

Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy



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Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy



FY 2011 NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS

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Topics for Discussion



- Application Components and Instructions
- Background and Purpose.....Application Package page 4
- Eligibility.....Application Package page 16
- Project Period and Award Size.....Application Package pages 57-58
- Absolute Priorities.....Application Package pages 9-10
- Competitive Preference Priority.....Application Package page 10
- Program Requirements.....Application Package page 10
- Additional Requirements.....Application Package pages 10-11
- Selection Criteria.....Application Package page 36
- Budget NarrativeApplication Package page 39
- Key Reminders
- Resources

Application Components and Instructions



Copies of the Application Package are available at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/applicant.html>

All applicants must be submitted electronically using the governmentwide Grants.gov “Apply” site at:

<http://www.Grants.gov>

Submission involves uploading forms, documents, and narratives

Application Components and Instructions continued



Applying via Grants.gov means

You must download a copy of the Application Package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application.

You may **not** e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us

Application Components and Instructions continued



Applicants may apply for an exception to the electronic submission requirement if:

You do not have access to the Internet; or

You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

You mail or fax a written statement to the Department no later than two weeks before the application deadline date

Follow the instructions in the Application Package at the end of section 7. a. Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement

Overview



- \$178,000,000 in available funds
 - ED expects to award between 3-18 grants
 - ED expects awards to be made by August 31, 2011
- Notice Inviting Applications
 - Published in the *Federal Register* on March 10, 2011
- Application Package
 - Available at www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/applicant.html
- Deadlines
 - April 4, 2011– Notice of intent to apply
 - May 9, 2011 – Application submission (electronic)

Background and Purpose



- Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) was funded in the FY 2010 Consolidated Appropriations Act
- General purpose is to advance literacy skills—including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing—for students from birth through grade 12, including limited-English-proficient students and with disabilities

Background and Purpose continued



Statutory Language:

“... for a comprehensive literacy development and education program...up to 5 percent for State leadership activities..., not less than 95 percent to local educational agencies or, in the case of early literacy, to local educational agencies or other nonprofit providers of early childhood-education that partner with a public or private nonprofit organization or agency with a demonstrated record of effectiveness in improving the early literacy development of children... , giving priority to such agencies or entities serving greater numbers or percentages of disadvantaged children. ...State educational agency shall ensure that:

- (1) at least 15 percent to serve children from birth through age five,*
- (2) 40 percent to serve students in kindergarten through grade five, and*
- (3) 40 percent to serve students in middle and high school, through grade 12, including an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools.”*

Background and Purpose continued



“Provided further, That eligible entities receiving subgrants from State educational agencies shall use such funds for services and activities that have the characteristics of effective literacy instruction through professional development, screening and assessment, targeted interventions for students reading below grade level and other research-based methods of improving classroom instruction and practice.”

Eligibility



- State educational agencies (SEAs)
 - A **state education agency (SEA)**, or **state department of education**, is a formal governmental label for the state-level government agencies within each U.S. state responsible for providing information, resources, and technical assistance on educational matters to schools and residents
- <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/eligibility.html>

Project Period and Award Size



- Grants will be awarded *up to* 60 months
- Estimated range of awards: \$3,000,000 - \$70,000,000 per year
- Estimated number of awards: 3-18
- Maximum award amounts
 - An applicant may request up to their categorical award limit per year
 - Each SEA applying for funds under this competition should develop a budget per year for up to 5 years that is appropriate for the plan it outlines in its application. We will **not** consider an application if the budget request exceeds the categorical award limit per year (provided in the notice, see next slide)

Project Period and Award Size continued



Categorical award limits* (per year)

- **Category 1** –up to \$70 million: California, Texas
- **Category 2** –up to \$50 million: Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico
- **Category 3** –up to \$30 million: Alabama, Arizona, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington
- **Category 4** –up to \$15 million: Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Utah
- **Category 5** –up to \$8 million: Alaska, Delaware, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Wyoming

** These limits were determined by ranking every State according to its share of the national population of children in poverty ages 5 through 17 based on data from "Table 1: 2009 Poverty and Median Income Estimates—States" released by the Small Area Estimates Branch of the U.S. Census Bureau in December, 2010.*

Project Period and Award Size continued



Question: Do the budget limits included in the Notice Inviting Applications cap the total funding that a State can receive for the entire five-year grant period, or do the budget limits apply for a single year of the grant?

Answer: The budget limits are for each year, not for the entire grant period. Thus, an applicant may propose a five-year budget that includes annual requests of up to the relevant categorical award limit.

