

Research and Development Infrastructure (RDI) Pre-Application Webinar

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Objectives

- (1) Purpose of the Program
- (2) Absolute Priorities
- (3) Eligibility
- (4) Carnegie Classifications
- (5) Match Requirements
- (6) Evidence
- (7) Use of Funds
- (8) Selection Criteria
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Purpose of the Program

- The purpose of this program is to provide four-year Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs), and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) including Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs), Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions (ANNH), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions (NASNTIs), and/or Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), or consortia led by an eligible institution, with funds to implement transformational investments in research infrastructure, including research productivity, faculty expertise, graduate programs, physical infrastructure, human capital development, and partnerships leading to increases in external funding.

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Definitions

- Historically Black College or University means an institution that meets the eligibility requirements under section 322(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.
- Minority-Serving Institution means an institution that is eligible to receive assistance under sections 317 through 320 of part A of title III, or under title V of the HEA.
 - Note: The list of institutions currently designated as eligible under titles III and V of the HEA is available at www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/itudes/eligibility.html#el-inst.
- Tribally Controlled College or University means an institution that meets the eligibility requirements of Section 316 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, namely one that qualifies for funding under the Tribally Controlled College or University Assistance Act of 1978 or the Navajo Community College Assistance Act of 1978; or is cited in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land Grant Status Act of 1994.
- Additional definitions are available in the Notice Inviting Applications (Notice).

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Absolute Priorities

This program has three absolute priorities.

Absolute Priority 1—Funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities' Research and Development Infrastructure.

Applications will be accepted for this absolute priority from HBCUs that propose to support high-quality implementation of transformative research capacity initiatives and that seek to attain higher research activity status, as measured by the Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education, to either move from R2 to R1 status or from D/PU to R2 status. HBCUs that currently have an R1 Carnegie Classification are ineligible to apply as the lead applicant in this competition but are eligible to participate as part of a consortium.

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Absolute Priorities

Absolute Priority 2—Funding for Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities' Research and Development Infrastructure.

Applications will be accepted for this absolute priority from TCCUs that propose to improve their research and development activities, including infrastructure, faculty development, and academic programs.

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Absolute Priorities

Absolute Priority 3—Funding for Minority Serving Institutions' Research and Development Infrastructure.

Applications will be accepted for this absolute priority from MSIs, including institutions designated as AANAPISI, ANNH, HSI, NASNTI, and/or PBI, that propose to support high-quality implementation of transformative research capacity initiatives and that seek to attain higher research activity status, as measured by the Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education to either move from R2 to R1 status or from D/PU to R2 status. Institutions that currently have an R1 Carnegie Classification are ineligible to apply as the lead applicant in this competition but are eligible to participate as part of a consortium.

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Competitive Preference Priority

Absolute priority 3 has one competitive preference priority. We give competitive preference to applications that address the below priority.

The priority is:

MSI Pell Grant Percentage (0 or 2 points).

Lead applicants whose Pell Grant recipients account for 50 percent or higher of their undergraduate student enrollment, as measured by the Department using the most recent data available in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

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Eligibility

Eligible applicants:

- Four-year institutions of higher education that meet the following:
 - Is an HBCU, TCCU, or MSI; and
 - Is a D/PU or R2 institution according to the Carnegie Classification for AP1 and AP3.
 - Only TCCUs may apply under AP2.
- Eligible applicants may apply individually or as lead applicants of a consortium with other eligible applicants and/or other partners such as an institution of higher education with an R1 Carnegie Classification, community colleges, or non-profit, industry and philanthropic partners.
- The lead applicant must be an eligible applicant under the absolute priority under which it is applying.

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Carnegie Classifications

For AP1 and AP3:

- Institutions must be classified as Doctoral/Professional Universities (D/PU) or Doctoral Universities with High Research Activities (R2) Institutions to apply, and be working towards R2 or R1. No R1 institutions can receive funding.

For AP2:

- Review of TCCU applications under AP2 will not use the Carnegie Classification System.

You can look up your institution at <https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/institutions/>.

Doctoral/Professional University

- Awarded at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees during the Carnegie Classification's update year, or awarded fewer than 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees during that year but awarded at least 30 professional practice doctoral degrees in at least 2 programs, and
- Expended less than \$5 million in research.

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Carnegie Classifications: R2

- Awarded at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees during the Carnegie Classification's update year, or awarded fewer than 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees but awarded at least 30 professional practice doctoral degrees in at least 2 programs, **and**
- Had at least \$5 million in total research expenditures as reported through the National Science Foundation HERD.
- Additionally, the Carnegie Classifications developed two indices of research activity using
 - (1) the aggregate level of research activity and
 - (2) the per-capita research activity using the expenditure and staffing measures divided by the number of full-time faculty within the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks.
 - These two indices were charted for each institution and assigned to one of two categories based on a common reference point (the minima of each scale). Institutions that are below the minima during the Carnegie Classification's update year are considered R2.

