

## Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Frequently Asked Questions

### Application Questions

**1. What is the deadline for an applicant to submit an application for TQP funds under the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 competition?**

July 7, 2016

**2. What is the length of a TQP grant?**

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) may award TQP grants for up to 60 months; however, an applicant may request an award for a period shorter than 60 months.

**3. Is electronic submission required?**

Yes. Applicants must submit their applications electronically using the Grants.gov system. Instructions for doing so are included in the Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for FY 2016 (FY 2016 NIA) published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2016. Additional instructions on electronic submission and SAM registration are found in the TQP application package.

**4. Should applicants submit to the Department a written notice of their intent to apply for a TQP grant award?**

To assist the Department in planning for the upcoming competition, the Secretary strongly encourages each applicant to inform the Department of its intent to apply. Potential applicants should complete the FY 16 Intent to Apply form at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/tqpfy16> and submit it by June 22, 2016. However, potential applicants that do not submit the intent to apply form may still apply for funding.

**5. How will applications be selected for funding?**

Three independent peer reviewers (i.e., non-Federal employees) will review and score the applications. Those applications that include all required information will be scored against the program's selection criteria and, if they choose to address it, the competitive preference priority announced in the FY 2016 NIA published in the Federal Register on May 23, 2016. Because the Department hopes to be fund projects of sufficient quality that address both reform of teacher preparation programs at the pre-baccalaureate or 5<sup>th</sup> year levels (Absolute Priority 1) and teaching residency programs (Absolute Priority 2), applications will be reviewed by the absolute priority they address and then ranked within that absolute priority by their total score.

**6. When should applicants anticipate that grant awards will be made?**

The Department expects TQP grant awards will be made on or before September 30, 2016.

**7. May an entity be a partner in more than one application?**

Yes. An entity may be a partner and participate in more than one TQP grant. However, because an eligible partnership may not receive a TQP grant more than once in a five-year period (see Section 2023(a)(2) of the Higher Education Act (HEA), the partnership as a whole may only submit one TQP application and is ineligible to apply if it received an award in the 2014 TQP competition. Individual entities that were members of partnerships that received awards in the 2014 TQP competition are eligible to apply in this competition, so long as they apply as members of a different partnership than the one that received an award in 2014.

## Eligibility Questions

### 1. Who is eligible to apply for a TQP grant?

An applicant must be an “eligible partnership” as defined in Section 200(6) of the HEA. The term “eligible partnership” means an entity that, at minimum, includes all of the components listed below:

- A high-need LEA or consortium of high-need LEA(s) (see definition of high-need LEA in HEA Section (200)(10));
- A high-need school or consortium of high-need schools (see definition of high-need school in HEA Section (200)(11)) or a high-need early childhood education program (see definition of high-need early education program in HEA Section (200)(9));
- An institution of higher education (IHE) (see definition of “partner institution” in HEA Section (200)(17));
- A college, school, department, or program of education within the partner IHE; and
- A college, school, or department of arts and sciences within the partner IHE.

NOTE: For eligibility of a two-year-IHE to be a partner, please see question 6 of this section. For questions on which entity may submit the application on behalf of the eligible partnership, please see question 14 of this section.

### 2. May an eligible partnership apply under Absolute Priority 2 to expand or enhance a teaching residency program that an IHE partner is already conducting?

Yes, as long as the existing IHE’s teaching residency program conforms to the requirements in HEA Section 202(e) and the definition of “teaching residency program” in HEA Section 200(22), noted below:

**Teaching Residency Program: The term “teaching residency program” means a school-based teacher preparation program in which a prospective teacher—**

- A) for one academic year, teaches alongside a mentor teacher, who is the teacher of record;
- B) receives concurrent instruction during the year described in subparagraph (A) in these FAQs from the partner institution, which courses may be taught by local educational agency personnel or residency program faculty, in the teaching of the content area in which the teacher will become certified or licensed;
- C) acquires effective teaching skills; and
- D) prior to completion of the program (i) attains full State teacher certification or licensure and with respect to special education teachers, meets the qualifications described in Section 612(a)(14)(C) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and (ii) attains full State teacher certification or licensure, and acquires a master’s degree not later than 18 months after beginning the program.

