

SKILLS FOR SUCCESS PROGRAM

Q&A WEBINAR—JUNE 2015

Note: These slides are intended as guidance only. Please refer to the official documents published in the *Federal Register*.

TWO PARTS TO TODAY'S WEBINAR

- 1) An overview of the Skills for Success competition.

*These slides are intended as guidance only.
Keep in mind that the overview covers only part
of the information that prospective applicants
should review from the Federal Register and the
Skills for Success Web site.*

- 2) A Q&A period with a discussion organized by
specific topic.



A FEW NOTES ON Q&A

We have allowed substantial time after each discussion topic for Q&A.

- Webinar participants should submit their questions via the webinar Q&A function

We cannot answer questions that are applicant-specific.

- “Am I eligible to apply?”
- “Does this sound like a good idea?”
- “Does this idea address the absolute priorities?”

We may not be able to answer all questions received.

If you have additional questions, please send them to the Skills for Success mailbox: skillsforsuccess@ed.gov





Q&A Discussion Topics

- **Overview**
- **Priorities**
- **Selection Criteria**
- **Other Topics**

OVERVIEW OF THE SKILLS FOR SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAM

Purpose

To implement, refine, and evaluate existing tools and approaches that encourage the development of non-cognitive skills of middle-grades students (grades 5-8) in order to increase student success.

Funding

\$2,000,000 (est.) to be obligated by September 30, 2015.

Applicants

Eligible applicants are:

- (a) An LEA
- (b) An LEA in partnership with—
 - (1) A nonprofit;
 - (2) An IHE; or
 - (3) Other LEAs.

OVERVIEW OF THE SKILLS FOR SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAM

Purpose

- Implementation, evaluation, and refinement of existing tools and approaches (e.g., digital games, growth mindset classroom activities, experiential learning opportunities).
- Integration of the development of students' non-cognitive skills into classroom-level activities in alignment with existing strategies designed to improve schools.
- Collection, analysis, and use of data to improve the tools and strategies throughout the project period.

OVERVIEW OF THE SKILLS FOR SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAM

Purpose

For the purpose of this program, the term “non-cognitive” is used to capture the array of skills, behaviors, and mindsets that practitioners and researchers may also refer to as “social and emotional” skills (e.g., self-efficacy, agency, resilience, and perseverance). We acknowledge that the term “non-cognitive” does not fully capture the cognitive factors involved in many of these constructs, nor does it necessarily represent the full range of relevant social and behavioral skills. Nevertheless, we use the term because it is generally well-understood in the sector and is consistent with other Department documents, including the Secretary’s Supplemental Priorities.

OVERVIEW OF THE SKILLS FOR SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAM

Funding

- Estimated Available Funds: \$2,000,000
- Estimated Range of Awards: \$400,000-600,000 /year
- Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$500,000 /year
- Estimated Number of Awards: 4-5
- Project Period: 12-36 months
- Project Start Date: October 1, 2015

OVERVIEW OF THE SKILLS FOR SUCCESS GRANT PROGRAM

Applicants

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 - (1) A nonprofit;
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Q&A: Overview



Q&A Discussion Topics

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ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1

Absolute Priority 1: Developing Non- Cognitive Skills in Middle-Grades Students

Applicants must address the following:

Under this priority we provide funding to projects that implement, refine, and evaluate existing tools and approaches that encourage the development of non-cognitive skills for students in grades 5-8. Such tools and approaches may be designed to encourage the development of growth mindsets, resilience, and self-control, among other attributes. Applicants must demonstrate how their proposed approach would develop students' non-cognitive skills and fit into existing school- or district-level improvement strategies.



ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 2

Applicants must address the following:

**Absolute Priority 2:
Supporting High-Need
Students**

Under this priority we provide funding to projects that are designed to improve academic outcomes, learning environments, or both, for High-need Students.



Q&A: Priorities



Q&A Discussion Topics

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NOTES ON SELECTION CRITERIA AND POINTS

- The selection criteria are the criteria against which the peer reviewers score each application.
- The Department **selects grantees based on peer reviewer scores**, so clearly addressing the selection criteria is critical.
- Detailed wording for each selection criterion may be found in the Notice Inviting Applications at the Skills for Success Web site:
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/skillssuccess/index.html>.



SELECTION CRITERIA AND POINTS

Selection Criteria	Points
A. Significance	20
B. Quality of the project design	45
C. Quality of the management plan	15
D. Quality of the project evaluation	20
Total Points	100



SELECTION CRITERION:

A. SIGNIFICANCE

(Up to 20 points)

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

SELECTION CRITERION:

B. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

(Up to 45 points)

1. The extent to which the proposed project is supported by Strong Theory.
2. The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.
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 performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

SELECTION CRITERION:

C. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Up to 15 points)

1. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.
2. 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.
3. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

SELECTION CRITERION:

D. QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION PLAN

(Up to 20 points)

1. The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.
2. The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.
3. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
4. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

SELECTION CRITERION:

D. QUALITY OF THE EVALUATION PLAN

Note:

Applicants may wish to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and (2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers:

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods.

