix.xlsx>

A “YES” in Column AK (ELIGIBLE) indicates whether an institution meets the requirements to be considered an MSI or community college for this priority.

What is the difference between an Absolute Priority and a Competitive Preference Priority?

An applicant must address all absolute priorities in order to be considered for funding under a program competition.

An applicant may receive additional qualitative points for responding to a competitive preference priority (CPP), depending upon how well the application meets the CPP.

Our center engages in outreach activities. Does that mean that we have fulfilled Absolute Priority 2 for National Resource Centers?

Not necessarily. "Outreach activities" include many projects that are not teacher training. To meet the absolute priority, applicants must include information that demonstrates the existence, development, and expansion of effective teacher training activities. Collaboration with Schools of Education, and Local and State Education Agencies are good means by which to address this requirement.

For the FLAS competitive preference priority about financial need, I understand that the EFC will be going away in the next year or two (to be replaced by a new metric). Will this have any impact on that priority?

If the way of determining financial need changes from what is described in the FLAS competitive preference priority, then we will advise the FLAS grantee community at that time of how to best respond to maintain the intent of the priority. For now, for the purposes of the FY 2022 application, centers/institutions may provide information about the current process for determining financial need.

Languages

Are these programs only for less commonly taught languages (LCTLs)?

No. The NRC and FLAS programs support the study of all languages and world regions. While there is a particular interest in and emphasis on programming for LCTLs, NRC and FLAS funding may also be used for programming related to French, German, and Spanish.

I found a list of acceptable languages on IFLE’s website. Are only those languages allowed?

Regarding the [Consultation with Federal Agencies on Areas of National Need](#), all modern foreign languages are relevant to the NRC and FLAS programs. This site may help you shape how you describe how your application will address national needs.

Do you designate certain languages as “priority languages”?

No. While past NRC and FLAS competitions have designated specific “priority languages”, we no longer make this designation. All modern foreign languages are relevant to the NRC and FLAS programs. There is a particular interest in activities that support less commonly taught languages (LCTLs), defined as any language other than French, German, or Spanish.

World Regions

Where do you draw the lines for what is included in a world region? For example, is Afghanistan in South Asia? What about Iran?

We do not determine the world region assignment for centers. You do that in your application via the “Application Profile Form”. That form allows you to indicate under which regional category you would like your application to be considered. You are in the best position to determine the regional category that best aligns with your center’s work.

For example, Afghanistan might be included in the work of a South Asia or a Middle East NRC, depending on a center’s focus. Similarly, some Eastern European countries can be included in the work of a Western Europe/Europe center. That said, if the center’s work is exclusively focused on Eastern Europe (with little or no inclusion of broader European topics or Western European countries), then your center would be better grouped in the Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasian category.

If your center’s focus is on something topical and not region-specific (for instance, looking at climate change across all world regions), that would fall under the International category. The International NRC category is for centers that are doing work that spans the globe and is not confined to a particular world region.

If you need guidance on which world region would be most appropriate for your center’s application, then please reach out to the NRC and FLAS team at NRC-FLAS@ed.gov and we can assist.

Regarding the combination of Latin America and Canada into an area, is there more specific information available on this change and how it may impact centers or affect the next competition?

Nothing significant will change with this new world region designation. We expect to make a similar number of awards with similar funding levels as for the FY 2018-2021 cycle for the Canada and Latin America world regions combined.

A center applying under the Western Hemisphere category may still have a particular focus on Canada or on Latin America and the Caribbean. Reviewers will still have relevant expertise in the countries/regions pertaining to the applications on their panel. Canadian area studies specialists will review Canadian NRC/FLAS applications and Latin American area specialists will review Latin American NRC/FLAS applicants.

Does the new Western Hemisphere world area mean that we can include indigenous languages to the U.S. in our proposal?

