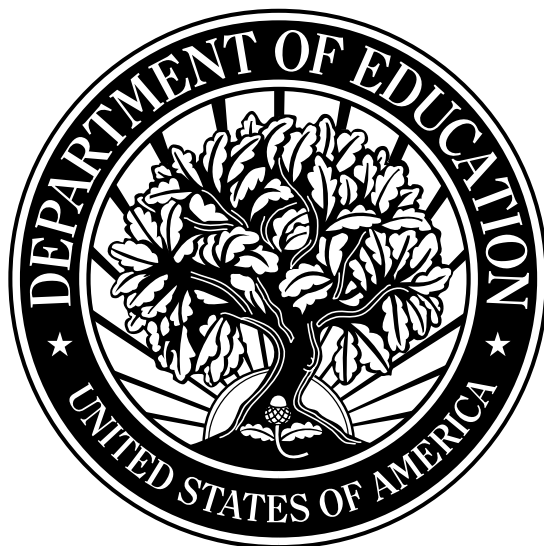


**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES  
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-2800**

**FY 2024—Application Kit for New Grants  
Under  
The Rehabilitation Services Administration  
DISABILITY INNOVATION FUND--CREATING A 21ST CENTURY  
WORKFORCE OF YOUTH AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES THROUGH  
THE TRANSFORMATION OF EDUCATION, CAREER, AND COMPETITIVE  
INTEGRATED EMPLOYMENT MODEL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT  
PROGRAM**

**ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER 84.421F**



FORM APPROVED  
OMB No. 1894-0006, EXP. DATE: 01/31/2027  
ED FORM 424, OMB APPROVED

DATED MATERIAL—OPEN IMMEDIATELY

**CLOSING DATE: JULY 8, 2024**

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## **PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0006. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 93-112 or 116-260). If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this individual collection, or if you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form, application or survey, please contact Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Discretionary Grant Programs, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington D.C. 20202-2800 directly.

**SECTION A**  
**DEAR APPLICANT LETTER**

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES  
REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

April 9, 2024

Dear Applicant:

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is issuing a Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for fiscal year 2024 (FY24) to fund the Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities Through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project, Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 84.421F.

This application package contains information and the required forms for you to use in submitting a new application for funding under the Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities Through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project (ALN 84.421F). The awards will be discretionary grants negotiated as cooperative agreements.

As provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117-328), FY24 DIF funding is to support innovative (as defined in the notice) activities aimed at increasing competitive integrated employment (CIE) as defined in section 7 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act) (29 U.S.C. 705(5)) for youth and other individuals with disabilities.

The purpose of this competition is to fund model demonstration projects designed to develop, implement, refine (as defined in the notice), evaluate, and disseminate, for easy adoption, new or substantially improved model strategies or programs to transition youth and adults with disabilities to CIE in any one of five topic areas, or a sixth topic, for field-initiated topic areas that includes the opportunity to address more than one topic as outlined in the notice.

Within the absolute priority, the Secretary intends to support innovative model demonstration projects under the following topic areas: (1) Broadening Access to Advanced Technology Careers and Creating A 21st Century Workforce of Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE; (2) Innovative Applications (as defined in this notice) of Advanced Technology to Support Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE; (3) Justice-Involved Youth with Disabilities--Early Intervention (as defined in this notice) and Reintegration (as defined in this notice) from the Juvenile Justice System to the Community, Leading to CIE; (4) Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration Strategies for Youth and/or Adults with Acquired Disabilities that Lead to CIE; (5) Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration Strategies for Disconnected Youth and/or Disconnected Adults with Disabilities that Lead to CIE; and (6) Field Initiated, under which applicants address innovative topic areas not otherwise included in this priority, or combine two or more topic areas described in this priority into one application.

Please read this letter carefully as it includes important information related to the grant competition. Take the time to review all applicable requirements, definitions, selection criteria, and application instructions thoroughly. An application will not be evaluated for funding if the applicant does not comply with all procedural rules that govern the submission of the application or if the application does not contain the information required. (Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) at 34 C.F.R. §75.216 (b) and (c)).

Please note the following:

## **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Eligible applicants for this competition are:

- State agencies or their equivalents under State law:
  - (1) State Educational Agency;
  - (2) State Juvenile Justice agency;
  - (3) State Developmental Disabilities agency;
  - (4) State Department of Health;
  - (5) State Department of Human Services; or
  - (6) Designated State unit for Vocational Rehabilitation Services;and
- Public, Private and Nonprofit Entities, including Indian Tribes and Institutions of Higher Education.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to Institutions of Higher Education only.

Note: The regulation 34 CFR § 75.51 How to prove nonprofit status applies to nonprofits and requires documentation to prove its nonprofit status. (a) Under some programs, an applicant must show that it is a nonprofit organization. (See the definition of nonprofit in 34 CFR 77.1.) (b) An applicant may show that it is a nonprofit organization by any of the following means: (1) Proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) A statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that: (i) The organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State; and (ii) No part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) A certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; (4) Any item described in paragraphs (b)(1) through (3) of this section if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate; or (5) For an entity that holds a sincerely held religious belief that it cannot apply for a determination as an entity that is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, evidence sufficient to establish that the entity would otherwise qualify as a nonprofit organization under paragraphs (b)(1) through (4) of this section.

## **NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS**

The NIA is published in the Federal Register, contained in Section B of this application package, and is available to download and review.

## **PRE-APPLICATION MEETING AND POWERPOINT PRESENTATION**

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) will post a PowerPoint presentation that provides general information about the Rehabilitation Services Administration's discretionary grants and a PowerPoint presentation specifically about the Disability Innovation Fund: Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities Through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/grant-info>. In addition to posting the PowerPoint, OSERS will conduct a pre-application meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2024, at 1:30 pm ET specific to this competition via conference call to respond to questions. Information about the pre-application meeting will be available at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/grant-info> prior to the date of the call. All 84.421F questions should be submitted to the [84.421F@ed.gov](mailto:84.421F@ed.gov) mailbox by 5:00 PM (ET) on Wednesday, April 24, 2024.

The teleconference information, including a summary of the 84.421F pre-application meeting will be available at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/grant-info> within 10 business days after the pre-application meeting.

## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION: COMMON INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS TO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DISCRETIONARY GRANT PROGRAMS**

Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the Federal Register on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045) and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs>, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on December 27, 2021.

## **GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND SAM REGISTRATION**

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site ([www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)). Please read carefully the Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants document included in Section D of this application package, which includes helpful tips about submitting electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site. Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration on SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) which may take approximately one week to complete but could take as many as several weeks to complete. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the registration steps are complete. Please note that once your

SAM registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov. You cannot submit an application through Grants.gov until Grants.gov has received your SAM registration information. We strongly encourage you to familiarize yourself with SAM and Grants.gov and strongly recommend that you register and submit early.

Applicants are required to upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in either Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word. However, it is recommended that applicants upload files as read-only flattened PDFs. Please be aware that applications submitted to Grants.gov for the Department of Education will now be posted

using Adobe forms. Information on computer and operating system compatibility with Adobe and links to download the latest version of Adobe are available on Grants.gov. Please note that you must follow the application procedures as described in the Federal Register notice announcing this grant competition. Information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically can also be found in Section D of this application package.

## **APPLICABLE REGULATIONS**

### Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR)

This program is subject to the requirements of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations at 34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. These regulations set forth all general rules affecting application submittal, review, grant awarding, and post-award administration of Department of Education grant programs.

### Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)

This program is subject to the requirements of the Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485.

### Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance)

This program is subject to the requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW**

This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

## **BUDGET INFORMATION**

Applicants under this competition must provide detailed budget information for the total grant period, including detailed budget information for each of the five years of the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to consider the impact of implementation of the proposed project when creating a year 1 budget. Applicants are also encouraged to consider the impact of the period of performance end date, September 30, 2029, when creating the year 5 budget.

### Required Cost Sharing or Matching

This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

### Indirect Cost Rate Information

This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html).

### Administrative Cost Limitation

This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to the Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

### Subgrantees and Contracts

Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, a grantee under this competition may award subgrants and contracts. Under this competition, subgrants and contracts may not exceed 75 percent of the funds. Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants and contracts—to directly carry out project activities described in its application—to the following types of entities: public and private, nonprofit entities, including DSU for VR services, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, parent training and information centers, Centers for Independent Living, Developmental Disabilities agencies, Juvenile Justice agencies, or independent and capable evaluation experts and organizations, such as institutions of higher education or nonprofit or for-profit research firms. The grantee may only award subgrants and contracts to entities it has identified in an approved application. Subrecipients may not further subgrant funds received under this award. The administration of the grant award must be conducted by the grant recipient and administrative costs of the project allocated to the DIF award.

### Final Performance Report

The Final Performance Report must be completed and submitted by the end of the project period, September 30, 2029. Therefore, all project activities (other than work on the evaluation and final performance report) must conclude earlier than 60 months to allow time for the evaluation and final performance report to be completed and submitted by the end of the project period of September 30, 2029. This should be reflected in the budget.

## **PRIORITY**

This competition contains one absolute priority. We are establishing the absolute priority for the FY 2024 grant competition, and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, in accordance with section 437(d)(1) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232(d)(1).