Please note the TQP program has a supplement not supplant requirement. Therefore, TQP funds may be used to expand or enhance capacity of existing teaching residency programs but may not be used to pay for currently provided services.

### 3. If an IHE partner is running an existing teaching residency program, may the eligible partnership apply for TQP funding under Absolute Priority 2?

Yes. If the IHE partner’s current teaching residency program meets the requirements under Section 202(e) and the definition of teaching residency program in HEA Section 200(22), it may receive TQP funds to expand its existing teaching residency program, subject to TQP’s requirement to supplement,

not supplant (see Question 5 under Match/Budget Questions for additional information). If its current teaching residency program does not meet the definition for a teaching residency program in HEA Section 200(22), the newly proposed TQP project must meet this definition in order to receive TQP funds.

**4. Whether or not an IHE partner is running an existing teaching residency program that meets the requirements for a teaching residency program in HEA Section 202(e) and the definition of teaching residency program in HEA Section 200(22), may the eligible partnership apply for TQP funding under Absolute Priority 1?**

Yes.

**5. How might an eligible partnership demonstrate that it has a college, school, or department of arts and sciences as a partner?**

Required partners of a TQP project must include an IHE that meets the definition of a “partner institution” and its college, school, or department of arts and sciences (as well as its college, school, department, or program of education).

An eligible partnership can demonstrate that an IHE’s (partner institution’s) college, school, or department of arts and sciences (school of arts and science) is a partner in a variety of ways. For example, the partnership could include in the application written confirmation from the dean or other officials of the school of arts and sciences that it is a partner. As another example, the application could include documentation of active representation in the eligible partnership of one or more faculty members from that school of arts and sciences, along with conformation from the faculty member(s) that (1) the faculty member(s) speak(s) for the school of arts and science, and (2) as the project proceeds, the faculty member(s) will work in close consultation with the school’s chair and academic dean to ensure that teaching residents benefit from any needed subject-matter content.

In addition, if an IHE (partner institution) does not have a school of arts and sciences, the eligible partnership may include as an additional partner an IHE that does, provided that the collective eligible partnership and project management plan clarify how the multiple IHEs, teacher preparation program(s), and school of arts and sciences will work together to promote success of the TQP project.

**6. May two-year IHEs be partners in this competition?**

Yes. Two-year IHEs may be partner institutions as long as (1) they have a formal articulation agreement for a dual program with a four-year IHE participating in the eligible partnership and (2) that four-year IHE has a teacher preparation program that meets the requirements in the definition of “partner institution.” See HEA Section 200(17)(A) and (B).

**7. To be a partner high-need LEA, does an LEA need to meet one of the criteria in each section of the high-need LEA definition?**

Yes. For an LEA to be considered “high-need,” it must meet at least one criterion under Poverty Data/Rural Location and at least one criterion under Teacher Need, as contained in the definition of high-need LEA in HEA Section 200(10), noted below.

**High-Need LEA Definition: The term high-need LEA means an LEA-**

- (i) Poverty Data/Rural Location
- (A) For which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the agency are children from low-income families;

- (B) That serves not fewer than 10,000 children from low-income families;
- (C) That meets the eligibility requirements for funding under the Small, Rural School Achievement (SRSA) Program under Section 5211(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (ESEA); or
- (D) That meets eligibility requirements for funding under the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) Program under Section 6211(b) of the ESEA; and--
  - (ii) Teacher Need
    - (A) For which there is a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach; or
    - (B) For which there is a high teacher turnover rate or a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensure.