A Western Hemisphere NRC and/or FLAS program may include indigenous languages that apply to North America *as long as* the focus is international (i.e., on Latin America, the Caribbean, and/or Canada) and not domestic (i.e., on the United States). The focus of Title VI programs is international and the programs are supposed to prepare U.S. citizens to better engage with the world beyond the United States.

Example: It is acceptable to include languages that are indigenous to Mexico but that are also found in certain communities in the United States provided the focus would be on the language's use in Mexico. Similarly, a Canada-focused NRC may include a language like Inuktitut that is used both in Alaska and Canada, provided the focus would be on the use of the language in Canada. It would not be appropriate to include a language that is indigenous *only* to the United States.

FLAS

Can you confirm whether FLAS-only applicants need to apply for both graduate and undergraduate scholarships? Could we apply for undergraduate support only or graduate support only?

Institutions may request FLAS awards for only undergraduate students, only graduate students, or a combination of the two. Please note, however, that if you request FLAS fellowships for only one type of student (undergraduate or graduate) and are selected for funding, you will be held to those terms for the full grant cycle. That is, if you request only undergraduate fellowships, you cannot change mid-cycle to start making graduate awards also, and vice-versa.

Are undergraduate students eligible to receive FLAS fellowships?

Yes. Undergraduate students may be eligible to receive FLAS fellowships if they are studying a Less Commonly Taught Language (any language other than French, German, or Spanish) at the intermediate or advanced level of study in combination with area or international studies.

Do FLAS graduate students need to be in doctoral programs? Are students still eligible if the master's (or a professional degree like a JD) is the terminal degree?

IFLE considers graduate students to be all students above the bachelor's degree level; MA, JD, MPH, PhD, EdD and non-degree graduate students are therefore all eligible for FLAS funding *provided* that the institution's FLAS application included awards to graduate students (i.e., did not request only undergraduate FLAS awards).

If you are only requesting FLAS training stipends for graduate students, would the narrative include programming (courses, advising resources, career support, etc.) that is specific to undergraduates or only that which serves graduate students?

Regardless of likely recipients for FLAS fellowships, applicants must respond to all selection criteria for the FLAS program in the project narrative, which may involve addressing graduate and undergraduate students/education.

How do we determine which languages are FLAS eligible?

Applicants will provide a list of languages for which they are requesting FLAS awards. In order to offer awards in a particular language, you must demonstrate in your application that your institution has qualified instructors for the language AND that your institution offers courses in each language at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. Languages that meet these criteria will become your “FLAS-eligible” languages for which you may make awards freely during the grant cycle. (Grantees may also request approval for ‘one-time’ awards in languages that are not part of the pre-approved “FLAS-eligible” list. If your application is selected to receive funding, you will receive more information about this possibility.)

For FLAS languages, can a center or institution shift outside of its NRC world area? For example, can an East Asia center include South and West Asian languages? Could we list Hindi, Arabic, etc. in addition to East Asian languages?

This answer depends on what type of center you have/are proposing and if the languages in question make sense in the context of your center and proposal. For instance, if you are a Pan Asia center, then it would be okay to include languages like Hindi, Arabic, or other languages that are used in Asia more broadly (meaning, beyond the borders of what is traditionally considered East Asia). On the other hand, if your center is an East Asia center and the core of your narrative focuses on teaching what is traditionally understood to be East Asia (China, Japan, Korea), then it may not make sense to include additional languages..

If a 1st year (freshman) student is applying for FLAS, can they base/demonstrate their merit on their performance in their high-school language courses?

A freshman student could, in theory, receive a FLAS award, but would need to be selected via a competitive application process managed by the college/university. It is extremely rare for a FLAS award to go to a freshman as they have not yet demonstrated their academic commitment to the study of the world region/language at the postsecondary level, but it does sometimes happen.

Can a student who has intermediate or advanced language proficiency in one critical language apply for FLAS funding to study a new critical language if they have a strong proposal?