Absolute Priority: Disability Innovation Fund--Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities Through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project

Please refer to the NIA for more details about this absolute priority. Applicants must address the absolute priority in the budget information (ED Form 524, Section B) and budget narrative.

Prior to the peer review, Department staff will determine if an application has met the appropriate absolute priority and is eligible for peer review. An application that has not met the absolute priority will not be considered for funding and may not be reviewed.

## **PROJECT ABSTRACT**

Applicants are required to submit a one-page project abstract with their application. The project abstract requirements may be found in Section E of this application package.

## **APPLICATION NARRATIVE AND SELECTION CRITERIA**

Part III of the Application Narrative addresses the absolute priority, particularly the Application Requirements and the Project Requirements in the NIA. The application narrative must also address the Selection Criteria, which the competition peer reviewers use to evaluate and score each application. These may be found in Section C of this application kit or Section V of the NIA. Please note that peer reviewers are instructed that appendix material is considered supplemental material to support or show evidence supporting statements made in the narrative, and that they are not required to review such material. (They are neither asked nor expected to consider appendix material in rating applications.)

## **EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS FORM (OPTIONAL)**

Applicants are not required to complete the Evidence of Effectiveness Form for this competition. However, this form is optional and contained in this application package should an applicant choose to submit it.

## **PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH**

The discretionary grant Application Form SF-424 requires applicants to indicate whether they plan to conduct research involving human subjects at any time during the proposed project period. The Protection of Human Subjects in Research Attachment is an integral part of the SF-424 form. It includes information that applicants need to complete the protection of human subjects' item and, as appropriate, to provide additional information to the Department regarding human subject's research projects. Additional information on completing the protection of human subjects' item is also available and can be accessed on the internet at: [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html)

## **RESPONSE TO PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

For this competition, applicants must develop and implement a plan to measure the innovative model demonstration project's performance and outcomes, including an evaluation of the practices and strategies implemented by the project. The performance measures consist of both the program and project measures.

**Program Measures:** The program measures will be developed in collaboration with the Department and/ or its contracted independent evaluator during the first three months (October 1, 2024–December 31, 2024) of the awards, program measure targets will be developed in collaboration with the Department and/or its contracted independent evaluator and reported during the second three months (January 1, 2025–March 31, 2025). Program performance measures may, for example, assess the impact of project activities on effective identification of resources and the sustainability and replicability of the project.

**Project Measures:** Under the absolute priority, grant recipients must develop and implement a plan to measure the innovative model demonstration project's performance and outcomes,

including an evaluation of the practices and strategies implemented by the project. Grantees must evaluate project performance based on the measures found in Section VI of the NIA, as well as any measures individually developed by the project and include targets in the application.

## **REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23). For the FY 2024 grant competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, in accordance with section 437(d)(1) of GEPA, in selecting an application for an award under this program, we also consider the geographical distribution of projects in the DIF program throughout the country. This factor will be applied after non-Federal reviewers score the applications. The geographical distribution of projects factor will be applied to fund applications out of rank order if the top-ranked applications do not represent a geographical distribution throughout the country. The topic area distribution of projects factor will be applied to fund applications out of rank order to ensure a range of topic areas are funded.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For information about other U.S. Department of Education grant and contract opportunities, please use the Department's grant information web page which can be accessed on the internet at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/grants/grants.html>. Applicants may contact Cassandra Shoffler, Competition Manager, at (202) 987-0118 or 84.421F@ed.gov, to discuss any matters relating to this competition.

Sincerely,

*Douglas X. Zhu*

Douglas X. Zhu  
Chief, Training Programs Unit  
Rehabilitation Services Administration

**SECTION B**  
**NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS**  
**FOR NEW AWARDS**

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4000-01-U

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Applications for New Awards; Disability Innovation Fund--Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities Through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project

**AGENCY:** Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for fiscal year (FY) 2024 for the Disability Innovation Fund (DIF)--Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities Through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project, Assistance Listing Number 84.421F. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 1894-0006, Applications for New Grants under the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

**DATES:**

**Applications Available:** April 9, 2024.

**Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply:** April 23, 2024.

**Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:** July 8, 2024.

Pre-Application Meeting: The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) will post a PowerPoint presentation that provides general information about the Rehabilitation Services

Administration's discretionary grants and a PowerPoint presentation specifically about the Disability Innovation Fund: Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities Through the Transformation of Education, Career, and Competitive Integrated Employment Model Demonstration Project at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/grant-info>. In addition to posting the PowerPoint, OSERS will conduct a pre-application meeting specific to this competition via conference call to respond to questions. Information about the pre-application meeting will be available at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/grant-info> prior to the date of the call. OSERS invites interested applicants to email questions to 84.421F@ed.gov in advance of the pre-application meeting. The teleconference information, including a summary of the 84.421F pre-application meeting will be available at <https://ncrtm.ed.gov/grant-info> within 10 business days after the pre-application meeting.

**Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:** September 6, 2024

**ADDRESSES:** For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045) and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs>. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on December 27, 2021.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Cassandra P. Shoffler, U.S.

Department of Education, Lyndon Baines Johnson Building, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 4A10, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 987-0118. Email: 84.421F@ed.gov.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* The purpose of the Disability Innovation Fund (DIF) Program, as provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117-328), is to support innovative (as defined in this notice) activities aimed at increasing competitive integrated employment (CIE) as defined in section 7 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act) (29 U.S.C. 705(5))<sup>1</sup> for youth and other individuals with disabilities.

*Priority:* This competition contains one absolute priority. We are establishing the absolute priority for the FY 2024 grant competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, in accordance with section 437(d)(1) of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232(d)(1).

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<sup>1</sup> See 34 CFR 361.5(c)(9) for the regulatory definition of "competitive integrated employment," which further clarifies the definition in the Rehabilitation Act.

*Background:*

In 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that 61 million (one in four or 26 percent) adults in the United States live with a disability (Okoro et al., 2018). During the 2022-23 school year, 7.1 million students, ages 5 through 21, received special education services and/or related services under the IDEA (Source: U.S. Department of Education, EDFacts Data Warehouse (EDW): "IDEA Part B Child Count and Educational Environments Collection", available at <https://data.ed.gov/dataset/idea-section-618-state-part-b-child-count-and-educational-environments/resources>). Additionally, during the 2020-21 school year, 1.6 million students with disabilities were served solely under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. (Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2020-21 Civil Rights Data Collection, available at <https://civilrightsdata.ed.gov>).<sup>2</sup>

Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities (as defined in this notice), experience diverse disabilities that include physical disabilities (such as mobility impairments or chronic health conditions), sensory disabilities (such as visual or hearing impairments), intellectual disabilities (such as

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<sup>2</sup> The IDEA Part B Child Count and Educational Environments Collection includes all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Outlying Areas (United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands), and the Freely Associated States (Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau). In addition, if a public school's enrollment for a school year was less than five students for fewer than 60 days, the Office for Civil Rights may exempt that school from Civil Rights Data Collection reporting.

developmental delays or cognitive impairments), and mental health disabilities (such as depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorder). It is important to recognize that all individuals with disabilities have unique strengths, talents, and contributions to offer; and it is essential for service providers to adopt a person-centered approach to support individuals with disabilities to achieve their goals for CIE. This means recognizing their individual needs, preferences, and goals, and involving them in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Supporting self-determination and empowerment are crucial for promoting independence, economic self-sufficiency, and CIE.

The 21st century brings numerous changes that will affect youth and adults with disabilities. As we look to the future, technological innovations can provide new opportunities for individuals with disabilities by improving mobility, communication, learning, daily living activities, education, career training, and CIE. However, it is crucial that these technologies are accessible and affordable, and more importantly, that individuals with disabilities and professionals, including educators (as defined in this notice), service professionals, and employers, are knowledgeable and use, as appropriate, the options available. In addition, with the advancement of technology across all sectors, education, employment, and communities are constantly changing. Advanced technology (as defined in this notice) can result in knowledge-based

jobs and support remote work, providing individuals with disabilities increased CIE opportunities.

Additionally, individuals with disabilities, including justice-involved youth with disabilities, youth and adults with acquired disabilities (as defined in this notice), disconnected youth with disabilities (as defined in this notice) and disconnected adults with disabilities (as defined in this notice), may benefit from a range of services, and supports to address their unique needs and challenges to ensure access to CIE. Examples of services and supports include: (1) receiving case management services (i.e., assistance with coordinating services and supports); (2) accessing high quality education and vocational training programs to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to secure CIE, including opportunities in advanced technology careers; (3) obtaining counseling and mental health services needed to address issues and improve overall well-being and to help ensure the ability to obtain and maintain CIE; (4) obtaining rehabilitation services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy to regain or improve functional abilities and independence to obtain or maintain CIE; (5) receiving assistance with job placement, job coaching, and ongoing support in the workplace; (6) securing safe and stable housing, as well as services needed to address housing needs necessary to improve quality of life, which can be a barrier to CIE; (7) connecting with mentors or peers who have similar experiences for guidance, support, and a sense of belonging, the lack of which can be a barrier to

obtaining or maintaining CIE; and (8) identifying accessible transportation options to increase access to education, CIE, healthcare, and other essential services. However, there are challenges in ensuring all youth and adults with disabilities receive the support, education, training, and advocacy they may need to succeed in the workplace. There are also opportunities to address these challenges by exploring new ideas, methods, or technologies to improve existing processes, products, or services that have the potential to affect how many of these individuals with disabilities achieve their CIE goals.

