

FY 2012  
Upward Bound Competition  
Frequently Asked Questions

Application Requirements: Multiple Applications, Applicant Eligibility, Maximum Points, and Attachments

Q: May one organization submit an application for the regular Upward Bound (UB) and another for the Upward Bound Math and Science (UBMS) program?

A: Yes, an applicant may submit an application for a regular UB project and an application for an UBMS project.

Q: May an Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science program serve the same target school?

A: Yes, as long as there is no duplication of services. There must be a large enough eligible population for both projects. A student cannot be simultaneously enrolled in more than one program.

Q: May an applicant submit multiple applications?

A: An applicant may submit more than one application for a regular UB grant as long as each application describes a project that serves a different target area or target school(s). An applicant may not submit a separate application to serve different populations in the same target area or target schools, since the Secretary did not designate any additional populations for this competition. (See 34 CFR 645.20 and Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards).

Q: Are school districts and state education departments eligible to apply for a grant to carry out an Upward Bound project?

A: Yes. The program regulations (in 34 CFR 645.2 (b)) state that a public or private agency or organization is eligible to apply for an Upward Bound grant. As any other eligible entity, if funded these entities are required to meet all of the requirements stated in the application package. Among those requirements, they will serve the required number of eligible participants, provide all required services, implement a six-week summer program, submit annual performance reports and track participants who graduate high school and enroll in postsecondary education programs through graduation from college. In addition, the application will be evaluated on the extent to which there are

commitments from community partners, including an institution of higher education, the target schools, and community organizations (see 34 CFR 645.31(d)).

Q: What is the maximum amount of points an application can earn for addressing the competitive preference priorities?

A: The maximum competitive preference points an application can receive under this competition is **10**. Each of the three priorities addressed in the application is worth a maximum of five points. Although an applicant may choose to address all three priorities, an applicant will only receive a maximum of **10** competitive preference points.

Q: Will the additional pages for the priorities be a separate attachment or will they be part of the narrative?

A: Responses to the competitive preference priorities should be uploaded in Grants.gov as a separate attachment under “Other Attachments.” The four pages allotted to each competitive preference priority cannot be transferred to the narrative.

Q: Can an applicant score over 100 points on an application?

A: An applicant can score a maximum of 100 points for the selection criteria in 34 CFR 645.31 and a maximum of 10 points for the competitive preference priorities. The maximum amount of points that can be earned for the selection criteria and competitive preference priorities is 110 points. In addition, in accordance with 34 CFR 645.32, the Secretary will award prior experience points to applicants that have conducted an Upward Bound Program project during fiscal years: 2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011. Based on the applicant’s documented experience set forth in the annual performance reports, up to 15 prior experience (PE) points will be added to the application’s averaged reviewer score to determine the total score.

### Competitive Priority: Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools

Q: What is the definition for “persistently lowest achieving school” and where can the list be located?

A: Persistently lowest-achieving schools means, as determined by the State: (i) Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (ii) any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that: (a) is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are

eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years.

To identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both: (i) the academic achievement of the “all students” group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State’s assessments under Section 1111(b)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (ii) the school’s lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the “all students” group.

The most recent listing can be found at: [www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html).

Q: When looking at the School Improvement Grant’s (SIG) list of persistently lowest-achieving schools (PLAS), different schools are marked as being Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3. Are all of these schools considered to be PLAS, regardless of tier?

A: Yes, any school shown on that list would be considered a PLAS for the purpose of this competition.

Q: Are first-time applicants for Upward Bound limited to serving persistently lowest-achieving schools?

A: No. First-time applicants are not limited to serving persistently lowest-achieving schools. Applicants should select as target schools those schools that demonstrate need for the services that an Upward Bound project provides and enroll students that meet participant eligibility requirements. In an effort to more strategically align Upward Bound with overarching reform strategies for postsecondary completion, the Department included Competitive Preference Priority 1 – Turning Around Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools. The priority is a competitive preference priority; which means that if addressed, an applicant may receive additional points, depending on how well the application meets the priority. Applicants are not required, but are encouraged, to address the priority.

### Application Requirements: Maximum Award Amounts

Q: Is \$250,000 for each grant year the maximum award amount for new grantees, even those proposing to serve more than 60 students?

A: Yes, for new grantees or existing grantees proposing to serve a new target area, the maximum award is equal to \$250,000 to serve at least 60 students. If an applicant proposes to serve more than 60 students, the maximum award is still equal to \$250,000.

However, new applicants may serve more than 60 students as productivity improvements allow more students to be served with the maximum award of \$250,000.