**8. How does an eligible applicant determine that it has at least 20 percent of, or at least 10,000, children from low-income families and a high-percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach?**

Section 200(2) of the HEA defines the phrase “children from low-income families” to have the meaning described in Section 1124(c)(1)(A) of the ESEA, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). That ESEA provision requires use of the most recent poverty data issued by the US Census Bureau. These data may be found in the following links:

<http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/downloads/sd14/index.html>

<http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/data/index.html>

If the Census Bureau data do not include poverty data for a particular LEA, such as a charter school with LEA status, a newly created LEA, and most, if not all, Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)-funded schools, the eligible partnership should include in its application documentary support for a conclusion that the level of its students’ family poverty as measured by data it does have, such as eligibility for free or subsidized lunches, is comparable to 20 percent of, or at least 10,000, children from low income families as presented in the most recent Census Bureau data. The Department will then review these submissions on a case-by-case basis.

**9. How does an eligible applicant determine that it has a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach, or a high teacher turnover rate or a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensure?**

The Department is not able to provide a definitive threshold of what constitutes a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach, or a high teacher turnover rate or a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensure. Therefore, eligible applicants should include in their application documentation to support the conclusion that any LEA they would identify as a high-need LEA has one of these teacher-need characteristics. The Department will then review these submissions on a case-by-case basis.

**10. Is a charter school eligible to be a member of an eligible partnership?**

Yes, if a charter school is considered by the State in which it is located to be an LEA, it is eligible if it meets the definition of a high-need LEA in HEA Section 200(10). (If it does so, the Department would

consider it also to be a high-need school.) If a charter school is administered by a high-need LEA, it must meet the definition of a high-need school in HEA Section 200(11).

**11. May a charter school that is neither a high-need LEA nor a high-need school be a partner in an eligible partnership that applies for a TQP grant?**

Yes. A charter school that is neither a high-need LEA nor a high-need school may be an optional partner if it meets the definition of a [charter school](#), as defined in Section 5210 of the ESEA, as amended by NCLB. See HEA Section 200(6)(B)(x).

**12. May 2014 TQP grantees apply in this competition?**

No. HEA Section 203(a)(2) prohibits an eligible partnership from receiving more than one TQP award during a five-year period. However, any entity within a currently funded TQP grant may be part of a new eligible partnership with different eligible partners and may apply with such partners for a new TQP grant.

**13. Who may be the fiscal agent or lead applicant for the grant?**

The fiscal agent or lead applicant (the Department generally uses these terms interchangeably for this program, though an eligible partnership could identify one partner that submits the application as the lead applicant and another partner as the eligible partnership's fiscal agent) may be any member of the eligible partnership. The eligible partnership should decide which of the partners will be the fiscal agent and lead applicant and identify this partner (or these partners) in its application.

**Programmatic Questions**

**1. What are the priorities for the FY 16 TQP Competition?**

There are two absolute priorities, one competitive preference priority, and one invitational priority.

Absolute Priority 1 is Partnership Grants for the Preparation of Teachers. Absolute Priority 2 is Partnership Grants for the Establishment of Effective Teaching Residency Programs. Every applicant must address one (but not both) of these priorities.

The Competitive Preference Priority is Supporting High-Need Students who are members of Federally recognized Indian Tribes or who are served by rural LEAs (up to 15 points). Applicants are not required to address this priority but will not be considered for the additional points unless they address the competitive preference priority well.

The Invitational Priority is Enhancing Cultural Competencies to Support High-Need Students. While the Department strongly believes that this priority is an important addition to the competitive preference priority, and strongly encourages applicants to have their proposed projects address it, applicants that do so will not be given any additional preference in the application review process.

**2. May applicants address both absolute priorities?**

No. Applicants must address either Absolute Priority 1 or Absolute Priority 2 but may not address both. Applicants must clarify in the Project Abstract which absolute priority they are addressing. Applications that address both absolute priorities will not be reviewed. Full language for the absolute priorities is found in the FY16 NIA.

**3. Under Absolute Priority 1, the projects designed to reform teacher preparation, may grantees use TQP funds to pay student stipends or tuition reduction to prospective teachers? May TQP funds pay the costs of their certification or State testing?**

No. The HEA does not authorize the use of TQP funds for tuition or other student support costs such as fees for certification or State testing.