Once selected to receive funding, an institution/center must implement an application/competition process to select qualified fellows to receive FLAS awards. Fellows must meet program eligibility requirements for students, which may be viewed at:

[FLAS Eligibility Requirements Website](#)

[FY 2018-2021 Program Administration Manual for the NRC and FLAS programs](#)

Fellowships may not be awarded for the study of the first 12 semester hours or the equivalent (i.e., the beginning level) of a commonly taught language (Spanish, French, and German).

HEA section 602(b)(1)(B)(i) is unequivocal that undergraduate students must be in the intermediate or advanced study of a less commonly taught language to receive a fellowship.

Graduate students may also not receive fellowships for the beginning level of a language study. See section 602(b)(1)(B)(ii) (U.S. Department of Education, Office of the General Counsel).

Note: An exception might be made for the beginning level of a less commonly taught language if a graduate student has achieved advanced proficiency in another language of the world area of specialization, and if learning a second language of that world area is required for the student's overall training and expertise. This requires pre-approval from IFLE.

Diverse Perspectives and Areas of National Need

What exactly does “diverse perspectives” mean? Multiple political sides? Domestic vs. international perspectives from the region? Something else?

Your statement should address how the activities funded by the grant will reflect diverse perspectives and a wide range of views and generate debate on world regions and international affairs. “Diverse perspectives” means making sure that as many relevant views as reasonably possible about any topic are presented or addressed. We recommend approaching this the way an academic would; that is, treat all relevant sides and include information to address them.

This requirement has been in place since 2008 when amendments were added to the Higher Education Act (HEA). Among the amendments was the inclusion of diverse perspectives, activities that promote debate on certain world regions, and promote greater understanding in areas of national need. This emerged after a Congressional review of the program's purpose, which is to prepare people to have a fuller understanding of regions and countries, after which they deemed it appropriate that centers provide training that helps prepare students to think critically about different sides of a given issue.

What this is asking you to do is to show that your center's mission, programming, and curricula presents diverse perspectives to help students understand and think critically on a range of issues and to enables them to effectively debate different sides of an issue .

Note: The reviewers will see this statement; however, it is not evaluated as part of the Technical Review Form (TRF) and selection criteria.

Do reviewers have access to the statement regarding diverse perspectives and responding to areas of national need that we will upload with our application?

Yes, the reviewers will have access to everything you submit as part of your application package. Grants.gov combines all your application materials into one packet that is fully available to the reviewers.

Is there an official definition of “areas of national need”?

Your statement responding to “areas of national need” should be a description of how you will encourage government service in areas of national need, as identified by the Secretary, as well as in areas of needs in education, business, and nonprofit sectors.

The areas of national need, as identified by the Secretary, may be viewed here (see FY 2022 list): [Consultation with Federal Agencies on Areas of National Need](#).

Narrative

If an institution isn’t a current grantee, should the narrative refer to activities over the past four years, since that's the NRC cycle?

In general, your application should be forward-looking, not backward-looking, whether you're a current grantee or not. You could include past programs as examples, but your focus should be on what you are seeking funding to do in the future.

For returning centers, we always encourage you to not rest too much on your laurels. This is not a competition to decide who was the best grantee over the last four years, but rather it's a competition to determine who is going to be a good grantee for the next four years. You can include what you've accomplished over the last four years to lay the foundation for your application, but don't look backwards the whole time.

Selection Criteria

Can we assume that the order of the selection criteria presented in the webinar is the same as the anticipated Technical Review Form (TRF)/scoring sheet?

Yes, the order of the criteria presented here is the order that we expect to present them on the actual TRF:

NRC:

- A. Commitment to the subject area on which the Center focuses
- B. Quality of the Center’s language instructional program
- C. Quality of the Center’s non-language instructional program
- D. Quality of curriculum design
- E. Quality of staff resources
- F. Strength of library
- G. Impact and evaluation
- H. Outreach activities
- I. Program planning and budget
- J. Competitive preference priorities

FLAS:

- A. Commitment to the subject area on which the applicant focuses

- B. Quality of the applicant's language instructional program
- C. Quality of the applicant's non-language instructional program
- D. Quality of curriculum design
- E. Quality of staff resources
- F. Strength of library
- G. Impact and evaluation
- H. FLAS awardee selection procedures
- I. Competitive preference priorities

Outreach

Should we describe in the application our center's "outreach" to institutions, organizations, and people in other countries?