Q: For an applicant currently receiving an Upward Bound program grant, how is the maximum award and the number of participants to be served determined?

A: For an applicant currently receiving an UB Program grant and applying for a grant to serve substantially the same target area or schools, the maximum award amount is determined based upon the applicant's proposed per participant cost, as follows:

Option 1: If an applicant's proposed per participant cost is at or below \$4,200, the applicant's maximum award is equal to the applicant's grant award amount for FY 2007, the first year of the previous grant cycle, plus 5 percent.

Option 2: If an applicant's proposed per participant cost is at or below \$4,500 and above \$4,200, the applicant's maximum award is equal to the applicant's grant award amount for FY 2007, the first year of the previous grant cycle, to serve a number of participants such that the per participant cost is \$4,500 or less.

Option 3: If an applicant's proposed per participant cost is above \$4,500, the applicant's maximum award is equal to \$250,000 to serve at least 50 students.

*Examples:*

1) In FY 2007, if the applicant was awarded \$269,479 to serve 60 participants (a per participant cost (PPC) of \$4,491), the applicant has these options:

a) The applicant can propose to lower its PPC and therefore be eligible to receive the 5% increase under option 1.

$\$269,479 \times 1.05 = \$282,953$  (FY 2007 award plus 5%)

To receive this award amount, the applicant must have a PPC of \$4,200 or less; therefore, the applicant must propose to serve at least 68 students, an increase of 8 participants.

$\$282,953 / \$4200 = 68$  participants (a PPC of \$4,161)

b) Since the applicant's FY 2007 PPC was between \$4,200 and \$4,500, the applicant can propose to serve the number of participants served in FY 2007 under option 2.

c) Under option 3, the applicant can request a \$250,000 award to serve 50 participants. Under this option, an applicant that is an existing UB grantee can receive no more than \$250,000; if the applicant's FY 2007 grant was greater than \$250,000, the new award would be reduced to \$250,000 to serve 50 participants.

2) In FY 2007, a grantee was awarded \$331,673 to serve 65 participants (\$5,103 PPC). The applicant has three options:

a) The applicant can propose to lower their PPC and get the 5% increase under option 1.

$\$331,673 \times 1.05 = \$348,256$  (the FY 2007 award plus 5%)

To receive this amount, the applicant must propose a PPC of \$4,200 or less; therefore, the applicant must serve at least 83 participants, an increase of 18 participants.

$\$348,256 / \$4,200 = 83$  participants (a PPC of \$4,195.86)

b) The applicant can propose to lower the PPC to somewhere between \$4,200 and \$4,500 in order to maintain FY 2007 funding under option 2.

$\$331,673 / \$4,500 = 74$  participants (a PPC of \$4,482)

If proposing an award equal to FY 2007, the applicant must serve at least 74 participants.

c) Under option 3, the applicant can request a \$250,000 award to serve 50 participants. Under this option, an applicant that is an existing UB grantee can receive no more than \$250,000; if the applicant's FY 2007 grant was greater than \$250,000, the new award would be reduced to \$250,000 to serve 50 participants.

3) In FY 2007, a grantee was awarded \$365,000 to serve 60 participants (\$6,083 PPC)., the applicant has the three options:

a) The applicant can propose to lower the PPC and get the 5% increase under option 1.

$\$365,000 \times 1.05 = \$383,250$  (their award plus 5%)

To receive this, the applicant must propose a PPC of \$4,200 or less, therefore, the applicant must serve at least 92 participants, an increase of 32 participants.

$\$383,250 / \$4,200 = 92$  participants (a PPC of \$4,165.76)

b) The applicant can propose to lower the PPC to somewhere between \$4,200 and \$4,500 in order to maintain FY 2007 funding under option 2.

$\$365,000 / \$4,500 = 82$  participants (a PPC of \$4,451.22)

If proposing an award equal to FY 2007, the applicant must serve at least 82 participants, which represent an increase of 22 participants.

c) Under option 3, the applicant can request a \$250,000 award to serve 50 participants. Under this option, an applicant that is an existing UB grantee can receive no more than \$250,000; if the applicant's FY 2007 grant was greater than \$250,000, the new award would be reduced to \$250,000 to serve 50 participants.

### Participant Eligibility and Numbers to be Served

Q: Does a participant selected based upon having a high risk of academic failure need to meet any of the other criteria?

A: A participant selected based on having a high risk of academic failure does not need to meet the low-income or potential first-generation college student criteria. However, the participant must meet the other eligibility requirements as stipulated in the Upward Bound regulations in 34 CFR 645.3.