The focus of this program on increasing CIE is aligned to the Administration's Good Jobs Initiative, which is led by the Department of Labor and focused on providing information to workers, employers, and government to promote good jobs for all workers. This includes eight Good Jobs Principles that create a framework for workers, businesses, labor unions, advocates, researchers, State and local governments, and Federal agencies for a shared vision of job quality. The Department encourages applicants to this grant program to consider how these principles could further support increasing CIE opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Additional information about the Good Jobs Initiative is available at <https://www.dol.gov/general/good-jobs>.

*Absolute Priority:* For FY 2024 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this

competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

*Creating a 21st Century Workforce of Youth and Adults with Disabilities through the Transformation of Education, Career, and CIE.*

Purpose of Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to fund model demonstration projects designed to develop, implement, refine (as defined in this notice), evaluate, and disseminate, for easy adoption, new or substantially improved model strategies or programs to transition youth and adults with disabilities to CIE in any one of five topic areas, or a sixth topic, for field-initiated topic areas that includes the opportunity to address more than one topic as outlined in this notice.

*Topic Areas:*

Within this absolute priority, the Secretary intends to support innovative model demonstration projects under the following topic areas: (1) Broadening Access to Advanced Technology Careers and Creating A 21st Century Workforce of Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE; (2) Innovative Applications (as defined in this notice) of Advanced Technology to Support Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE; (3) Justice-Involved Youth with Disabilities--Early Intervention (as defined in this notice) and Reintegration (as defined in this notice) from the Juvenile Justice

System to the Community, Leading to CIE; (4) Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration Strategies for Youth and/or Adults with Acquired Disabilities that Lead to CIE; (5) Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration Strategies for Disconnected Youth and/or Disconnected Adults with Disabilities that Lead to CIE; and (6) Field Initiated, under which applicants address innovative topic areas not otherwise included in this priority, or combine two or more topic areas described in this priority into one application. If an applicant intends to address multiple topic areas, the applicant must combine the topic areas in one application and submit it under topic area 6, Field Initiated. For example, an applicant could apply under topic area 6 with a proposed project that combines topic area 1 with any of topic areas 2 to 5. Multiple applications from a single applicant will not be reviewed. If multiple applications are submitted by a single applicant, the last completed application submitted will be reviewed.

*Note:* The numbering of the topic areas does not reflect an established hierarchy or preference among the topic areas.

**Note:** The geographical distribution of projects factor will be applied to fund applications out of rank order if the top-ranked applications do not represent a geographical distribution throughout the country.

**Note:** The topic area distribution of projects factor will be applied to fund applications out of rank order to ensure a range of topic areas are funded.

For each of the topic areas, we identify a background section, if applicable, and a section that sets forth the requirements for projects that address the topic area.

*Topic Area 1: Broadening Access to Advanced Technology Careers and Creating A 21st Century Workforce of Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE.*

*Background:*

Advanced and emerging technology careers require specialized knowledge and skills in areas such as computer science, engineering, data analysis, artificial intelligence, microelectronics, cybersecurity, and robotics. Demand for workers in advanced technology fields is likely to increase in the next 10 years (Ellingrud et al., 2023). At the same time, these advanced technologies, and the products they enable will cause disruption across nearly every sector of the economy. Both trends have major impacts on CIE.

According to a report by the World Economic Forum, it is predicted that 97 million new roles will be created, as humans, machines, and algorithms increasingly work together (Masterson, 2022). Understanding how advanced technology influences the strategies to support high-quality CIE opportunities for youth with disabilities and adults with disabilities is crucial to global economic competitiveness. The rise of advanced technology and the automation that often comes with it is transforming the workplace.

Positions in nearly every industry are evolving into new roles and responsibilities that require new skills. These shifts may provide new opportunities for youth with disabilities and adults with disabilities to participate in this critical area of the workforce. Doing so will require using all available strategies, including those that leverage the products created by advanced technology fields, to remove barriers that have traditionally made it difficult for youth with disabilities and adults with disabilities to find and maintain CIE in advanced technology careers.

*Requirements:*

A project in this topic area must assist youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities to: (1) obtain certifications or participate in training (education or employment) to help secure CIE in a changing job market and employment landscape; and (2) identify and secure CIE in advanced technology careers that are in high demand and pay a livable wage, such as computer science, engineering, data analysis, artificial intelligence, microelectronics, cybersecurity, machine learning, machine programming, and robotics. Project activities must include, but are not limited to: (1) Employer Engagement and Partnerships (as defined in this notice): Developing employer engagement and creating partnerships in advanced technology industries to support project participants interested in pursuing CIE in these areas; (2) Advanced Technology Utilization: Incorporating advanced technology into work-based learning opportunities and CIE experiences in these areas; (3) Advanced Technology Training:

Developing, facilitating, incorporating and implementing training of employers and personnel, such as educators and service professionals, in strategies to transform service delivery to support project participants moving toward CIE in advanced technology careers; and (4) Removing Barriers to Entry: Providing flexible, personalized, and/or interactive learning experiences (e.g., online learning platforms, virtual reality and augmented reality technologies, artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies, mobile learning), to reduce barriers to entry into CIE.

*Topic Area 2: Innovative Applications of Advanced Technology to Support Youth with Disabilities and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE.*

*Background:*

Advanced technology may help improve the independence for individuals with disabilities at work, school, and in the community (Weitzman, 2023). It can also influence the delivery of services and trainings, daily living skills development and devices, communication strategies and devices, information access for youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities with sensory impairments, or other types of assistive devices or technology.

Further, advanced technology plays a role in helping youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities obtain and be successful in jobs across all sectors (e.g., Healthcare, Information Technology, Finance and Banking, Education, Manufacturing, Retail and Hospitality, Construction, Professional Services, Transportation and

Logistics) of the economy (Paige 2023). For example, through accessible and flexible options like online learning platforms, webinars, virtual training programs, virtual reality and augmented reality, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and mobile learning, youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities have opportunities to re-skill or up-skill and improve their competitiveness in the job market. In addition, advanced technology utilization can increase access to a wide range of job opportunities. Applications such as online job portals, professional networking platforms, and digital recruitment platforms make it possible to identify promising CIE opportunities. Through high-speed internet, video conferencing tools, and online collaboration platforms, advanced technology can also help enable remote work, increasing the opportunities for youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities who may have limitations related to commuting or working in a traditional office setting. Advanced technology facilitates networking and professional development opportunities through professional networking platforms, online professional learning communities, and social media platforms that allow youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities to connect with professionals in their field, join industry-specific groups, and access resources and mentorship opportunities that can help them keep current or advance in CIE.

*Requirements:*

A project in this topic area must focus on using advanced technology, which could include innovative and promising techniques, tools, and systems, to create or expand opportunities for youth and/or adults with disabilities to prepare for, identify, secure, obtain, and maintain CIE in any employment sector. Activities must include, but are not limited to, (1) Engagement: Engaging project participants, educators, service professionals, and employers to better understand the ways advanced technology can address their needs; (2) Personalized Advanced Technology (as defined in this notice): Incorporating personalized advanced technology into project participants' activities of daily living, education, training and employment; (3) Training on Advanced Technology: Identifying, developing, and implementing training of project participants, service professionals, educators, and employers, in the use of advanced technology; (4) Advanced Technology to Support Partnerships: Utilizing innovative and promising strategies, including virtual platforms, that can support connection and collaboration between diverse stakeholders (e.g., State agencies, local agencies, employers, community based organizations, or education/training institutions) to support project participants in obtaining CIE.

*Topic Area 3: Justice-Involved Youth with Disabilities--Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration from the Juvenile Justice System to the Community Resulting in CIE.*

*Background:*

Data from the American Civil Liberties Union (2024) indicates that roughly 60,000 youth under age 18 are incarcerated in juvenile jails and prisons in the United States. It is estimated that the percentage of incarcerated youth with disabilities, that reside in the juvenile corrections facilities, typically range from 30 percent to 60 percent, with some estimates as high as 85 percent (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). According to the National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, more than one in three youths entering juvenile justice or young adult corrections facilities have previously received special education services. This highlights the disproportionate representation of youth with disabilities in juvenile justice populations (National Center on Education, Disability and Juvenile Justice, 2021). Compared to youth without disabilities, youth with disabilities encounter the juvenile justice system at an earlier age, stay for a longer period, and experience additional challenges as they reintegrate into the community (Taylor, 2011).

It is vital to recognize the distinct obstacles faced by youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system and prioritize meeting their needs to ensure equitable treatment and inclusive support (McLellan et al., 2022). For example, research has shown that a significant number of individuals impacted by the criminal justice system have dyslexia, which can negatively impact academic and behavioral outcomes. Therefore, screening for dyslexia and offering related intervention services as appropriate is critical to promoting

positive outcomes for youth with disabilities (Cassidy et al., 2021). By understanding and addressing these types of issues, we can strive for a system that provides appropriate accommodations and services to all youth with disabilities. Juvenile justice corrections facilities often face challenges providing special education services and meeting the needs of youth with disabilities. This is in part due to the complexities of the population (e.g., the high numbers of youth with disabilities and the high mobility of youth), the physical context (e.g., restrictions associated with providing education in a secured facility), and the system (e.g., poor linkages among schools and juvenile justice facilities, including inability of facilities to get educational records from previous educational placements) (Houchins et al., 2010). Due to these challenges, youth with disabilities in the juvenile justice system are at risk for a range of negative outcomes, including struggling academically, not graduating high school or being able to access postsecondary education opportunities, recidivism, and unemployment (Taylor, 2011). The reintegration of youth involved in the juvenile justice system is a critical component of ensuring their successful transition back into society; however, there are challenges associated with reintegrating these youth into school or community settings, including CIE, following a stay in a residential or juvenile corrections facility (Trout et al., 2008).