**4. Absolute Priority 1 requires that applicants implement reforms in each teacher preparation program assisted with TQP funds. See HEA Section 202(d)(1). Does that mean that the eligible partnership must reform all of the partner IHE's teacher preparation programs inclusive of all subjects and grade levels, including those not housed in its college, school, or department of education?**

In addressing Absolute Priority 1, applicants may propose use of TQP funds to implement TQP-funded reforms and other required activities either within all teacher preparation programs that the partner IHE administers or within one or more particular teacher preparation programs that need particular assistance to implement the TQP-funded reforms and other required activities. Applicants will need to identify in their applications the teacher preparation program(s) that TQP funds would reform.

**5. Who is eligible to participate in a teaching residency program?**

Eligible participants are recent graduates of a four-year IHE or mid-career professionals from outside the field of education possessing strong content knowledge or a record of professional accomplishment. In selecting teaching residents, an eligible partnership must establish criteria based on: (1) strong content knowledge or record of accomplishment in the field or subject area to be taught; (2) strong verbal and written communication skills, which may be demonstrated by performance on appropriate tests; and (3) other attributes linked to effective teaching, which may be determined by interviews or performance assessments, as specified by the eligible partnership. See HEA Section 202(e)(2)(B)(i) and (ii). See also requirements governing admission goals and priorities that are aligned with the needs of the partner LEA(s) in HEA Section 202(e)(2)(A)(vi).

**6. May individuals who already are certified to teach in one area participate in the teaching residency program as a way of becoming certified in another area?**

No. The definition of a "teaching residency program" in HEA Section 200(22) provides that the program be for "prospective teachers." The intent of this program is to bring new teachers into classrooms.

**7. What is a teaching resident's service obligation, and who is responsible for tracking whether, upon completion of their teaching residencies, residents have met it?**

In order to receive the one-year living stipend or salary that eligible partnerships must make available to them, residents must submit an application that includes an agreement to work, immediately upon successful completion of the residency, as a full-time teacher for not less than three years in a high-need school in a partner high-need LEA. The Agreement also must specify that a resident who does not fulfill this service obligation must repay these funds to the eligible partnership. See generally HEA Section 202(e)(2)(C)(iii) and (iv).

Eligible partnerships are responsible for tracking residents' employment after completing the teaching residency program based on the terms of the repayment agreement, and for requiring residents who do not fulfill their service obligation to repay the living stipend or salary that they received. They must use recovered funds for additional activities consistent with the purposes of the teaching residency program.

**8. In teaching residency projects, may payment of the participants’ “one-year living stipend or salary” be made with either TQP grant funds or with non-Federal match funds?**

Yes. The living wage stipend may be paid with TQP funds, non-Federal funds that the eligible partnership provides (which may be for the required match), or a combination of the two.

The HEA does not define the term “living stipend or salary.” Therefore, the applicant should describe in the budget and budget narrative (and elsewhere in the application, as relevant) the amount that it proposes to provide as a living stipend to its teaching residents. This living stipend may be granted for a maximum of one year (12 months).

**9. May an applicant seek TQP funding to prepare multiple cohorts of teachers in a teaching residency program?**

Yes. Please note, if an applicant proposes to recruit and prepare candidates during Project Years 4 and/or 5 of their grant performance period, the Department will expect it to describe in the application how it will provide them with the required minimum two-year induction support, professional development, and networking opportunities (see HEA Section 202(e)(2)(A)(vii)) during and after the end of the five-year grant performance period.

**10. What is the required length of the teaching residency program?**

The teaching residency program must be designed so that participants may complete it within 18 months (i.e., the program must be designed so that within an 18-month period, residents may receive the necessary mentoring and instruction and earn a Master’s degree and initial teacher certification or licensure). TQP program funds may only be used to pay for residents’ stipends or salaries for a one-year (12-month) period of that program. See the definition of teaching residency program in HEA Section 200(22), below.