Additional Applicant Guidance



- *Absolute Priorities* – In order to be eligible, applicant proposals must address Absolute Priorities 1 and 2. If an application does not meet these priorities, it will not be considered for funding.
- *Competitive Preference Priority*– If the Competitive Preference Priority is be addressed explicitly in the application, then an applicants may receive up to an additional 5 points.
- *Program Requirements* – Applicants are not required to address the program requirements in the application; however, any applicant that receives a grant under the SRCL program must comply with all the Program Requirements.

Absolute Priorities



Priority 1: Improving Learning Outcomes

To meet this priority, an applicant must propose a project that is designed to improve school readiness and success through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy development for disadvantaged students (as defined on page 13 of the Application Package)

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/applicant.html>

Absolute Priorities



Priority 2: Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making

To meet this priority, an applicant must propose a project that is designed to collect, analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, especially on program participant outcomes, in accordance with privacy requirements (as defined on page 14 of the Application Package), to improve instructional practices, policies, and student outcomes in early learning settings and in elementary and secondary schools

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/applicant.html>

Competitive Preference Priority



Applicants that meet the competitive preference priority may receive up to an additional 5 points

To meet this priority, an applicant must:

- (1) propose to use technology—which may include technology to support principles of universal design for learning (as defined on page 15 of the Application Package)—to address student learning challenges; and
- (2) provide, in its application, an evidence-based (as defined on page 14 of the Application Package) rationale that the proposed technology program, practice, or strategy will increase student engagement and achievement or increase teacher effectiveness

Statutory Requirements



Statutory Requirements (see Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2010 (Pub. L. 111-117)).

An SEA awarded a grant under this program--

(a) Must subgrant no less than 95 percent of funds received under this competition to LEAs or, in the case of early literacy, to LEAs or other nonprofit providers of early childhood education that partner with a public or private nonprofit organization or agency with a demonstrated record of effectiveness in improving the early literacy development of children from birth through kindergarten entry and in providing professional development (as defined in this application) in early literacy, giving priority to such agencies or other entities serving greater numbers or percentages of disadvantaged students;

Statutory Requirements



(b) Must ensure that at least--

(1) 15 percent of the funds it subgrants to LEAs or other nonprofit providers of early childhood education (SRCL subgranted funds) are used to serve children from birth through age 5;

(2) 40 percent of its SRCL subgranted funds are used to serve students in kindergarten through grade 5; and

(3) 40 percent of its SRCL subgranted funds are used to serve students in middle and high school, including an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools;

(c) May reserve up to 5 percent of funds received under this competition for State leadership activities, including technical assistance and training, data collection, reporting, and administration.

Statutory Requirements



- **Question:** Is there flexibility in the 15/40/40 funding distribution?
- **Answer:** The distribution of the funds is set by statute. It is in Congress' language. So each grantee (SEA) must ensure that the grant funds be spent according to the percentages.

However, the subgrants that the grantee awards (to LEAs or early childhood nonprofits) might serve children using a different funding distribution. For example, if a subgrantee was an early childhood education agency, all subgrant funds might be used to serve children birth through age 5.

It is not necessary for an SEA to run three separate subgrant competitions for each funding distribution band. However, the SEA is responsible for ensuring that the total amount of SRCL subgrant funds is allocated according to the statutorily mandated funding distribution.

In responding to Selection Criteria (D)(ii) of the Notice Inviting Applications, the SEA should clearly explain how it will design its subgrant competition to ensure compliance with the required funding distribution.

Additional Requirements



The Department established additional requirements for the FY 2011 competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Applicants do not have to respond to the additional requirements in their narrative, however the Department will monitor all awardees for compliance with these additional requirements.

In addition, reviewers will note if an application proposes a program or activities inconsistent with the additional requirements (in review of Selection Criteria (A)(i)).

Selection Criteria



The selection criteria are addressed in your project narrative. You must limit the application narrative to 50 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

Reviewers will not read any pages of your application that exceed the page limit. We highly recommend using a font size of 12 points or higher.

All documents must be submitted electronically as PDF files to www.Grants.gov.