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Carnegie Classifications: R1

- Awarded at least 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees during the Carnegie Classification's update year, or awarded fewer than 20 research/scholarship doctoral degrees but awarded at least 30 professional practice doctoral degrees in at least 2 programs; **and**
- Had at least \$5 million in total research expenditures as reported through the National Science Foundation HERD.
- Additionally, the Carnegie Classifications developed two indices of research activity using
 - (1) the aggregate level of research activity and
 - (2) the per-capita research activity using the expenditure and staffing measures divided by the number of full-time faculty within the assistant, associate, and full professor ranks.
 - These two indices were charted for each institution and assigned to one of two categories based on a common reference point (the minima of each scale). Institutions that are above the minima during the Carnegie Classification's update year are considered R1.

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Match Requirement

This program requires cost sharing or matching for all applicants. Grantees will need to provide a 1:1 match, which can include in-kind donations. The goal of the match is to promote sustainability and alignment to the institution's strategic plan. Full or partial waivers may be granted using the criteria below.

- The difficulty of raising matching funds for a program to serve a high poverty area in the lead applicant's geographic location;
- Serving a significant population of low-income students;
- Significant economic hardship as demonstrated by low average educational and general expenditures per full-time equivalent undergraduate student; or
- Information that otherwise demonstrates a commitment to the long-term sustainability of the applicant's projects
- Note: Institutions seeking to waive the matching requirement must provide the waiver request information outlined above within their application.

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Evidence

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

Note: In developing logic models, applicants may want to use resources such as the Regional Educational Laboratory Program’s (REL Pacific) Education Logic Model Application, available at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/regions/pacific/pdf/ELMUserGuideJune2014.pdf>. Other sources include: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014025.pdf, https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014007.pdf, https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2015057.pdf.

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Allowable Use of Funds

(1) Providing for the **improvement of infrastructure** existing on the date of the grant award, including deferred maintenance, or the establishment of new physical infrastructure, including instructional program spaces, laboratories, or research facilities relating to the fields of science, technology, engineering, the arts, mathematics, health, agriculture, education, medicine, law, and other disciplines.

(2) **Hiring and retaining faculty, students, research-related staff, or other personnel**, including research personnel skilled in operating, using, or applying technology, equipment, or devices used to conduct or support research.

(3) **Supporting research internships and fellowships for students**, including undergraduate (Absolute Priority 2 for TCCUs only), graduate, and post-doctoral positions, which may include providing direct student financial assistance to such students.

Note: Per 20 U.S.C. 1138(d)(1), no funds made available under FIPSE can be used to provide direct financial assistance in the form of grants or scholarships to students who do not meet eligibility criteria under Title IV of the HEA.

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Allowable Use of Funds

(4) **Creating new, or expanding existing, academic positions**, including internships, fellowships, and post-doctoral positions, in fields of research for which research and development infrastructure funds have been awarded under this program.

(5) **Creating and supporting inter- and intra-institutional research centers** (including formal and informal communities of practice) in fields of research for which research and development infrastructure funds have been awarded under this program, including hiring staff, purchasing supplies and equipment, and funding travel to relevant conferences and seminars to support the work of such centers.

(6) **Building new institutional support structures and departments that help faculty** learn about, and increase faculty and student access to, Federal research and development grant funds and non-Federal academic research grants.

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Allowable Use of Funds

- (7) **Building data and collaboration infrastructure** so that early findings and research can be securely shared to facilitate peer review and other appropriate collaboration.
- (8) **Providing programs of study and courses in fields of research** for which research and development infrastructure funds have been awarded under this program.
- (9) **Paying operating and administrative expenses for, and coordinating project partnerships with members of, a consortium** as described in the notice on behalf of which the eligible institution has received a grant under this program. A grantee under this competition may not pay for expenses to R1 institutions that are members of the consortia.
- (10) **Installing or extending the life and usability of basic systems and components of campus facilities** related to research, including high-speed broadband internet infrastructure sufficient to support digital and technology-based learning.