**Teaching Residency Program: The term “teaching residency program” means a school-based teacher preparation program in which a prospective teacher—**

- A) for one academic year, teaches alongside a mentor teacher, who is the teacher of record;
- B) receives concurrent instruction during the year described in subparagraph (A) in these FAQs from the partner institution, which courses may be taught by local educational agency personnel or residency program faculty, in the teaching of the content area in which the teacher will become certified or licensed;
- C) acquires effective teaching skills; and
- D) prior to completion of the program (i) attains full State teacher certification or licensure and with respect to special education teachers, meets the qualifications described in Section 612(a)(14)(C) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and (ii) acquires a master’s degree not later than 18 months after beginning the program.

**11. How many classroom hours must teaching residents spend working in the classroom?**

The eligible partnership determines the number of required classroom hours; the HEA does not specify a specific number of hours per day/week that a resident must spend in the classroom. During the teaching residency, residents must teach alongside a mentor teacher (who is the teacher-of-record) for a full academic year, and that mentor teacher must have been selected based on measures of effectiveness addressed in HEA [Section 202\(e\)\(2\)\(A\)\(iv\)](#).

**12. May teacher mentors under the TQP program receive stipends?**

Yes. TQP funds may be used to provide reasonable and necessary stipends or other supplemental compensation to teachers who have taken on additional responsibilities related to mentoring the teaching residents. Supplemental compensation may include bonuses, salary differentials, incentives, or performance pay, based on the mentor teacher’s additional responsibilities.

**13. May TQP funds be used to secure replacement teachers for times when mentor teachers are working on TQP responsibilities outside their classrooms?**

Yes. TQP funds may be used to cover the costs of replacement teachers as long as the LEA, under its established policies, would not pay for these costs in the absence of the TQP project (which therefore would constitute impermissible supplanting of other Federal, State, or local funds).

**14. Are all schools within the high-need LEA eligible to receive project services under Absolute Priority 1 or Absolute Priority 2?**

Not necessarily. Teaching residency program participants must teach in a high-need school of a partner high-need LEA to meet their service requirement.

HEA Section 202(e)(2)(C) states that projects focused on reforming teacher preparation programs at the pre-baccalaureate or 5<sup>th</sup> year levels must provide clinical experiences in a high-need school that is part of an eligible partnership, and the Department encourages teachers who complete the program to become teachers of record in a high-need school. However, the program’s required induction component is focused on all of the participating LEA’s new teachers.

**15. Is Early Childhood Education (ECE) a required component of either Absolute Priority 1 or 2 for TQP projects?**

No. However, an eligible partnership that would prepare teachers to teach early childhood education programs must focus their activities on providing prospective teachers with the knowledge and skills they need in early childhood education. See, e.g., HEA Section 202(b)(6)(E), (b)(6)(K), (b)(7)(D); and Section 202(d)(1)(A), (d)(1)(B)(ii)(IV), and (d)(2)-(d)(4).

**16. With regard to applications from eligible partnerships that include LEAs or schools that serve American Indian or Alaska Native students, how does the TQP program differ from the Indian Education Professional Development Grant Program administered by the Department’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education?**

The following chart provides a snapshot of each program and highlights the similarities and differences. It also includes funding associated with the two current competitions and information about closing dates.

	<b>Indian Education Professional Development (PD) Program</b>	<b>Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Program</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	The purposes of the Indian Education Professional Development grant program are to (1) increase the number of qualified Indian individuals in professions that serve Indians; (2) provide training to qualified	The TQP grant program aims to improve student achievement by enhancing the quality of prospective and new teachers by improving the preparation of prospective teachers and the professional