Selection Criteria



- There are 4 selection criteria:
 - (A) Quality of State-level activities (37 points)
 - (B) Quality of the State subgrant competition (28 points)
 - (C) Project management (15 points)
 - (D) Adequacy of resources (20 points)
- Each criterion has several sub criteria

Selection Criteria



(A) Quality of State-level activities (37 points)

(A)(i) How the SEA will carry out the required State-level activities (described in the Additional Requirements section of the Notice Inviting Applications) and how it will align those activities with its comprehensive State literacy plan (10 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of State-level activities continued



(A)(ii) The SEA's goals for improving student literacy outcomes throughout the State for all students (e.g., limited-English-proficient students and students with disabilities), including a description of the data (which may include data gathered through a needs assessment) that the SEA has considered or will consider and a clear and credible path that the SEA will take to achieve these goals with the support of its LEAs (8 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of State-level activities continued



(A)(iii) How the SEA will provide technical assistance and support to its SRCL subgrantees (and, at its discretion, to other LEAs or early childhood education providers) to enable them to implement a high-quality comprehensive literacy program and to improve student achievement in core academic subjects (5 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of State-level activities continued



(A)(iv) How the SEA will evaluate the State's progress in improving achievement in literacy for children and youth from birth through grade 12, including disadvantaged students, including:

- (A)(iv)(1) whether the evaluation will be conducted by an independent evaluator (whose role in the project is limited solely to conducting the evaluation);
- (A)(iv)(2) whether the evaluation will use methods that are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the objectives of the proposed project; and
- (A)(iv)(3) how the SEA will use evidence to inform and continuously improve the design and implementation of its activities (10 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of State-level activities continued



(A)(v) How the SEA will disseminate information on project outcomes, disaggregated by student subgroup, and in formats that are easily understood by, and accessible to, the public, and how the SEA will make that information useful to varied groups (such as families, educators, researchers, other experts, early childhood education providers, and State leaders) (4 points).

Selection Criteria



(B) Quality of the State subgrant competition
(28 points)

(B)(i) The extent to which the SEA will run a rigorous, high-quality competition for subgrants, including how it will review and judge:

(B)(i) (a) The LEA's or early childhood education provider's capacity to successfully implement its proposal (3 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of the State subgrant competition



(B)(i) (b) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant has proposed a comprehensive high-quality literacy program that meets all of the requirements set out in paragraph (d) of the Additional Requirements section in the Notice Inviting Applications and that (8 points):

Selection Criteria

Quality of the State subgrant competition continued



- (B)(i) (b) (1) Addresses the needs of disadvantaged students and proposes to implement activities in schools and early learning programs with the highest levels of need and capacity for improvement.
- (B)(i) (b) (2) Is informed by a needs assessment described in the application and is designed to support effective teaching and to improve student achievement of struggling readers.
- (B)(i) (b) (3) Involves other agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and families in activities that promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for disadvantaged students.

Selection Criteria

Quality of the State subgrant competition continued



(B)(i) (c) The extent to which each SRCL subgrant applicant demonstrates that it will implement a coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction that aligns activities under the SRCL subgrant with literacy instruction supported with other Federal funds, including with funds the entity receives under Title I, Title II-A, and Title III of the ESEA and, as appropriate, the Head Start Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, and State and local funds (2 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of the State subgrant competition continued



(B)(ii) The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education that propose to serve high-poverty schools or a high-poverty population, based on a definition of poverty and process for applying the priority provided by the State (6 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of the State subgrant competition continued



(B)(iii) The extent to which the SEA will give priority to LEAs or providers of early childhood education whose applications are supported by the strongest available evidence (4 points).

Selection Criteria

Quality of the State subgrant competition continued



(B)(iv) The extent to which the SEA will develop or update a process, or use an existing process, to review and judge the evidence base and alignment with State standards for the curricula and materials that LEAs propose to use in implementing their subgrants, and how the SEA will make the process and results of any such review publicly available (5 points).

Selection Criteria



(C) Project management (15 points)

(C)(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 (6 points).

Selection Criteria

Project management continued



- (C)(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key personnel (5 points).

Selection Criteria

Project management continued



(C) (iii) The extent to which the State will ensure a diversity of perspectives in the design and implementation of the proposed project, including those of: families, teachers, early childhood education professionals, officials from other State and local agencies, Head Start Advisory Councils, professional organizations, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, and libraries (4 points).

Selection Criteria



(D) Adequacy of resources (20 points)

(D)(i) The extent to which the costs described in the SEA's budget are reasonable in relation to the number of objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project (10 points).

Selection Criteria

Adequacy of resources continued



(D)(ii) The quality of the SEA's plan to ensure that SRCL subgrant funds are allocated as follows:

- At least 15 percent to serve children from birth through age five.
- At least 40 percent to serve students in kindergarten through grade five.
- At least 40 percent to serve students in middle and high school, through grade 12, including an equitable distribution of funds between middle and high schools (4 points).