Yes, but not in response to the "Outreach Activities" selection criterion, which asks applicants to describe their regional, national, and local domestic (i.e., within the U.S.) outreach activities.

You may describe linkages with overseas institutions of higher education and organizations, overseas professional development opportunities that contribute to the teaching and research of the center, and other international initiatives as applicable to other selection criteria.

Impact and Evaluation

Should the Impact and Evaluation section of the narrative address past activities or proposed activities?

The selection criteria in this category address both past activities and future activities. For example, this section asks you to address both records of student placement and future plans for providing equal access for and treatment of eligible project participants who are members of groups that have been traditionally underrepresented. Similarly, another criterion addresses the need for an evaluation plan as well as evidence that similar plans have been used to improve project-related activities.

Are there any detailed expectations around evaluation and the use of external and/or independent evaluators?

Evaluators need not necessarily be external, but you should do whatever you can to convince your reviewers that evaluators are unbiased.

Reviewers tend to be particular about potential bias among evaluators. Whether using internal or external evaluators, you still need to demonstrate that they are unbiased and that there isn't some potential conflict of interest that could imperil the quality of the evaluation.

Does the evaluation plan describe a methodology for establishing a baseline and tracking the project's progress during the project? Do evaluation techniques use quantitative (e.g., hard data, statistics) and qualitative (e.g., interviews, surveys, observations) data, as appropriate,

to measure and report results? Will the center use an evaluator to assess the success of the project, and will that evaluator be unbiased?

Basically, you should develop a plan for evaluating the work of the center over the course of 4-year grant period and you should clearly transmit that plan in that section of your application.

Differently reiterating the evaluation question, can you address expectations for the "use of recent evaluations to inform current plan" on external/internal evaluators for our program?

It is a good practice to use recent evaluations to inform an evaluation plan, though it is not necessary. If you have recent evaluations, those can help your readers better understand your evaluation plan or can contribute to the explanation of your evaluation plan.

Budget

How much money should we request for an NRC or FLAS grant?

The requested funds should be reasonable, necessary, and appropriate for implementing the proposed project. IFLE suggests that applicants limit requests to the estimated range for awards announced in the *Federal Register* Notice Inviting Applications (NIA).

Is there a matching or cost sharing requirement for the NRC or FLAS program?

No. There is no matching or cost sharing requirement for either program. Applicants are not required to fill out Section B of the ED-524 form, but if they do, and cite institutional commitment, then the grantee and host institution will be held to that commitment for however long the applicant indicated it will be provided.

That said, institutional commitment must be addressed in the narrative portion of the grant application. Higher levels of institutional commitment will strengthen an application. Information provided to demonstrate "commitment to the subject area on which the center focuses" does not constitute cost sharing or cost matching.

Is there a separate budget narrative for each year of the project?

Present all budget years (i.e., Year 1 2022-2023, Year 2 2023-2024, Year 3 2024-2025, Year 4 2025-2026) in your budget. In addition to your detailed, line-item budget, we recommend including a one-page overview that allows the reviewer and program officer to view requested funding for each category across the entire project period.

FLAS BUDGETS

It's great that the FLAS total has increased, but does that mean we should all request larger FLAS grants? Or is IFLE saying that they will be awarding fewer FLAS awards?

Once we have an appropriation bill for FY 22, we will determine the totals available for each Title VI program. Should Title VI be level funded, we may need to stretch the funding and fund fewer FLAS fellowships to absorb the increase to the graduate stipend, but we hope to increase the overall FLAS funding.

Would a FLAS budget include the 8% overhead (indirect costs)?