Transitioning from the juvenile justice system to CIE can be a challenging process for youth with disabilities. However, there are

several strategies and resources available to support their successful transition: (1) Vocational rehabilitation (VR) services may be available to assist youth with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining CIE. These services provide a range of supports, including vocational assessment, career counseling, pre-employment transition services for school-aged youth, job training, job placement assistance, and ongoing support in the workplace. (2) For youth with disabilities who are still school age, an individualized education program (IEP) or a plan under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 can help outline specific goals, accommodations, and services to support their transition to CIE. The IEP team, which includes the student, parents or caregivers, educators, and other professionals, can work together to develop a plan that addresses the student's unique needs and goals. (3) Job readiness programs specifically designed for youth with disabilities can provide training and support in areas such as resume writing, interview skills, workplace etiquette, and job search strategies. These programs can help youth with disabilities develop the necessary skills and confidence to enter the workforce. (4) Work-based learning opportunities, such as internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing, can provide valuable hands-on experience and exposure to different career paths. These opportunities allow youth with disabilities to gain practical skills, explore their interests, and make connections with potential employers. It is important for youth with disabilities to understand their rights regarding disclosure of

their disability and prepare to advocate for the accommodations they need to succeed in CIE. (5) Mentoring programs and peer support groups can provide youth with disabilities with guidance, encouragement, and role models who have successfully navigated the transition from juvenile justice confinement to CIE. These relationships can help youth with disabilities build confidence, develop important skills, and access valuable networks. (6) Connecting with community resources, such as disability advocacy organizations, parent organizations, vocational training centers, and employment agencies, can provide additional support and guidance during the transition process. These organizations can offer specialized services, workshops, and resources tailored to the needs of youth with disabilities. By using various strategies and resources, youth with disabilities can increase their chances of successfully transitioning from the juvenile justice system to CIE and achieve their career goals.

*Requirements:*

A project in this topic area must focus on early intervention and reintegration strategies for justice-involved youth with disabilities designed to lead to CIE and otherwise improve CIE opportunities for justice-involved youth with disabilities who are returning to their community. Activities must include, but are not limited to: (1) Plans: Develop multifaceted pre- and post-release reentry plans for project participants transitioning from the juvenile justice system to the community, including but not limited

to, providing and connecting to transition services, community services, trauma-informed services, wraparound support (as defined in this notice) and life coaching services (as defined in this notice) to assist in obtaining and maintaining CIE; (2) Skills and Tools: Identify the skills and tools necessary to improve opportunities for CIE and reduce recidivism once project participants return to the community; (3) Partnerships: Develop and expand community-based partnerships and linkages that provide wrap-around supports to project participants that foster positive reentry into the community and create opportunities for CIE; (4) Risk and Needs Factors: Identify, assess, and address general risk and need factors to address prevention and early intervention for project participants vulnerable to entering or reentering the juvenile justice system, including by developing models to navigate various systems (e.g., transition from juvenile justice to community services); (5) Professional Development Trainings: Identify, develop, and implement training opportunities, including but not limited to service professionals, stakeholders, and employers, involved in the community reintegration process for project participants transitioning from the juvenile justice system on issues, tools, and resources; (6) Transition Services: Identify transitional services to assist reentering youth with disabilities to successfully reintegrate into communities, including but not limited to educational services, postsecondary education and training, employment, housing, parent and family information and services,

mentoring, treatment, and counseling, and social activities which can lead to achieving CIE; and (7) Project Advisory Committee: Develop a project advisory committee that includes representation from the target population to be served by the project, partners (as defined in this notice) relevant to the project, and project activities (e.g., State agencies, employers, youth service programs, parent organizations, local agencies, support systems).

*Topic Area 4: Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration for Youth and/or Adults with Acquired Disabilities Leading to CIE.*

*Background:*

While some youth and adults with disabilities have congenital disabilities that they have lived with since birth, others have acquired disabilities through various means such as traumatic accidents, diagnosis of chronic illnesses, or through other life-changing means (Okoro et al, 2018). Examples of acquired disabilities include but are not limited to spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injury, vision loss, and Long COVID. An individual's life, both physically and mentally, can be significantly altered after acquiring a disability.

The differences between a youth and/or adult with a congenital disability and a youth and/or adult who acquires a disability later in life can vary depending on the individual and the specific disability. For youth and/or adults with a congenital disability, the disability is all the youth or adult has known, and they may have a different perspective on what is considered a limitation or barrier

(Bateman, 2023). Those who acquire a disability later in life may have an awareness of the differences between their previous abilities and their current abilities. It is important to note that these differences are generalizations, and each individual's experience may vary (Bateman, 2023). The responses to a disability can be influenced by various factors, including the type and severity of the disability, social support, and individual differences in coping mechanisms and can significantly impact CIE.

As an individual with an acquired disability navigates changes in their circumstances, there are potential new challenges to face related to education, employment, social well-being, and health, including a need for mental health support. Acquired disabilities can present unique challenges when it comes to finding and maintaining CIE. However, with the right support and accommodations, youth and adults with acquired disabilities can pursue meaningful and fulfilling CIE opportunities. There are several considerations and strategies to keep in mind when working with youth and adults with acquired disabilities who are seeking to obtain or maintain CIE, such as the importance of advocating for oneself and communicating needs to employers (Morgan, 2021). This may involve discussing accommodations, such as reasonable modifications to the work environment and flexible work arrangements, that can help them perform their job duties effectively (U.S. Department of Labor, 2024). In addition, VR services are available to assist youth and adults with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining CIE. These

services can provide vocational assessments, career counseling, job training, job placement assistance, and ongoing support in the workplace. When searching for jobs, youth and/or adults with acquired disabilities can focus on industries or positions that align with their abilities and interests. Networking, attending job fairs, and using online job boards and disability-specific job portals can be helpful in finding suitable CIE opportunities. Building a support network in the workplace can also be beneficial for youth and/or adults with acquired disabilities. A support network may include colleagues, supervisors, and mentors who can provide guidance, understanding, and assistance when needed. Lastly, youth and/or adults with acquired disabilities can continue to enhance their skills and knowledge through professional development opportunities, such as attending workshops, conferences, or online courses to increase marketability.

Studies have shown that early intervention, providing services shortly after a disability is acquired, is critical to promoting improved employment outcomes (Smalligan & Boyens, 2018). Wickizer et al. (2018) found that providing services to injured workers in the first 1-2 months following injury is critical to reducing the likelihood individuals exit the workforce and transition to long-term disability. Therefore, it has been found that efforts to more quickly identify, enroll and provide services to individuals with disabilities in vocational rehabilitation programs have increase employment and wage outcomes as well (Martin & Sevak, 2020).

*Requirements:*

A project in this topic area must focus on securing CIE for youth and/or adults with acquired disabilities, by addressing the unique employment, training, emotional, cognitive, and life adjustment factors experienced by youth or adults who acquired a disability from an accident or illness in a timely manner.

Activities must include, but are not limited to: (1) Outreach and Enrollment: Develop, implement, and conduct outreach and enrollment strategies, including but not limited to promoting early intervention to project participants that fall within 6 months of an acquired or identification of acquired disability; (2) Transition and Reintegration Services: Identify support services (e.g., personal care assistance services, education support services, independent living services, counseling and support groups, government programs, employment services, disability support services, housing and transportation services, rehabilitation and medical services, and government programs, such as VR services) and resources (e.g., nonprofit organizations, assistive technology centers, advocacy services, and online resources) to create a seamless transition to CIE for project participants, including identification and utilization of advanced technology supports and identification of advanced technology career opportunities leading to CIE; (3) Family Engagement and Social Support: Partner with service providers supporting project participants to achieve their goals of CIE (e.g., Designated State unit (DSU) for VR services, State educational

agencies, parent organizations, community-based services; local educational agencies; and other local agencies); (4) Advanced Technology and Accommodations: Explore, identify, and utilize advanced technology and workplace accommodations to enable project participants to obtain and/or maintain CIE. This may include adaptive equipment and/or devices, computer software, ergonomic modifications, remote monitoring systems, cognitive assistive technology, mobility aids, and other advanced technology, including artificial intelligence, that help project participants overcome barriers and maximize productivity; and (5) Professional Development Training: Identify, develop, and implement professional development training opportunities, including using virtual reality training opportunities, for service professionals.