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Allowable Use of Funds

- (11) **Expanding, remodeling, renovating, or altering biomedical and behavioral research facilities** existing on the date of the grant award that received support under section 404I of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 283k).
- (12) **Acquiring and installing furniture, fixtures, and instructional research-related equipment and technology** for academic instruction in campus facilities in fields of research for which research and development infrastructure funds have been awarded under this program.
- (13) Providing **increased funding to programs that support research and development** at the eligible institution that are funded by National Institutes of Health, including the Path to Excellence and Innovation program with the National Institutes of Health.
- (14) **Faculty professional development.**
- (15) **Planning purposes**, for TCCUs applying under Absolute Priority 2 only.

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Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to specific selection criteria. Reviewers of your application will use these criteria to rate your proposal, and the overall assessment of your proposal will be based on the extent to which it satisfies the selection criteria. However you choose to organize your narrative, once it has been completed, make sure the information provided addresses each of these criteria.

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Significance (Maximum 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:

- (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. **(Up to 10 points)**
- (ii) 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. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (iii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project. **(Up to 10 points)**

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Quality of the Project Design (Maximum 30 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the project design.

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

- (i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (iii) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (iv) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established in the competition. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (v) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts in order to improve relevant outcomes (as defined the notice), using nonpublic funds or resources. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (vi) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with, or build on similar or related efforts, to improve relevant outcomes (as defined in the notice), using existing funding streams from other programs or policies supported by community, State, and Federal resources. **(Up to 5 points)**

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Quality of Project Services (Maximum 15 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. (Up to 5 points)

In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (i) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (ii) The extent to which the technical assistance services to be provided by the proposed project involve the use of efficient strategies, including the use of technology, as appropriate, and the leveraging of non-project resources. **(Up to 5 points)**

Note: For the purpose of this competition, technical assistance services could include, for example, technical assistance provided to faculty, staff, and students (at all levels) designed to increase research activities, including to expand institutional capacity to secure new funding, support student experiences, and facilitate faculty professional development.

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Adequacy of Resources (Maximum 15 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:

- (i) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (ii) The potential for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing program of the agency or organization at the end of Federal funding. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (iii) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support. **(Up to 5 points)**

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Quality of the Management Plan (Maximum 10 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:

- (i) 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. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. **(Up to 5 points)**

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Quality of the Project Evaluation (Maximum 15 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:

- (i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. **(Up to 5 points)**
- (iii) 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. **(Up to 5 points)**

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Submission Requirements

Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045), and available at www.federalregister.gov/d/2022-26554, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on December 27, 2021.

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Submission Requirements

The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application.

Recommended Submission Requirements:

1. Limit the application narrative to no more than 50 pages
2. A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
3. 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.
4. Use a font that is either 12 point or larger, and no smaller than 10-pitch (characters per inch).
5. Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.
6. The recommended page limit does not apply to the **cover sheet**; the **budget section**, including the narrative budget justification; the **assurances and certifications**; the one-page **abstract**, the **resumes**, the **bibliography**, the **letters of support**; or the **waiver request** for the matching requirement.

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Submission of Proprietary Information

Given the types of projects that may be proposed in applications for the RDI grant program, your application may include business information that you consider proprietary. In 34 CFR 5.11 we define “business information” and describe the process we use in determining whether any of that information is proprietary and, thus, protected from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended).

Because we plan to make successful applications available to the public, you may wish to request confidentiality of business information.

Consistent with Executive Order 12600, please designate in your application any information that you believe is exempt from disclosure under Exemption 4. In the appropriate Appendix section of your application, under “Other Attachments Form,” please list the page number or numbers on which we can find this information. For additional information please see 34 CFR 5.11(c).

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Funding Restrictions

We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of the notice. Additionally, no funds received by an institution of higher education under this section shall be used to fund any activities or services provided by institutions that are not eligible as lead applicants in this competition.

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Build America Buy America Act

This program is subject to the Build America, Buy America Act (Pub. L. 117–58) domestic sourcing requirements. Accordingly, under this program, grantees and contractors may not use their grant funds for infrastructure projects or activities (e.g., construction, remodeling, and broadband infrastructure) unless—

- (a) All iron and steel used in the infrastructure project or activity are produced in the United States;
- (b) All manufactured products used in the infrastructure project or activity are produced in the United States; and
- (c) All construction materials are manufactured in the United States.

Grantees may request waivers to these requirements by submitting a Build America, Buy America Act Waiver Request Form. For more information, including a link to the Waiver Request Form, see the Department's Build America Buy America Waiver website at:

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/buy-america/index.html>.

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Questions

- Please type your questions into the chat box.
- FAQs are available at <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/rdi/faq.html>.
- Application Deadline: October 2, 2023 at 11:59 PM EDT
- Applications will be submitted electronically at www.grants.gov.

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Thank You

- We look forward to receiving and reviewing your applications.

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