FLAS budgets should NOT include indirect costs (overhead) and should ONLY include the costs of the actual fellowships. Similarly, it is not appropriate for a FLAS budget to include any support for staff or non-fellowship costs.

NRC BUDGETS

Can NRC budgets vary year by year? Or are you expecting them to be identical?

The yearly budget for NRC can vary from year to year. That said, it is useful to note that often we are only able to level fund awards for years 2, 3, and 4 of the grant, which means that often the entire grant amount will be four times the year 1 amount.

Are we allowed to include project evaluation costs in our NRC budget and is there any limitation on the amount?

Including project evaluation costs in the NRC budget is appropriate and allowable. Applications should request an amount that is reasonable and justifiable in terms of the overall project scope and total budget request.

Would Title VI Project Director meetings be every year or just once during the 4-year grant cycle?

There would be one Title VI Project Directors meeting for the FY 2022-2025 grant cycle. The meeting would most likely take place in year 1 or early in year 2 of the grant.

SUBGRANTS/SUBAWARDS

Are subgrants allowed this grant cycle?

Subawards are still allowed, but would not affect the ED 524 budget form submission (which should cover everything you are asking for, including the subgrant amount).

If we conduct a subaward, what category should that be listed under?

It is most appropriate to include the subaward information under the “Other” category.

NRC BUDGET SUPPORT FOR SALARIES AND SPECIFIC POSITIONS

Would someone who acts as a LCTL coordinator (administrative) as well as teaches a LCTL language be someone who could be supported at 100%?

Yes, it would be ok to include salary support for a LCTL coordinator/LCTL instructor in your NRC proposal. Again, we recommend considering these requests from the viewpoint of a reviewer (i.e., is there a good reason for using X amount of NRC funds to support this person’s salary, is the person’s work directly related to the mission of the center and the successful implementation of the grant, etc.).

Can we use a visiting instructor for language teaching? Sometimes it is difficult to find a part-time instructor for some languages.

Yes, visiting instructors may teach languages as part of an NRC's programming.

Can we include support for the Executive Director or Program Managers?

Do not request support for the Project Director (Principal Investigator).

Other positions working on the grant may be funded in part or in full using NRC funding, but remember that your budget and proposal will be reviewed and scored based on reasonableness and other considerations. The core budget-related question for reviewers is always, "is this a good use of taxpayer money?" We generally recommend that institutions try to fund salaries from institutional or other sources of funding whenever/to the maximum extent possible so that NRC funding may be directed to support programming and activities.

It is common for NRCs to direct some funding toward salary support for an outreach coordinator, less commonly taught language instructor, etc. (i.e., positions where the day-to-day work is directly related to the mission of the NRC). You may see how past successful applications have structured their budgets and staff salaries by reviewing funded applications from the FY 2018 competition: [Funded NRC and FLAS Applications, FY 2018-2021](#).

Any recommendations for institutions that are in very high cost-of-living areas? A 'reasonable' salary for someone to oversee all the NRC programming at our D.C. area university, even with a 15% salary cost-share from the center, is still quite high. If our HR people identify a certain salary band for a given position, will we be penalized for including the position at that (high) level in the application?

We understand that some areas of the country are much more expensive to live in than others and salary amounts vary accordingly. We know these are difficult decisions for centers in high cost-of-living areas of the country, but it is up to each center to decide what to propose in the budget. Generally, we recommend trying to minimize putting salaries on the grant as much as possible (in favor of using institutional or other sources of funding), and instead directing NRC funds to support activities.

There is no easy answer to this, but practically speaking, try to put yourself in the shoes of a reviewer reading your proposal. For example, if you were a reviewer, what would you think if a center proposed to pay for 100% of someone's salary in an expensive area? While the reviewers will likely understand the institution is in an area with a high cost of living, that doesn't necessarily mean this would be a good use of funding. Reviewers may have questions like, "Could this center have proposed 50% NRC funding and 50% institutional funding? Could they have found another way to support that position?" It's all about whether a proposed expense is a good use of taxpayer money.