*Topic Area 5: Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration for Disconnected Youth and/or Disconnected Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE.*

*Background:*

Disconnected youth with disabilities and disconnected adults with disabilities often face multiple barriers (e.g., criminal records, lack of academic accreditation) that prevent them from actively participating in education, employment, or training, and can be at risk of experiencing negative outcomes such as unemployment, poverty, and social disconnection (Lewis et al., 2019). There are several factors that can contribute to youth or adults becoming disconnected. For example, disconnected youth and disconnected

adults may not have completed a specific level of education, such as high school or college for various reasons, limiting opportunities for further education or CIE. Economic factors, such as poverty, limited job opportunities, or financial instability, can make it difficult for disconnected youth and disconnected adults to find and maintain CIE. Disconnected youth and disconnected adults may not have had the opportunity to receive the necessary training to enter the workforce or pursue further education. This can be due to limited access to quality education or training programs. Lastly, mental health challenges, substance abuse, and involvement in the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems can also contribute to youth with disabilities and adults with disabilities becoming disconnected. Addressing the issue of disconnected youth with disabilities and disconnected adults with disabilities requires a comprehensive and multifaceted approach.

There are numerous strategies that can be used to help re-engage disconnected youth and disconnected adults: (1) Providing accessible and relevant education and training programs that provide the skills and qualifications needed for CIE; (2) Offering mentoring programs and support services that provide guidance, encouragement, and assistance in navigating education and CIE opportunities; (3) Creating high-quality job placement programs, apprenticeships, and internships that provide hands-on experience and opportunities for skill development; (4) Providing comprehensive support services, such as counseling, mental health services, substance abuse treatment, and

housing assistance; (5) Implementing targeted outreach efforts to identify and engage disconnected youth with disabilities and disconnected adults with disabilities, including those who may be unknown or hard to reach; and (6) Collaboration among government agencies, community organizations, educational institutions, and employers to re-engage disconnected youth with disabilities and disconnected adults with disabilities. By addressing the barriers and providing the necessary supports and opportunities, it is possible to re-engage disconnected youth with disabilities and disconnected adults with disabilities to transition into education, employment, and training, leading to improved outcomes.

*Requirements:*

A project in this topic area must focus on securing CIE for disconnected youth with disabilities and/or disconnected adults with disabilities, by addressing the unique employment, training, emotional, cognitive, and life adjustment factors experienced by disconnected youth and/or disconnected adults with disabilities. Activities must include, but are not limited to: (1) Transition and Reintegration Services: Identify support services and resources to create a seamless transition to CIE for project participants; (2) Family Engagement and Social Support: Partner with service providers supporting project participants to achieve their goals for CIE (e.g., DSU for VR services, State educational agencies, parent organizations, community-based services, local educational agencies, other local agencies); (3) Pre-employment Related activities: Provide

pre-employment related activities, such as career exploration, resume writing and job search skills, interview preparation, soft skills development, job readiness training, networking and mentoring, internships, apprenticeships, and job trials, to prepare project participants for the workforce by developing essential skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to obtain and maintain CIE; (4) Professional Development: Develop and implement professional development trainings specific to the professionals serving project participants; (5) Transition Coordinators/Career Navigators: Create, identify, and provide a wide variety of services to project participants pertaining to early intervention and reintegration, including career planning, exploration, and counseling; educational planning; support to navigate systems; learner skill building; and CIE placement; (6) Project Advisory Committee: Develop a project advisory committee that includes representation from the target population to be served by the project and partners relevant to the project and project activities (e.g., State agencies, local agencies, employers, youth service programs, support systems); and (7) Advanced Technology: Identify and use advanced technology to enhance accessibility, education, and CIE for project participants, through the identification and development of strategies that will support access to trainings and education to equip them with the skills needed for CIE.

*Topic Area 6: Field Initiated.*

*Requirements:*

(a) A field-initiated project must (1) address an innovative topic area not otherwise included in this priority, or (2) combine two or more topic areas described in this priority into one application. If an applicant intends to address multiple topic areas, the applicant must combine the topic areas in one application and submit it under Topic Area 6, Field Initiated.

*General Application Requirements:*

Applicants must identify the specific topic area (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6) under which they are applying as part of the competition title on the application cover sheet (SF form 424, line 4).

*Application Requirements:*

Under this priority, the model demonstration project must, at a minimum, meet the following application requirements.

(a) Logic model (as defined in this notice). In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the Project Design", include a logic model for the proposed project as described in the following paragraphs. The logic model must describe how--

(b) (1) The proposed project will achieve its intended outcomes that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the proposed project.

(c) (2) The proposed project components (as defined in this notice) are intended to affect the proposed project outcomes. Applicants must specifically note the proposed project activities that are supported by evidence that demonstrates a rationale and are depicted in the logic model.

(d) Note: The following website provides more information on logic models: "Logic models: "Logic models: A tool for designing and monitoring program evaluations"

[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/rel\\_2014007.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/rel_2014007.pdf).

(b) Proposed *Project Management Plan*. In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the management plan," include a proposed project management plan as described in the following paragraphs. The proposed project management plan must describe how--

(1) The intended proposed project outcomes will be achieved on time and within budget. To address this requirement, the applicant must provide a proposed project management plan that includes--

(i) Clearly defined responsibilities for key project personnel, including level of effort, consultants, and subcontractors, as applicable;

(ii) Timelines, milestones, and deliverables for accomplishing the project tasks;

(iii) A description of how time commitments of proposed key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors will be allocated and how these allocations are appropriate and adequate to achieve the intended proposed project outcomes;

(iv) A description of how the products and services provided are of high quality, evidence-based, relevant, and useful to recipients; and

(v) A detailed description of how activities will continue to be sustained once the grant performance period is over.

(c) *Proposed Project Evaluation Plan.* In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation," include a proposed project evaluation plan for the proposed project as described in the following paragraphs. The proposed project evaluation plan must describe measures of progress in implementation, including the criteria for determining the extent to which the proposed project's products and services have met the goals for reaching its target population; measures of intended outcomes or results of the proposed project activities to evaluate those activities; and how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project, as described in its logic model, have been met. Grantees must dedicate sufficient funds throughout the project period to cover the costs of developing, refining, and implementing the project evaluation plan, as well as the costs associated with collaborating throughout the period of performance with an independent evaluator identified by RSA. The proposed project evaluation plan and process must--

(e) (1) Identify formative and summative evaluation questions that align to the logic model;

(f) (2) Describe how progress in and fidelity of implementation, as well as project outcomes, will be measured to answer the evaluation questions;

(g) (3) Specify the measures and associated instruments or sources for data appropriate to the evaluation questions. Include information regarding reliability and validity of measures where appropriate;

(h) (4) Describe strategies for analyzing data and how data collected as part of this proposed project will be used to inform and refine the logic model and evaluation plan, including subsequent data collection;

(i) (5) Include a timeline for conducting the evaluation and include staff assignments for completing the plan. The timeline must indicate that data will be available bi-annually, for the annual performance report (October 1 - March 31) and end of year performance report (October 1 - September 30);

(j) (6) Describe how the proposed project will collect data, during the project performance period, regarding the project participants, including but not limited to, demographics (e.g., gender, race, ethnic group), disability type, pre- and post- project participation, employment and wage outcomes, and regional information;

(7) Describe how the proposed project will identify and evaluate the innovative strategies that were effective for systemic change in partnerships (e.g., relationship building, resource sharing, funding mechanism for services);

(8) Describe how the proposed project will evaluate the relationship between project participants' engagement with or use of specific practices and strategies implemented by the proposed project and key outcomes;

(9) Describe how the proposed project will make broadly available the results of any evaluations conducted of funded

activities, digitally and free of charge, through formal (e.g., peer reviewed journals) or informal (e.g., newsletters) mechanisms;

(k) (10) Describe how the proposed project will ensure that data from the grantee's evaluation can be made available to any evidence building support contractor identified by RSA consistent with applicable privacy requirements;

(l) (11) Describe how the proposed project will leverage data collection, analysis, and research methodologies to result in an evaluation that can build evidence; and

(m)(12) Include an assurance that the project will cooperate on an ongoing basis with any technical assistance provided by the Department or its contractors and comply with the requirements of any other evaluation of the program conducted by the Department, including the need to share project data.

(d) Proposed Project Website. In the narrative section of the application, include a description of the proposed project website as described in the following paragraph. The narrative must describe how--

(n) (1) The proposed project will develop (year 1), refine, and implement (years 2-5) a project website that is a centralized location for maintaining age-appropriate materials for project participants and resources for service professionals to include, but not limited to: project details, project results, and resources for project participants that will be incorporated into the applicant's website at the end of the proposed project.

(e) Non-DSU for VR Eligible Applicants: For eligible applicants who are not DSU for VR, how the project will share progress and outcomes of the proposed project with the DSU for VR; and as appropriate, how the project will work to ensure that youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities are referred to the DSU for VR for services.

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*Definitions:*

For the FY 2024 grant competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, in accordance with section 437(d)(1) of GEPA, 34 CFR 77.1, and 2 CFR 200.1, we establish definitions of "Acquired disabilities," "Advanced Technology," "Disconnected adult with a disability," "Disconnected youth with a disability," "Early

Intervention," "Educator," Innovative," "Innovative Applications," "Indian Tribe," "Life Coaching Services," "Logic Model," "Nonprofit," "Nonpublic," "Partners," "Partnerships," "Personalized Advanced Technology," "Project Components," "Public," "Refine," "Reintegration," "Wraparound support," and "Youth with disabilities". The authority for each definition is noted following the text of the definition.