	<b>Indian Education Professional Development (PD) Program</b>	<b>Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Program</b>
	Indian individuals to become teachers, administrators, teacher aides, social workers, and ancillary educational personnel; and (3) improve the skills of qualified Indian individuals who serve in the education field.	development activities for new teachers; holding teacher preparation programs at IHEs accountable for preparing certified teachers; and recruiting highly qualified individuals, including minorities and individuals from other occupations, into the teaching force.
<b>Eligible Applicants</b>	An applicant must be an eligible entity, which means— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An IHE, including an Indian IHE;</li> <li>• A State educational agency in consortium with an IHE;</li> <li>• A LEA in consortium with an IHE;</li> <li>• An Indian tribe or Indian organization in consortium with an IHE; or</li> <li>• A Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funded school. (For a pre-service training program, the BIE school must apply in consortium with an IHE that is accredited to provide the coursework and level of degree required by the project.)</li> </ul>	An applicant must be an “eligible partnership” as defined in Section 200(6) of the HEA. The term “eligible partnership” means an entity that, at minimum, includes all of the components listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high-need LEA or consortium of LEA(s);</li> <li>• A high-need school or consortium of high-need schools or a high-need early childhood education program;</li> <li>• An IHE that meets the HEA definition of a partner institution;</li> <li>• A college, school, department, or program of education within the partner IHE; and</li> <li>• A college, school, or department of arts and sciences within the partner IHE.</li> </ul>
<b>Funds Available</b>	\$6,000,000 estimated for new awards in FY16	\$5,000,000 estimated for new awards in FY16
<b>Range of Awards per Project Year</b>	\$300,000 to \$400,000 estimated per year	\$1,000,000 estimated per year for Year 1, and must not exceed \$1,500,000 for each subsequent year
<b>Project Period</b>	Up to 48 months	Up to 60 months
<b>Estimated Number of Awards</b>	16–18 new awards in FY16	3–5 new awards in FY16
<b>Program</b>	<b>Absolute Priorities:</b>	<b>Absolute Priorities:</b>

	<b>Indian Education Professional Development (PD) Program</b>	<b>Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Program</b>
<b>Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-service teacher training</li> <li>• Pre-service administrator training</li> </ul> <p><b>Competitive Preference Priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of Support considering program graduates for qualifying employment</li> <li>• Application submitted by an Indian tribe, Indian organization, or Indian IHE as the lead</li> <li>• Application submitted by an Indian tribe, Indian organization, or Indian IHE as a consortium member</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership Grants for the Preparation of Teachers</li> <li>• Partnership Grants for the Establishment of Effective Teaching Residency Programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Competitive Preference Priority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting High-Need Students who are members of Federally recognized Indian Tribes or who are served by rural LEAs</li> </ul> <p><b>Invitational Priority:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing Cultural Competencies to Support High-Need Students</li> </ul>
<b>Eligible participants</b>	<p>Indian individuals interested in becoming teachers and administrators that serve Indian people. See 34 CFR 263.3 for definition of Indian.</p>	<p>Undergraduate students and others who are interested in becoming teachers. Eligibility will depend on whether the proposed project is addressing Absolute Priority 1 or Absolute Priority 2. Potential participants must meet the entrance requirements of the proposed project.</p>
<b>Payback requirement</b>	<p>Participants in the PD program may have the full costs of their educational expenses covered (see 34 CFR 263.4 for allowable costs). Participants qualify for work-related payback if the work they are performing is in their field of study and benefits Indian people. Employment in a school that has significant Indian student population qualifies as work that benefits Indian people. Work-related payback is calculated as one month of training for one month of work payback. Participants who are not in work-related payback will be referred to cash payback. Cash payback is equivalent to the total amount of funds received and expended for training received under this program and may be prorated based on any approved work-related service the participant performs. (see 34 CFR 263.8 for payback</p>	<p>Participants in the TQP-funded teacher/teaching residency model may receive a living wage stipend for up to 12 months while completing their year-long clinical experience. Residents who accept these funds must sign an agreement to (1) complete a 3-year teaching commitment in a high-need school of a partner high-need LEA, or (2) repay any amount received.</p>

	Indian Education Professional Development (PD) Program	Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Program
	requirements).	
<b>Eligible payback positions</b>	Participants qualify for work-related payback if the work they are performing is in their field of study and benefits Indian people.	N/A
<b>Application Closing Date</b>	July 1, 2016	July 7, 2016
<b>Program Contact:</b>	John Cheek <a href="mailto:John.Cheek@ed.gov">John.Cheek@ed.gov</a> 202-401-0274	Mia Howerton <a href="mailto:Mia.Howerton@ed.gov">Mia.Howerton@ed.gov</a> 202-205-0147

### Match/Budget Questions

**Note:** HEA Section 203(c)(1) requires each eligible partnership that receives a TQP grant to provide a 100 percent non-Federal match, which may be provided in cash or in kind. As part of their TQP applications, eligible applicants must identify the match funds on the ED 524 non-Federal budget form and include a budget narrative that provides the source and description of the matching funds.