Appendices

Can we include additional appendices beyond the four listed (i.e., CVs, position descriptions, course list, and letters of support)?

Yes, you may include additional appendices (e.g., project timeline) if it makes sense in the context of your grant application. That said, do not include unnecessary documents that will only add length to your proposal without providing much benefit. We remind applicants that reviewers have a lot to read--each application consists of hundreds of pages and each panel includes around 10 applications. You do not want to annoy the reviewer or make their jobs harder! Please be mindful of the total number of pages that you are submitting for review.

Can we include an NRC project timeline as an appendix?

Yes, you may include a timeline in your proposal appendix section. Reviewers generally appreciate timelines as they demonstrate that you have thought through the time frame for implementing the various elements of your project.

COURSE LISTS

Would it be favorable to include syllabi for any new courses or outlines for proposed events in appendix or unnecessary?

It is not necessary to include syllabi in your proposal. We encourage you to be mindful of the length of your application package and not include unnecessary materials. You might consider an appendix constituted of a list of proposed courses or activities.

On course lists, besides enrollment and course names/departments, what other information should be included?

The previous application packet offered the following guidance on course lists:

Recommended tips for the course list

- Include an index to show how the course list is organized.
- Indicate the 25% - 100% area studies or international studies content.
- Provide descriptions for area studies courses or international studies courses when the titles do not explicitly convey areas studies or international studies content.
- Include the course credits, if applicable. If institutional policies dictate that certain relevant courses may not be credit-bearing, explain why.
- Indicate courses that are cross listed.

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

How many letters of support will we be allowed? Is there a limit?

We recommend a maximum of 5 letters of support. While this is a recommendation and not a requirement, we again urge you to consider the reviewer. You would not want to overburden them.

If you are serving the community, is it useful to have a letter of support from a community partner, not just from within your own institution?

This might be useful depending on the relationship between the center and the community partner. There is a recommended limit of 5 letters of support, so be strategic in which persons and institutions you choose to include.

POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

Should position descriptions be included only for staff and faculty who have not yet been identified/hired and will have their salaries at least partially supported by the grant? Or existing positions as well?

You should include position descriptions for any position that is involved in the administration of the grant (even if the position is currently filled and you are providing that person's CV). Reviewers want to see how the parts of the center work together to deliver the project.

If our external reviewer will be conducting year over year comprehensive review, would it be required to include them in center personnel?

We recommend including position descriptions for roles that are directly involved in the grant (whether they're being funded by the grant or not) to show your reviewers that you have a clear plan in place and the necessary positions to carry out the tasks that you propose in your grant application.

CURRICULA VITAE

What CVs do we need to include? CVs for only those persons who are directly working on the grant, or ALL relevant faculty at the university and other affiliates? Where do we draw the limit for number of CVs collected?

It is essential to submit CVs for those persons who will be principally involved in and who will contribute to the grant. It is up to you to decide how to define "principal involvement" and "contribution to the grant".

It is ok to cast a wide net with CVs. You may include CVs for affiliated personnel, faculty from professional schools, etc., **if** it makes sense in the context of your proposal. You do not necessarily have to include ALL affiliates. Reviewers use the CVs submitted to ensure that people working on the grant have the right qualifications to be involved in the way that they are.

You may find it useful to review past successful proposals to get a sense of what types and how many CVs were included: [Funded NRC and FLAS Applications, FY 2018-2021](#).

How detailed should the CVs be considering the large number?

We recommend submitting 1-page CVs. The previous application packet offered the following guidance for the suggested contents of CV:

- Department and tenure status

- Education
- Academic experience
- Overseas experience
- Language(s) and level of proficiency
Note: include a legend to explain the metric for the proficiency level
- Language pedagogy training
- Instructional content area expertise represented as a percentage
- Number of area studies, international studies, language courses taught
- Research and training specialization
- Number of recent publications
- Number of dissertations and/or theses supervised in the past five years
- Recent Recognitions/Awards/Honors

Can you submit 2-page CVs instead of the suggested format for CVs?