Selection Criteria

Adequacy of resources continued



(D) (iii) The extent to which the SEA will use the grant to leverage other State and Federal funds in order to maximize the impact of the grant and how it will support LEAs and early childhood education providers in integrating funds with other local, State, and Federal funds and in developing a plan for sustaining funding after the end of the subgrant (3 points).

Selection Criteria

Adequacy of resources continued



(D) (iv) The extent to which the SEA will award SRCL subgrants of sufficient size to support projects that improve instruction for a significant number of students in the high-need schools or early learning programs serving children birth through five that the SRCL subgrantee would serve (3 points).

Budget Narrative



- Include a budget narrative that corresponds to the budget form (ED Form 524).
- The request should be carefully linked to the goals, objectives, and activities of the project narrative portion of the application.
- ED staff will review the budget narrative and determine whether or not the expenditures are allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Any costs not fully described or justified can be deleted from your funding request.
- Peer reviewers will likely reference the budget and budget narrative when scoring the selection criteria on adequacy of resources (D)(i).

Budget Narrative



- Remember that construction is not allowed
- An applicant may use their approved negotiated *unrestricted* indirect cost rate to charge indirect costs to the grant
 - Include a signed copy of the indirect cost rate agreement with the application
- Matching is not required
 - If an applicant intends to provide a match, this information must be included in the budget narrative and in any future reporting document

Suggested Steps for Submission



1. Register your Organization with Central Contractor Registry
2. Check Adobe Reader compatibility
3. Download, complete, and submit application
4. Verify Submission “OK”

1. Registering your Organization



For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to:
http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.

- Register early
- Registration may take five or more business days* to complete
- You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process
- You cannot submit an application until all of the Registration steps are complete.

Note: Your organization will need to update its Central Contractor Registry (CCR) registration **annually**.

**We hear that there's a backlog, and it may take up to 30 days to register.*

2. Check Adobe Reader compatibility



The compatible version of **Adobe Reader is required** for viewing, editing and submitting a complete grant application package for the Department of Education through Grants.gov.

- Confirm the compatibility of their Adobe Reader version before downloading the application
- Ensure you have a version of Adobe Reader on your computer that is compatible with Grants.gov
- Encouraged to use the test package provided by Grants.gov that can be accessed at

<http://www.grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>.

3. Download, complete and submit application



Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at <http://www.Grants.gov>, and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system **no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time on May 9th, 2011.**

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or <http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp>

4. Verify Submission “OK”



You will want to verify that Grants.gov and the Department of Education receive your Grants.gov submission timely and that it was validated successfully. To see the date/time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the “Track My Application” link.

The status of your application will be either:

- “Received” it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov.
- “Validated” validation is complete
- “Rejected with Errors” was not received, was late, or had errors

www.Grants.Gov Customer Support



- Contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or <http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp>; or
- Use the customer support available on the Web site: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_help.jsp
- Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Closed on [federal holidays](#)
- Questions about Grants.gov and electronic submission, e-mail support@grants.gov.

Tips for a Successful Submission



Do not wait until the last day to submit your application.

- Upload time for an application will vary depending on a number of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. The time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well
- Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded
- Download the Application Package
- You may save the Application Package to your computer and work offline while you register for Grants.gov

Tips for Preparing Strong Application



- It's important to remember that the application is a contract. What is in the application must be implemented unless changes are approved.
- Make you applications are organized, legible, and easy to read as possible for the reviewers.
 - Write the application in the order of the criteria . This will make it easier for reviewers to read, understand, and score.
 - Follow the page and font restrictions exactly.
 - Explain everything clearly. Don't assume that readers know anything about the project.
 - Have someone who doesn't know about SRCL read your application and provide feedback.

Key Reminders



- Familiarize yourself with Grants.gov
 - <http://www.Grants.gov>
- Submit your application ON TIME:
 - Application Due Date: May 9, 2011 at 4:30:00
Washington DC time
 - Intent to Apply Due Date – April 4, 2011
- FAX the signed SF 424 to the Application Control Center within 3 working days after you submit your application
 - (202) 245-6272

Key Reminders



- Remember the things that can get your application rejected from the competition:
 - Requesting more than the budget cap for your State per year
 - Missing the deadline
 - Not addressing the Absolute Priorities
 - Submitting by e-mail or mail
- Limit attachments to necessary files that support the application narrative

Resources



- Additional FAQs
- Application Package
 - <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/strivingreaders-literacy/applicant.html>

All other questions:

- Miriam Lund – (202) 401-2871
- Katie Chase – (202) 205-0266
- Striving.readers.comprehensive.literacy@ed.gov

Thank you for joining us!



Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Applicant WebEx