Q: Are projects required to serve 60 different students each year or one cohort of 60 students over the five-year period?

A: A project should serve its recommended number of participants (e.g., 60 students) annually. However, the number served each year may be a combination of participants served for the first time during the project year and those continuing participants first served in a previous year. For a project first funded in the 2012-17 grant cycle, the project would serve at least 60 new participants in 2012-13; however, in subsequent years (e.g., 2013-14), the project would continue to serve most of those same participants but would add new participants for those participants who did not continue in the project. In addition, a project is required to track the academic progress of all current and prior participants through completion of a program of postsecondary education (e.g., six years after the participants' expected high school graduation date).

### Project Services

Q: How often should required services be offered?

A: Each of the required services (see 34 CFR 645.11) should be offered every year. Based on the project's assessments of the participants' needs, these services may be offered throughout the year or during either the academic year or summer components.

Q: What is the required length of the summer session?

A: The program regulations (34 CFR 645.13(b)) state: "A summer instructional component shall—(1) Be six weeks in length unless the grantee can demonstrate to the Secretary that a shorter period will not hinder the effectiveness of the project nor prevent the project from achieving its goals and objectives, and the Secretary approves that

shorter period; and (2) Provide participants with one or more of the services described in §645.11 at least five days per week.”

Q: Must a project provide a residential summer program?

A: No. The summer program must be designed to simulate a college-going experience for participants but does not need to be residential (see 34 CFR 645.13(a)(1)).

Q: Must all students participate in the summer program?

A: All UB participants should be given the opportunity to participate in the summer program; however, for a variety of reasons, the Department recognizes that not all UB participants will be able to participate in the summer program. In order to most effectively use project funds, the Department expects projects to serve the project’s approved number of participants in both the academic year and summer component; therefore, the project should recruit additional students to participate in the summer program to replace other students unable to participate in the summer program.

### Selection Criteria: Objectives

Q: In what section of the application should an applicant include baseline data relative to objectives not addressed in the Need Section?

A: All applicants should provide baseline data to show that their proposed objective percentages are ambitious. If the applicant has not already provided some of this data under the Need section, then it should be placed in the Objectives section.

Q: Objective 2 (Academic performance on standardized tests) seems to read that seniors need to take a state standardized test. If state tests are only offered to students in lower grades (e.g., 9<sup>th</sup> grade), can a project report on the results of those tests?

A: To be counted towards the Academic Performance on Standardized Test objective, a participant must have achieved at the proficient level at any point during high school. Therefore, participants do not have to take the state test during the senior year.

Q: For Objective 3 (secondary school retention and graduation), does an applicant need to provide one percentage or two percentages?

A: For this objective, the applicant should provide only one percentage, which would include all participants served each academic year that were promoted to the next grade level or who graduated from high school.

### Selection Criteria: Quality of Key Personnel

Q: If an applicant intends to use the same employees from the currently funded Upward Bound project, is it necessary to specify the hiring practices and to explain the training and management processes?

A: Yes, it is necessary to specify the hiring practices and to explain the training and management processes. The qualifications and required experience for each position should be included in the Quality of Personnel section of the application. More information on the quality of personnel can be found on pages 73-74 of the published application.

### Selection Criteria: Applicant and Community Support

Q: Should letters of commitment be included in the application?

A: Letters of commitment should not be included in the application, as they will count against the page limit. An applicant, however, should summarize the commitments received in the Applicant and Community Support section and then keep hard copies of the letters on file for future reference.

### Budget and Allowable Costs

Q: Are indirect costs allowable and is there a maximum limit on indirect costs?

A: Yes, indirect costs are allowable. Please see page 122 of the application for more guidance. All grants awarded under the Upward Bound Program are classified as training grants, which limit indirect costs to the applicant's negotiated indirect cost agreement or a maximum of 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever is less. A modified total direct cost base is defined as total direct costs, less stipends, tuition and related fees, and capital expenditures of \$5,000 or more per unit. Therefore, calculations of indirect costs may not include cost of equipment, stipends, tuition and related fees, room and board and summer non-residential meals associated with the UB program.

Q: Where should stipends, room and board and tuition costs be included on the ED Form 524?

A: These expenses should be included on line number 11, entitled "Training Stipends." Details of costs included in this line item should be added to the budget narrative.

Q: Are in-kind contributions required?

A: In-kind contribution contributions are not required, but such contributions can be noted on Section B of the ED Form 524, as well as detailed in the narrative. If in-kind contributions are included on the ED Form 524, the grantee must maintain documentation to support the amount of in-kind contributions listed.