You can submit 2-page CVs, but it is not recommended.

Page and Formatting Limits/Recommendations

What are the formatting requirements? Is the page limit for single-spaced or double-spaced pages?

The formatting requirements will be outlined in the official Notice Inviting Applications (NIA). They will most likely remain the same as for the FY 2018 competition. Those requirements are:

- 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, except titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions. Charts, tables, figures, and graphs in the application narrative may be single spaced and will count toward the recommended page limit.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger, or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). However, you may use a 10-point font in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.
- The recommended page limit applies to the entirety of the application narrative. However, the recommended page limit does not apply to Part I, the Application for Federal Assistance face sheet (SF 424); the supplemental SF 424 form; Part II, Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524); the detailed line item budget; Part IV, the assurances and certifications and the response to section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act; the project abstract; the table of contents; the list of acronyms; the response to the diverse perspectives/areas of need requirements; the NRC/FLAS project profile form, and the appendices (curriculum vitae, course list, performance measure form, and letters of support).

Are budget forms and appendices included in the recommended page limit?

No. The 50-page (single institution) or 60-page (consortium) recommended page limit applies only to the “Application Narrative”. Other elements of the application (budget, profile form, other appendices) do not count toward the page limit.

Are institutions applying for both National Resource Centers and FLAS Fellowship funding permitted a longer page limit than institutions applying for a grant under only one program?

No. Narrative page limits are 50 pages for single institution applications and 60 double-spaced pages for consortia applications, regardless of whether they are for undergraduate or comprehensive NRC funding or FLAS fellowships or both. Please see the Notice Inviting Applications in the *Federal Register* for the official requirements.

Are consortia with more than two members permitted a longer page limit than two-member consortia?

No. All consortia are encouraged to comply with the 60 double-spaced page narrative limit.

Application Processing

What happens to my application after the Department receives it?

Applications are assigned a unique identifying number (PR/Award number, e.g., P015A22----P015B22----) and then screened to ensure eligibility and compliance with the competition requirements. Applications are also screened for world area or thematic focus so that they may be assigned to the appropriate panel for review.

Separate panels of experts will be arranged for world areas or thematically based applications. The panels of experts read and score each eligible application. IFLE then makes funding recommendations to Department officials based on reviewers’ scores and comments. Once recommendations are approved, grant award notifications (GANs) are issued based on available funding.

What happens if the Department deems an application ineligible?

The application is not submitted into the peer review process. Section 75.216 of the [Education Department General Administrative Requirements \(EDGAR\) and Other Applicable Grant Regulations](#) and [34 CFR 75.216](#) prohibit the Department from evaluating an application if it does not meet the program eligibility criteria, or does not otherwise comply with application requirements. We will notify you with a letter indicating the reason(s) why the application was deemed ineligible.

Panel Review Process and Application Evaluation

What information does the Department consider when selecting applications for new FY 2022 NRC and/or FLAS grants?

We rely on the panel review process (i.e., the peer reviewers' expertise) to identify the highly competitive applicants that merit funding consideration. Reviewers score each application using the selection criteria published in the Federal Register as part of the program regulations. Reviewers use the Technical Review Form that is included at the end of the application instructions document to record their comments and scores for each selection criterion. Reviewers are instructed to use only the published criteria and to base their evaluation strictly on information provided in the application.

Also, as described in the "Award Basis" section of the FY 2022 Notice Inviting Applications, the Department will consider, among other things, the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous or existing award under any Department program.

Who serves on the peer review panels, and what is involved in the peer review process?

Each peer review panel is constituted of three readers from outside the U.S. Department of Education: two area studies experts (representing a variety of disciplines) and a language expert. Peer reviewers are selected from the pool of field readers whose profiles have been submitted into the Department's G5 system and who are qualified to review Title VI NRC and FLAS applications.