"Acquired disabilities" means physical, mental, sensory, or cognitive impairments, typically resulting from injury, illness, or medical conditions that are not presented at birth but acquired later in life. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

"Advanced Technology" means cutting edge innovations, tools, systems, or solutions that represent the latest advancements in science, engineering, and technology.

"Disconnected adult with a disability" means an individual with a disability, over the age of 24 who may be from a low-income background, experiences homelessness, is involved in the corrections system, or is not working. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

"Disconnected youth with a disability" means an individual with a disability between the ages 14 and 24, who may be from a low-income background, experiences homelessness, is in foster care, is involved in the justice system, or is not working or not enrolled in (or at risk of dropping out of) an educational institution. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

“Early intervention” means a timely and systematic provision of support and services to individuals with disabilities with the goal of identifying, assessing, and addressing potential challenges and/or concerns as early as possible, using strategies and techniques that offer redirection and rehabilitation in order to promote positive outcomes whereby leading to CIE. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

“Educator” means an individual who is an early learning educator, teacher, principal, or other school leader, specialized instructional support personnel (e.g., school psychologist, counselor, school social worker, early intervention service personnel), paraprofessional, or faculty. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

“Indian Tribe” means any Indian tribe, band, Nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act ([43 U.S.C. Chapter 33](#)), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians ([25 U.S.C. 450b\(e\)](#)). See annually published Bureau of Indian Affairs list of Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services. (2 CFR 200.1)

“Innovative” means featuring new methods, ideas, or approaches. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

“Innovative Applications” means the creative and groundbreaking uses of technology in various fields, leveraging the latest

advancements in technology to solve problems, improve efficiency, and enhance user experiences to a given scenario that enables forms of interactivity, adaptivity, or support that would otherwise be impracticable without that technology intervention. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

"Life coaching services" means a collaborative and goal-oriented approach to help youth with disabilities and/or adults with disabilities make positive changes, set, and achieve personal or professional goals, and improve various aspects of their lives. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

"Logic model" (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key proposed project components (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1) of the proposed project (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1)) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key proposed project components and relevant outcomes. (34 CFR 77.1.)

"Nonprofit", means as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that it is owned and operated by one or more corporations or associations whose net earnings do not benefit, and cannot lawfully benefit, any private shareholder or entity. (34 CFR part 77)

"Nonpublic", as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that the agency, organization, or institution is

nonprofit and is not under Federal or public supervision or control.  
(34 CFR part 77)

"Partners" means organizations or entities that join forces, collaborate, and work together towards implementing the project.  
(Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

"Partnership" means two or more agencies, employers, or nonprofits working together cooperatively to reach a common goal pursuant to a formal Memorandum of Understanding among the partners and subject to the requirements of 2 CFR 200.332 and other relevant provisions of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards found at 2 CFR part 200. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA)

"Personalized Advanced Technology" means the use of state-of-the-art devices and programs to tailor experiences, products, or services to meet the specific needs and preferences of the individual with a disability. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

"Project components" means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers). (34 CFR 77.1(c)).

"Public" as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that the agency, organization, or institution is under the

administrative supervision or control of a government other than the Federal Government. (34 CFR part 77)

“Refine” means to include a process of continuous improvement to ensure that project activities are reviewed against the project’s goals and objectives, including securing feedback, through various methods (e.g., in-person, phone, virtual) from program participants throughout years two, three, four, and five. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

“Reintegration” means the process, including activities and tasks, for successful reentry into the community, home, or workforce from the juvenile justice or criminal justice system. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

“Wraparound Support” means a comprehensive and holistic approach to providing individualized care and services to support youth and/or adults with disabilities with complex needs, emphasizing a collaborative, strengths-based, family-centered approach to addressing the diverse needs of youth with disabilities and adults with disabilities and their support system.

“Youth with disabilities” means an individual between the ages of 14 and 24 who has a physical or mental impairment that results in a substantial impediment to competitive integrated employment. (Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA.)

*Program Authority:* Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Pub. L. 117-328), 136 Stat. 4892.

*Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking:* Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553), the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities, selection criteria, requirements, and definitions. Section 437(d)(1) of GEPA, however, allows the Secretary to exempt from rulemaking requirements regulations governing the first grant competition under a new or substantially revised program authority. This is the first grant competition for this program under the authority given in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, and, therefore, qualifies for this exemption. In order to ensure timely grant awards, the Secretary has decided to forego public comment on the priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria under section 437(d)(1) of GEPA. The priority, requirements, definitions, and selection criteria will apply to the FY 2024 grant competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications for this competition. *Note:* Projects will be awarded and must be operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws.

*Applicable Regulations:* (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform

Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

## II. Award Information

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants negotiated as cooperative agreements.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$236,313,221.00.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2025 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$8,000,000 - \$10,000,000 (frontloaded for the 60-month project period).

*Estimated Average Size:* \$9,000,000.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 23-29.

*Note:* The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

*Project Period:* Up to 60 months.

*Note:* The Final Performance Report must be completed and submitted by the end of the project period, September 30, 2029. Therefore, the project must complete core project activities to allow sufficient time for the evaluation and final performance report to be completed and submitted by the end of the project period on September 30, 2029.

*Note:* Applicants under this competition must provide detailed budget information for the total grant period, including detailed budget information for each of the five years of the proposed project.

Applicants are encouraged to consider the impact of implementation of

the proposed project when creating a year 1 budget. Applicants are also encouraged to consider the impact of the period of performance end date, September 30, 2029, when creating the year 5 budget.

Note: Grantees are expected to complete at least monthly drawdowns of expenditures.

Note: Subgrantees and Contractors are expected to report monthly invoices of expenditures to the grantees.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### 1. *Eligible Applicants:*

- State agencies or their equivalents under State law: (1) State Educational Agency; (2) State Juvenile Justice agency; (3) State Developmental Disabilities agency; (4) State Department of Health; (5) State Department of Human Services; or (6) Designated State unit for Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
- Public, Private and Nonprofit Entities, including Indian Tribes and Institutions of Higher Education.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian Tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to Institutions of Higher Education only.

Note: The regulation 34 CFR § 75.51 How to prove nonprofit status applies to nonprofits and requires documentation to prove its nonprofit status. (a) Under some programs, an applicant must show that it is a nonprofit organization. (See the definition of nonprofit

in [34 CFR 77.1.](#)) (b) An applicant may show that it is a nonprofit organization by any of the following means: (1) Proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) A statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that: (i) The organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State; and (ii) No part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) A certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; (4) Any item described in paragraphs (b)(1) through (3) of this section if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate; or (5) For an entity that holds a sincerely held religious belief that it cannot apply for a determination as an entity that is tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, evidence sufficient to establish that the entity would otherwise qualify as a nonprofit organization under paragraphs (b)(1) through (4) of this section.

2. a. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

b. *Indirect Cost Rate Information:* This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding

indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html).

c. *Administrative Cost Limitation*: This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to the Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

d. *Administrative Expenses*:

(i) All administrative expenses incurred under the DIF program must be reasonable and necessary for the administration of the DIF program and must conform to the requirements of the Federal Cost Principles described in 2 CFR 200.403 through 200.405.

(ii) Although, in certain circumstances, proposed project participants served and services provided are the same under both the DIF programs and the State programs (e.g., State Educational Agency, State Juvenile Justice Agency, State Developmental Disabilities Agency, State Department of Health, DSU for VR Services, State Department of Human Services) and/or public, private, nonprofit entities, including Indian Tribes and Institutions of Higher Education) these are separate and distinct with separate and distinct funding streams and requirements. As such, when allocating administrative costs between the DIF programs and State programs and/or public, private, nonprofit entities, including Indian Tribes and Institutions of Higher Education, grantees must allocate the costs in accordance with the requirements of 2 CFR 200.405. This

means that both DIF program and State program and/or public, private, nonprofit entities, including Indian Tribes and Institutions of Higher Education funds could be used to pay administrative costs associated with staff time providing services under certain circumstances; however, with respect to those administrative activities limited to the DIF program, such as submitting progress reports, grantees must use only DIF program funds (or other allowable funds) to pay these costs. This applies to grantees and subgrantees.

3. *Subgrantees and Contracts*: Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, a grantee under this competition may award subgrants and contracts. Under this competition, subgrants and contracts may not exceed 75 percent of the funds. Under 34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants and contracts--to directly carry out project activities described in its application--to the following types of entities: public and private, nonprofit entities, including DSU for VR services, State educational agencies, local educational agencies, parent training and information centers, Centers for Independent Living, Developmental Disabilities agencies, Juvenile Justice agencies, or independent and capable evaluation experts and organizations, such as institutions of higher education or nonprofit or for-profit research firms. The grantee may only award subgrants and contracts to entities it has identified in an approved application. Subrecipients may not further subgrant funds received under this award. The administration of the grant award must be

conducted by the grant recipient and administrative costs of the project allocated to the DIF award.

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Application Submission Instructions*: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045) and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/12/07/2022-26554/common-instructions-for-applicants-to-department-of-education-discretionary-grant-programs>, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on December 27, 2021.

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

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

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

3. *Intergovernmental Review*: This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

4. *Funding Restrictions*: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

5. *Recommended Page Limit*: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 45 pages and (2) use 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, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the recommended page limit does apply to the application narrative.