#### 1. What if an applicant cannot meet the non-Federal match requirement?

HEA Section 203(c)(2) allows for the Secretary to waive all or part of the matching requirement described in HEA Section 203(c)(1). An applicant may request a waiver of all or part of the non-Federal match requirement when it submits its application. If an applicant requests such a waiver, it must provide a detailed justification to support why a waiver in whole or in part is needed and demonstrate that all possible efforts were made to identify appropriate matching funds.

#### 2. If an applicant seeks a waiver, when and how should it do so?

An applicant should use the TQP Waiver Request form contained in the application package to request a waiver at the time of application. The initial waiver request should cover Year 1 of the grant performance period only. The Department will provide information about how to request waivers for future TQP grant performance periods after grant awards are made.

#### 3. Will waiver requests be approved automatically?

No. The TQP Waiver Request form, including the detailed justification, will initially be reviewed by the Department's TQP staff. Based on the information provided, staff will make a recommendation about whether or not the Department should approve the waiver request, or whether additional information is needed. If the Department does not approve the waiver request, the eligible partnership may be offered a reduced award amount at which the match can be met if this amount is still consistent with the scope and objectives of the proposed project.

**4. What is the amount of the non-Federal match requirement, and how do applicants identify the match in their applications?**

The TQP non-Federal match amount is 100 percent. The non-Federal match is a dollar-for-dollar required non-Federal contribution that is calculated on the basis of the annual amount of the TQP award (e.g., if the Year 1 award request is \$1,000,000, the applicant must match \$1,000,000 with non-Federal funds). Applicants must provide in their applications a proposed budget narrative form ED 524 Section B and a detailed budget narrative to show how the match would be met based on the annual award amount requested. If the applicant believes that it cannot meet the 100 percent non-Federal match requirement for one or more years of the proposed project, the applicant should identify in the budget form and narrative the amount of match it can commit to providing and include on the TQP Waiver Request form the amount of matching funds for any Project Year it requests to be waived. As noted in response to Question 2 of this section, the Department will not work to resolve requests for waivers in Project Years 2-5 until a later time.

Matching funds are governed by, and valued on the basis of, provisions in 2 CFR 200.306 of the recently issued Office of Management and Budget Uniform Requirements. This regulation includes the requirement that funds used to meet matching requirements be allowable if paid for with TQP funds. See 2 CFR 200.306(b)(4), principles governing allowable costs in 2 CFR Subpart E – Cost Principles, and 2 CFR 200.403((b), incorporated therein by reference.

**5. What is the “supplement, not supplant” requirement for the TQP program, and what does it mean for budgeting costs?**

The supplement, not supplant requirement is in [HEA Section 202\(k\)](#). It provides that grantees must not use TQP funds to pay for activities that are already being carried out, or that must be carried out, by the grantee or its partners with Federal, State, or local funds. (“Local” funds here include private IHE and other privately contributed funds).

In addition, given the requirement that funds provided as matching contributions be allowable if paid for with TQP funds, the matching contributions must likewise supplement the provision of non-TQP funds that would be provided in the absence of the TQP grant.

**6. Are funds that BIE-funded schools receive from the Department of Interior’s appropriation considered to be Federal funds for purposes of the match requirement?**

No. For any BIE-funded school that meets the definition of a “high-need LEA,” and so can be a partner in an eligible partnership, funds the school receives from the Department of Interior’s appropriation are considered to be non-Federal funds. Funds that it receives from the Department of the Interior that are originally awarded to the Department of Education are Federal funds and so they cannot be used to meet the TQP matching requirement.

**7. What are indirect costs?**

Indirect costs are costs that are not readily identified with a particular grant, contract, project function, or activity, but they are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs. Indirect costs, for example, may include utility costs that support the project and salaries of fiscal staff who work on TQP and other federal programs. TQP grantees may charge indirect costs to their TQP award.