The experts are required to use the program statute and regulations, the program selection criteria, and any priorities and other requirements that have been published in the *Federal Register* as guidance in reviewing the applications. The review panels provide written comments and scores to support their evaluations about the quality, significance, and impact of the proposed project. Those comments are shared with the applicants.

The total of the three scores for each program is divided by three to determine the application's average score. Funding recommendations are based on the ranking of the average scores within a world area. The recommended awards are reviewed by several Department offices, with final review and approval by the Secretary of Education. After the slates are signed by the Secretary and Congressional notifications have been completed, IFLE notifies grantees and issues Grant Award Notifications (GANs).

Is the peer reviewer information public?

We do not provide a list of the reviewers. The reviewers are professionals with specific training in the world area and/or languages they are reviewing. We recruit and select panel reviewers throughout the year who meet specific criteria. See [the peer reviewer recruitment flyer on IFLE's website](#).

How long does it take the Department to complete the review process?

Most review processes take about six to eight months from the announcement date through the issuance of the signed Grant Award Notification (GAN).

The external peer review will be conducted over a two-week period. After that, we hope to complete all grant-making activities so that we can notify new FY 22 grantees by early August, 2022.

Award Process

How does ED decide the allocations of awards for each world area?

These decisions are based on a variety of factors including how many quality applications come in for each world region. Just because fewer applications are received for a world region doesn't necessarily mean that there would be fewer grants awarded for that world region. There isn't necessarily a correlation between the number of applications received and the number of applications funded for a given world region. What matters is quality. If we receive a lot of excellent quality applications in one world region and another world region doesn't have as many, then at that point there are discussions about shifting funding among the world regions.

How will decisions about continuation funding be made?

Grantees are required to submit annual performance reports on time to the International Resource Information System (IRIS) that describe the projects' accomplishments, GPRA data, and budgetary status. These reports assist IFLE staff in determining continuation funding. Although estimated funding levels for all four years of the grant are established at the time of the initial grant award notification, the amount of funding received in Years 2, 3 and 4 of the grant can increase or decrease depending on:

1. the on-time submission of all required reports,
2. evidence in the reports that you have made substantial progress toward meeting original grant objectives,
3. program officers' review and analysis of report data,
4. information from site visits, such as programmatic or fiscal findings,
5. the Congressional appropriation of funds for the programs, and
6. A-133 audit information that IFLE might receive regarding a specific grant.

Successful applicants will receive instructions for submitting electronic performance reports through IRIS soon after their grants have been awarded. To view the NRC and FLAS reporting screens, please visit the IRIS web site at:

<http://iris.ed.gov/iris/pdfs/NRC.pdf>

http://iris.ed.gov/iris/pdfs/FLAS_director.pdf

http://iris.ed.gov/iris/pdfs/FLAS_fellow.pdf

Other Questions

Who do we contact if we have other questions?

You may email NRC-FLAS@ed.gov and your message will be directed to the appropriate program officer for your world region of interest. You may also reach out directly to the relevant program officer or office contact listed below.

Assignment	Contact Person	Email Address
Advanced Training and Research Division Director	Sarah Beaton	sarah.beaton@ed.gov
Africa	Brian Cwiek	brian.cwiek@ed.gov
East Asia, Pan Asia	Carolyn Collins	carolyn.collins@ed.gov
International	Brian Cwiek	brian.cwiek@ed.gov
Middle East	Tim Duvall	timothy.duvall@ed.gov
Russia, East Europe, and Eurasia	Dana Sapatoru	dana.sapatoru@ed.gov
South Asia	Cheryl Gibbs	cheryl.gibbs@ed.gov
Southeast Asia	Ariana Maki	ariana.maki@ed.gov
Western Europe	Tim Duvall	timothy.duvall@ed.gov
Western Hemisphere (Canada, Latin America and Caribbean)	Carolyn Collins	carolyn.collins@ed.gov
Closeouts and Administrative Support	Mone't Peterson-Cox	monet.peterson-cox@ed.gov