6. *Notice of Intent to Apply*: The Department will be able to review grant applications more efficiently if we know the approximate number of applicants that intend to apply. Therefore, we strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of their intent to submit an application. To do so, please email the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT with the subject line "Intent to Apply," and include the applicant's name and a contact person's name and email address. Applicants that do not submit a notice of intent to apply may still apply for funding; applicants that do submit a notice of intent to apply are not bound to apply or bound by the information provided.

## V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria*: The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 or established for the FY 2024 grant competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards

from the list of unfunded applications from this competition. The criteria are as follows:

(a) SIGNIFICANCE. (up to 15 POINTS)

(1) The Secretary considers the Significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

(iii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in employment, independent living services, or both, as appropriate.

(b) QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN. (up to 25 POINTS)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature,

a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.

(ii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(iii) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population.

(v) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

(c) QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES. (up to 10 POINTS)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(ii) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(d) QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL. (up to 5 POINTS)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(e) ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES. (up to 15 POINTS)

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

(ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(iii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.

(f) QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN. (up to 15 POINTS)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(iii) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.

(g) QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION. (up to 15 POINTS)

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.

(iii) The qualifications, including relevant training, experience, and independence of the evaluator.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

For the FY 2024 grant competition and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, in accordance with section 437(d)(1) of GEPA, in

selecting an application for an award under this program, we also consider the geographical distribution of projects in the DIF program throughout the country. This factor will be applied after non-Federal reviewers score the applications. The geographical distribution of projects factor will be applied to fund applications out of rank order if the top-ranked applications do not represent a geographical distribution throughout the country. The topic area distribution of projects factor will be applied to fund applications out of rank order to ensure a range of topic areas are funded.

3. *Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:* Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 200.208, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, under 2 CFR 3474.10, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. *Integrity and Performance System:* If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.206(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as

an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

5. *In General:* In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with--

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with

section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115–232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(d) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

## VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices*: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We also may notify you informally.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements*: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Open Licensing Requirements:* Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. *Reporting:* (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of the project period, September 30, 2029, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit annual performance reports and end of year performance reports that provide the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary

under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to [www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html](http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case, the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. *Performance Measures:*

The performance measures consist of both the program and project measures.

**Program Measures:** The program measures will be developed in collaboration with the Department and/or its contracted independent evaluator during the first three months (October 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024) of the awards, program measure targets will be developed in collaboration with the Department and/or its contracted independent evaluator and reported during the second three months (January 1, 2025 - March 31, 2025). Program performance measures may, for example, assess the impact of project activities on effective identification of resources and the sustainability and replicability of the project.

**Project Measures:** Under the absolute priority, grant recipients must develop and implement a plan to measure the innovative model demonstration project's performance and outcomes, including an evaluation of the practices and strategies implemented by the project. Grantees must evaluate project performance based on the

following measures, as well as any measures individually developed by the project and include targets in the application:

- (a) Number of individuals to be served by the project.
- (b) Number of project referrals.
- (c) Number of individuals participating in the project.
- (d) Of the individuals participating in the project, the number of individuals who received services and did not achieve competitive integrated employment.
- (e) Of the individuals participating in the project, the Pre- and post- project participation employment and wage outcomes.
- (f) Of the individuals participating in the project, the demographics (e.g., gender, race, ethnic group).
- (g) Of the individuals participating the project, the disability type.
- (h) Of the individuals participating in the project, the number of individuals who achieve competitive integrated employment.
- (i) The number of service professionals, including but not limited to employers, who completed professional training through the project.
- (j) Of the services professionals who completed professional training, including but not limited to employers, the number who reported the training is high in quality, relevant, and useful to their work.

Note: The performance measures will be reported in the Annual Performance Report (Reporting Period October 1 - March 30) and End of

Year Performance Reports (Reporting Period October 1 - September 30). For all five years of the project period, the cooperative agreement, as reviewed and amended as necessary during years 2-5, will specify the program and project measures that will be used to assess the grantees' performance in achieving the goals and objectives of the competition.

#### VII. Other Information

*Accessible Format:* On request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

*Electronic Access to This Document:* The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at [www.govinfo.gov](http://www.govinfo.gov). At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the *Federal Register*, in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the *Federal Register* by using the article search feature at: [www.federalregister.gov](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search

feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

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Glenna Wright-Gallo,  
*Assistant Secretary for Special Education  
and Rehabilitative Services.*

**SECTION C**  
**SELECTION CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS**

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## SELECTION CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS

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The Secretary uses the following selection criteria taken from 34 CFR 75.210 to evaluate applications for new grants under this competition. The maximum score for all these criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Because no points are assigned to the selected factors, the Secretary evaluates each factor within each criterion equally.

The criteria are--

### **(a) SIGNIFICANCE.** **(up to 15 POINTS)**

(1) The Secretary considers the Significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

(iii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in employment, independent living services, or both, as appropriate.

### **(b) QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN.** **(up to 25 POINTS)**

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.

(ii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(iii) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population.

(v) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

### **(c) QUALITY OF PROJECT SERVICES.** **(up to 10 POINTS)**

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(ii) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

**(d) QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL. (up to 5 POINTS)**

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

**(e) ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES. (up to 15 POINTS)**

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

(ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(iii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.

**(f) QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN. (up to 15 POINTS)**

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(ii) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(iii) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.

**(g) QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION. (up to 15 POINTS)**

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.

(iii) The qualifications, including relevant training, experience, and independence of the evaluator.

# **SECTION D**

## **APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

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## IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ FIRST

U.S. Department of Education

### *Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants*

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this document includes important submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the U.S. Department of Education (Department).

#### **Browser Support**

The latest versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE), Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Apple Safari are supported for use with Grants.gov. However, these web browsers undergo frequent changes and updates, so we recommend you have the latest version when using Grants.gov. Legacy versions of these web browsers may be functional, but you may experience issues. Grants.gov no longer provides support for Microsoft Internet Explorer 9 or below.

For additional information or updates, please see the Grants.gov Browser information in the Applicant FAQs: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs#browser>

#### **ATTENTION – Workspace, Adobe Forms and PDF Files**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using [Workspace](#). Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

Create a Workspace: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.

2) Complete a Workspace: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

- a. Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out web forms you can download individual PDF forms to [upload in Workspace](#). The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

- b. **Mandatory Fields in Forms:** In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
  - c. **Complete SF-424 Fields First:** The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.
- 3) **Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
  - 4) **Track a Workspace Submission:** After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the [Track My Application page](#) under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-training.html>

## Helpful Reminders

- 1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration on the System for Award Management ([SAM.gov](#)), which usually takes approximately 7 to 10 business days, but can take longer depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM.gov database by an applicant. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit until all of the Registration Steps are complete.

NOTE:, It will take 24-48 hours once your SAM.gov registration is active before the information becomes available in Grants.gov, and you can submit an application through Grants.gov. For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>. Please note that your organization will need to update its SAM.gov registration annually.

To register in SAM.gov, click on the “Get Started” link under the “Register Your Entity...” heading in SAM.gov. Grantees, and other entities wanting to do business with the U.S. Department of Education (e.g., entities applying for a grant), that are not already registered in SAM.gov must complete the “Register Entity” registration option and NOT the “Get a Unique Entity ID” option. The “Get a Unique Entity ID” option, which is not a full registration, is only available to entities for reporting purposes. Failing to complete the “Register Entity” option may result in loss of funding, loss of applicant eligibility,

and/or delays in receiving a grant award.

Information about SAM.gov is available at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). To further assist you with registering in SAM.gov or updating your existing SAM.gov registration, see the [Quick Start Guide for Grant Registrations](#) and the Entity Registration Video at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

- 2) **SUBMIT EARLY – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded.** The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully to Grants.gov before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date.

You must provide the UEI on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This UEI is assigned to your organization in SAM.gov at the time your organization registers in SAM.gov. If you do not enter the UEI assigned by SAM.gov on your application, Grants.gov will reject your application.

- 3) **VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK –** You will want to verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time 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. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned. Once the Department receives your application from Grants.gov, an Agency Tracking Number (PR/award number) will be assigned to your application and will be available for viewing on Grants.gov's [Track My Application](#) link.

If the date/time received is later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, your application is late. If your application has a status of "Received" it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to "Validated" or "Rejected with Errors." If the status is "Rejected with Errors," your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site:

<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html>. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet at: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>. If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below. Note: You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated

successfully.

#### 4) Submission Problems

- a) If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or email at: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or access the Grants.gov Self-Service Knowledge Base web portal at: <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>
- b) The Department discourages paper applications, but if electronic submission is not possible (e.g., you do not have access to the internet), (1) you must provide a prior written notification that you intend to submit a paper application and (2) your paper application must be postmarked by the application deadline date. Your prior written notification may be submitted by email or by mail to the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section of the competition Notice Inviting Applications (NIA). If you submit your notification by email, it must be received by the Department no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date. If you mail your notification to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date. (Refer to the NIA for detailed instructions)

#### Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please go to <https://www.grants.gov/support> for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Applicant FAQs found at this Grants.gov link: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs.html> as well as additional information on Workspace at <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs#workspace>.