In addition, we invite applicants to view two Webinar recordings that were hosted by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). The first Webinar addresses strategies for designing and executing well-designed Quasi-experimental Design Studies. This Webinar is available at:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/news.aspx?sid=23>. The second Webinar focuses on more rigorous evaluation designs, including strategies for designing and executing Randomized Controlled Trials. This Webinar is available at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/news.aspx?sid=18>.





Q&A: Selection Criteria



Q&A Discussion Topics

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- **Other Topics**

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

ED Standard Forms

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)
- Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424
- Department of Education Budget Summary Form (ED 524) Sections A & B
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

Assurances and Certifications

- GEPA Section 427
- Assurances- Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
- Grants.gov Lobby form (formerly ED 80-0013 form)

Application Narrative

- Project Narrative Form
- Budget Narrative Form
- Other Attachments Form (Upload Appendices here)



PROJECT NARRATIVE INFORMATION

The Project Narrative should describe the project that an applicant would carry out if funded and include the applicant's response to the selection criteria since the application will be evaluated and scored against these criteria.

Selection Criteria

- Significance (up to 20 points)
- Quality of the project design (up to 45 points)
- Quality of management plan (up to 15 points)
- Quality of the project evaluation (up to 20 points)

BUDGET NARRATIVE INFORMATION

Department of Education Budget Summary Form (ED 524) Sections A & B

- Applicants should include the line item budget (ED form 524) **AND** the accompanying detailed budget narrative justification.
- Applicants may request funding for 12-36 months.
- Applicants must complete ED 524 for all budget years of the proposed project.
- Applicants should identify funds budgeted for the project evaluation.
- Applicants should include costs for two project staff persons to attend an annual two day project directors meeting in Washington, DC.
- The budget should only include costs that are allowable, reasonable, and necessary for carrying out the objectives of the project.
- Section B: Applicants show any non-federal funds (if applicable).



POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Uniform Guidance

- Grants will be governed by the Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR Part 200, as adopted by ED at 2 CFR 3474.
- The changes should not have any significant impact on the application preparation process.
- Additional Information on the Uniform Guidance can be found in the FAQs and at this Web site:
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/uniform-guidance/index.html>



GRANTS.GOV

- Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov site (www.Grants.gov).
- In order to apply for a grant, you must complete the Grants.gov registration process. Go to the “Get Registered” link on the left hand side of the Grants.gov homepage. There will be a tutorial on this page that instructs applicants on how to complete the registration process.
- The registration process can take between three to five business days (or as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed in a timely manner).

Please register early!



APPLYING THROUGH GRANTS.GOV

- To apply for a Skills for Success grant, go to the “Apply for Grants” link under the Applicants heading on the Grants.gov homepage.
- Next, follow the step-by-step application instructions. The CFDA number you will enter is 84.215.
- 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 keep a record of it. You can also contact them via email at support@grants.gov.



REGISTERING FOR SAM.GOV

- In order to submit an application through Grants.gov, applicants must be active in the System for Award Management (SAM).
- 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 entered into the SAM database by an entity. Thus, if you are submitting an application, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.
- Once your SAM registration is active, you will need to allow **24 to 48 hours** for the information to be available in Grants.gov and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov.
- 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, the U.S. Department of Education prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>.





Q&A: Other Topics

DATES TO REMEMBER

Skills for Success (84.215H)

- **Application available:** June 9, 2015
- **Notice of Intent Deadline:** June 29, 2015
- **Deadline for transmitting applications:** July 29, 2015
- **Awards announced by:** September 30, 2015

NOTICE OF INTENT LINK

Notice of Intent Deadline: June 29, 2015

Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify us of the applicant's intent to submit an application for funding by completing a web-based form. The form can be accessed at the following URL:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VB5L3BR>. Please note that you may have to copy and paste this link into your browser and that this link works best in the Google Chrome browser.

RESOURCES

Skills for Success Web site:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/skillssuccess/index.html>

Notice Inviting Applications:

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-06-09/pdf/2015-14081.pdf> (PDF)

<https://federalregister.gov/a/2015-14081> (Text)

Frequently Asked Questions:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/skillssuccess/faq.html>

Application Package on Grants.gov and the Skills for Success Web site:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/skillssuccess/applicant.html>

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All questions about Skills for Success should be sent to skillsforsuccess@ed.gov