**8. What are an indirect cost rate and a restricted indirect cost rate?**

An indirect cost rate (ICR) is a methodology for determining the amount of indirect costs a grantee may charge to its program funds. The rate is applied to the grantee’s direct cost base. For more information on indirect costs, see 34 CFR 75.560-75.561 and 75.563-75.564. In addition, because the TQP program has a supplement, not supplant requirement, the ICR that an eligible applicant may use is reduced so that the amount of indirect costs does not include costs that the applicant would bear in the absence of TQP funds. This reduced rate is referred to as a restricted indirect cost rate (RICR). See 34 CFR 75.563 and 76.564 – 74.569.

**9. How does an eligible partnership determine the amount of indirect costs that it may charge to TQP funds?**

Under 34 CFR 75.563 and 76.563(c), the indirect cost rate that an eligible applicant may use to charge indirect costs to TQP funds may be no more than eight percent (8 percent). In addition, because the TQP eligible applicant is a group applicant (see 34 CFR 75.127 – 75.129), under 34 CFR 75.564(e), the eligible partnership must use an RICR that is no greater than the amount of the lead applicant’s RICR if that rate is less than eight percent. Under 34 CFR 75.128(b), the members of the eligible partnership need to enter into an agreement that details the responsibilities of each partner, and this agreement should, among other things, identify how indirect costs will be apportioned among members of the eligible partnership.

**10. How may a lead applicant that does not have a restricted ICR (RICR) obtain one?**

If a lead applicant that does not have an approved RICR would like to obtain one, please email the Department’s ICR Group at [IndirectCostGroup@ed.gov](mailto:IndirectCostGroup@ed.gov) for instructions. The Department of Education will provide direct support if it is the cognizant Federal agency. The cognizant Federal agency is the Federal agency that provides the most direct Federal funding to the lead applicant.

**11. May unrecovered indirect cost funds be used to meet the TQP non-Federal match requirement?**

No. As noted above, federal cost principles provide that matching funds are allowable only if they would be allowable if paid for with TQP funds. Since indirect costs charged to TQP funds may not exceed the amount using a restricted indirect cost that is the lesser of 8 percent or the negotiated restricted indirect cost rate (see Question 9 of this section), indirect costs that exceed this amount may not be used as a non-federal match.

**12. Should applicants submit a multi-year budget or just a Year 1 budget?**

TQP grants may be awarded for up to 60 months (i.e., five years). Applicants may request a project period that is less than 60 months. Except under unusual circumstances, the Department provides funding on the basis of annual budget periods that align with an annual project period. Applicants for new awards must provide with their applications a proposed budget using form ED 524 and a detailed budget justification or narrative for all requested budget years of the proposed project, not just the first year. Also see Question 4 of this section on preparation of multi-year budgets where the applicant anticipates the need for a full or partial waiver of the match requirement of Projects Years 2-5.

**Evaluation Questions**

**1. What measures should be included in the applicant’s evaluation plan?**

Applicants should include both the TQP GPRA measures found in the FY 16 NIA and measures that are unique to the applicant’s project as part of their evaluation plan. Applicants will report on all these measures annually as part of the annual performance report. Several of the TQP GPRA measures do not

yield results in Year 1. An explanation of how to report on these measures and possible options to reduce the grantee reporting burden will be provided to successful applicants shortly after awards have been made.

**2. In evaluating TQP projects, must eligible partnerships use an outside evaluator?**

No. However, given the complexity of the program, the Department encourages applicants to use an external evaluator to gather relevant and rigorous data about the impact of the TQP-funded programs. Those eligible applicants that wish to use an outside evaluator may also wish to consider selecting the evaluator and identifying it in the application using procedures in 34 CFR 75.135, which provide flexibility on procurement requirements that otherwise would be required.

Whether or not the eligible partnership uses an outside evaluator, the Department strongly recommends that it provide a detailed list of responsibilities for the evaluator in its application.