## Performance Measures

Q: How and where should the performance measures listed on page 49 of the application be addressed in the application narrative?

A: The Department recommends that an applicant discuss methods for collecting and reporting data relative to the performance measures in the evaluation section of the application narrative.

## Prior Experience

Q: How can an applicant make the case for prior experience (PE) points? Should a certain number of pages in the narrative highlight key accomplishments?

A: PE points should not be addressed in the application narrative, as the Department, not the peer reviewers will assess an applicant's prior experience. The Department will use the grantee's approved objectives and the data in the grantee's Annual Performance Reports (APRs) for 2008-2009, 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 to determine how many PE points that grantee has earned.

Q: Of its target schools served during the previous grant cycle, what percentage (or, in the alternative, what number) of these target schools can an institution or agency choose not to serve without jeopardizing its eligibility for PE points?

A: The regulation in 34 CFR 645.30(a)(2)(i) states: "If an applicant for a new grant proposes to continue to serve substantially the same target population and schools that the applicant is serving under an expiring project, the Secretary evaluates the applicant's prior experience of high quality service delivery under the expiring UB project on the basis of the outcome criteria in §645.32."

To provide a point of clarity, the Department defines "substantially the same" to mean that a project must continue to serve at least fifty percent or more of the currently-served target schools, in the same target area as the expiring grant.

The Department recognizes that to address changing needs within the target area, an existing UB grantee may choose not to serve one or more target schools. In that instance, the applicant would be eligible for PE points if the applicant proposed to continue to serve fifty percent or more of the currently-served schools within the current target area (substantially the same target population and schools).

For example, a project currently serving five target schools may decide not to propose to serve two of its previously-served schools, therefore, only proposing to include three of its schools. This project would still be eligible to earn PE points because it still proposes to serve fifty percent or more of its current target schools. However, if an applicant

decided to not include three schools and only propose to serve two, then they would not be eligible for PE points.

In the case of a project that currently serves an even number of schools, for instance, a project that currently serves four target schools but decides to propose to continue to serve only two, the applicant would still be eligible for PE points, as they are proposing to continue with fifty percent of the same schools.

If an applicant decides as discussed in Part V – Prior Experience in the UB application, to split a grant funded in FY 2007 into multiple proposals in the FY 2012 competition, the applicant will be eligible to receive PE points for *only one* proposed new project. The project eligible for PE consideration will be the one that proposes to serve the greatest number of currently-served target schools. An applicant is responsible for indicating on the UB Program Profile document, in item #1, whether the application is eligible for PE points. If an applicant proposes to split a currently-funded grant evenly by target schools into multiple proposals for the FY 2012 competition, the applicant must decide which one of the new proposals should be considered for PE points by following the instructions on the Program Profile document.

Q: What percentage (or, in the alternative, what number) of target schools not served by the applicant under its existing grant can be added without jeopardizing an institution's or agency's eligibility to earn PE points?

A: An existing UB grantee may add one or more target schools and be eligible for PE if the new target school(s) are in the same target area currently served by the existing project. The Department believes that since the grantee designated the target area to be served by the UB project in its prior grant application, other schools and students within the same target area would have similar backgrounds and needs as those served under the existing grant.

In addition, the Department is encouraging all UB applicants to consider providing UB services to persistently lowest-achieving schools (PLAS). Consistent with the guidelines above for adding new target schools, an existing UB grantee, in its application for a new grant, may add a PLAS as a target school and still be eligible to receive PE points if the PLAS is *in the same target area* currently served by the existing project. Furthermore, the Department, through its funding guidelines for the FY 2012 competition and the priority--Increasing Productivity, encourages existing UB grantees to serve more students at a lower per participant cost which may make it possible for the applicant to propose to serve 40 percent of its participants from PLAS without dropping any target schools.

### CCRAA Grantees

Q: What is the project start date for grantees currently funded under the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (CCRAA) that are successful in the competition?

A: Successful CCRAA applicants will have a June 1, 2012, start date.

Q: Will CCRAA recipients be considered eligible to receive PE points in the UB competition?

A: Yes, CCRAA grantees are eligible to receive PE points.

Q: Will CCRAA grantees receive continued funding as a separate funding group?

A: No, the fiscal year (FY) 2012 appropriation did not include separate funding for CCRAA grantees. CCRAA grantees must submit an application in the FY 2012 Upward Bound competition in order to be considered for funding for the 2012-2017 funding cycle.

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