#### Slow Internet Connections

When using a slow internet connection, such as a dial-up connection, to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g., cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection. Failure to fully upload an application by the deadline date and time will result in your application being marked late in the G5 system. **If you do not have access to a high-speed internet connection, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date.** (See the NIA for detailed instructions)

#### Attaching Files – Additional Tips

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application:

- When you submit your application electronically, you must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in either Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word. Although applicants have the option of uploading any narrative sections and all other attachments to their application in either PDF or Microsoft Word, we **recommend** applicants submit all documents as read-only flattened PDFs, meaning any fillable PDF files must be saved and submitted as non-fillable PDF files and not as interactive or fillable PDF files, to better ensure applications are processed in a more timely, accurate, and efficient manner.
- Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.
- When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded file names must be fewer than 50 characters,
- and, in general, applicants should not use any special characters. However, Grants.gov does allow for the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to the Department.
- Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can result in difficulties opening the files. For reference, the average discretionary grant application package with all attachments is less than 5 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

**SECTION E**  
**APPLICATION ABSTRACT INSTRUCTIONS**

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## PROJECT ABSTRACT

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Applicants are required to submit a **one-page** project abstract with their application. The abstract must include the following information:

1. **Name of Applicant** (agency or entity applying for award, not the individual submitting the application)
2. **Eligible Entity Identification** (indicate the type of agency or entity applying for award, not the individual submitting the application):
  - State agencies or their equivalents under State law:
    1. State Educational Agency;
    2. State Juvenile Justice agency;
    3. State Developmental Disabilities agency;
    4. State Department of Health;
    5. State Department of Human Services; or
    6. Designated State unit for Vocational Rehabilitation Services;
  - Public Entity, Private Entity, Nonprofit Entity, including Indian Tribes or Institutions of Higher Education Entity.
3. **City and state** where the agency or entity is located.
4. **The congressional district** where the agency or entity is located (number).
5. **The name of the Project Director and contact information** and the **percentage of time** the Project Director will manage the project or **level of effort (LOE)**. Please note: The Department's G5/G6 grants management system will only accept one Project Director. If co-Directors are named in the application, please specify which Director should receive primary access to G5/G6.
6. **Topic Area covered by the project.**
  - (1) Broadening Access to Advanced Technology Careers and Creating A 21st Century Workforce of Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE.
  - (2) Innovative Applications (as defined in this notice) of Advanced Technology to Support Youth and/or Adults with Disabilities Leading to CIE.
  - (3) Justice-Involved Youth with Disabilities--Early Intervention (as defined in this notice) and Reintegration (as defined in this notice) from the Juvenile Justice System to the Community, Leading to CIE.
  - (4) Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration Strategies for Youth and/or Adults with Acquired Disabilities that Lead to CIE.
  - (5) Early Intervention and Workforce Reintegration Strategies for Disconnected Youth and/or Disconnected Adults with Disabilities that Lead to CIE.or
  - (6) Field Initiated.

Note: If addressing multiple topic areas, the applicant must combine the topic areas in one application and submit it under topic area 6, Field Initiated and must indicate which topic areas are being combined.

**7. Geographical location(s) covered by project.**

Questions regarding the project abstract or any other components of the application should be directed to the competition manager before the closing date.

**SECTION F**  
**EVALUATION LANGUAGE FOR**  
**GENERIC APPLICATION PACKAGES**

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## **EVALUATION LANGUAGE FOR GENERIC APPLICATION PACKAGES**

A strong evaluation plan should be included in the application narrative and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and also outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. More specifically, the plan should identify the individual and/or organization that have agreed to serve as evaluator for the project and describe the qualifications of that evaluator. The plan should describe the evaluation design, indicating:

- (1) what types of data will be collected;
- (2) when various types of data will be collected;
- (3) what methods will be used;
- (4) what instruments will be developed and when;
- (5) how the data will be analyzed;
- (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and
- (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Successful applicants will be expected to report annually on the progress of each project or study included in the grant, including a description of preliminary or key findings and an explanation of any changes in goals, objectives, methodology, or planned products or publications.

**SECTION G**  
**APPLICATION FORMS**

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U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services  
Rehabilitation Services Administration

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR AN  
APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE**

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**(Nonconstruction Programs)**

The enclosed forms shall be used by all applicants for Federal Assistance under all Rehabilitation Services Administration programs. A separate application must be submitted for each grant sought. No grant may be awarded unless the completed application forms have been received. If an item does not appear to be relevant to the assistance requested, write "NA" for not applicable.

This application consists of six parts. These parts are organized in the same manner that the submitted application should be organized. These parts are as follows:

**If a PDF form does not open in your Edge or Chrome browser, right click on the form link and select "Save Link As" to download it to your computer. You can then open the file in Adobe Acrobat.**

- Part I** Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) and U.S. Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance [1894-0007, expires 12-31-2023]  
<https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/sf-424-core-form.pdf>  
<https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/sf-424-instructions.pdf>  
<https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/sf424edsuppl.pdf>  
<https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/sf424instruct.pdf>
- Part II** Budget Information (ED 524) [1894-0008, expires 8-31-2026]  
<https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed524.pdf>
- Part III** Application Narrative – Instructions provided on the following page
- Part IV** Evidence Form (**optional**) [1894-0001, expires 7-31-2025]  
[U.S. Department of Education Evidence Form: OMB No. 1894-0001 — March 7, 2018 \(PDF\)](#)
- Part V** Certifications and Disclosures
- Grants.Gov — Certification Regarding Lobbying  
[ED 80-0013 Form — Certification Regarding Lobbying \(PDF\)](#)
- SF-LLL — Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (**optional**) [4040-0013, expires 02-28-2025]  
<https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/sflll.doc>

Electronic submission requires that narratives and other files be attached to the following attachment forms as per the instruction in this document such as:

- One-page abstract must be attached to the “Department of Education Abstract Form”
- Program narratives must be attached to the “Program Narrative Attachment Form”
- Budget narratives must be attached to the “Budget Narrative Attachment Form”
- All vitas, table of contents, letters, certifications, supplementary statements, and other requested appendices must be attached to the “Other Attachment Form”

**NOTE:** Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files or application components to the Standard Form (SF-424). Although this form accepts attachments, the Department of Education will only review materials/files attached to the attachment forms listed above.

Each submitted application must include an index or table of contents and a one-page project abstract. Pages should be consecutively numbered.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1820-0018. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

Under terms of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended, and the regulations implementing that Act, the Department of Education invites comment on the public reporting burden in this collection of information. You may send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the:

U.S. Department of Education  
Information Management and Compliance Division  
Washington, DC 20202-4651

## **PART III: APPLICATION NARRATIVE**

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This narrative section of the application requires applicants to address the absolute priority, particularly, the Application Requirements and the Project Requirements in the NFP (if applicable) and the NIA.

The application narrative must also address the Selection Criteria, which the competition peer reviewers use to evaluate and score each application. These may be found in Section \_\_C of this application package or Section V of the NIA.

# **SECTION H**

## **IMPORTANT NOTICES**

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**NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS:**  
**EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM**  
**BENEFICIARIES**

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) ([20 U.S.C. 1228a](#)) applies to applicants for grant awards under this program.

**ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW GRANT AWARDS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

Please respond to the following requests for information:

1. Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.

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2. Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?

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3. Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?

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4. What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

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**Notes:**

1. Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity in order to submit an application.
2. Applicants may identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic

disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.

3. Applicants may have already included some or all of this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) and page number(s) in their applications or State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.

### **Paperwork Burden Statement**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0005. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain a benefit. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this individual collection, send your comments to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference OMB Control Number 1894-0005. All other comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form may be addressed to either (a) the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section in the competition Notice Inviting Applications, or (b) your assigned program officer.

***NOTICE FOR ALL APPLICANTS: EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES (OMB Form 1894-0005)***

Instructions

The NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS: EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES is a standard form used by the U.S. Department of Education (*the Department*) for applicants seeking Federal assistance under the Department's grant programs.

Applicants submit in their grant application a description of steps that they propose to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, their Federal grant as required by the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Section 427.

GEPA Section 427 highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Applicants based on the design of their proposed grant project, the participants and community the project proposes to serve, and local circumstances determine whether these or other barriers may prevent all beneficiaries such access or participation. General instructions for completing the standard form are contained below.

- Applicants may identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting, or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants must respond to each question using the associated text box. Each text box allows approximately 4000 characters; therefore, if copying and pasting into the text box from another document be sure to check that everything copied.
- Applicants will receive an error message if any response is missing and will not be able to submit the application due to the missing information.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception and satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW (SPOC LIST)

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Intergovernmental Review (SPOC List) Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," was issued with the desire to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The Order allows each State to designate an entity to perform this function. Below is the official list of those entities. For those States that have a home page for their designated entity, a direct link has been provided below by clicking on the State name. States that are not listed on this page have chosen not to participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a federal awarding agency.

### \*\*\* SPOC List as of June 2023 \*\*\*

STATE	STATE
<p><b>ARIZONA</b></p> <p>Andrea Hightower Grants &amp; Federal Resources Team Manager Office of Grants and Federal Resources 100 N. 15th Avenue, 4th Floor Phoenix, AZ 85007 Telephone: (602) 542-7567 Fax: None ahightower@az.gov</p>	<p><b>ARKANSAS</b></p> <p>Dorris R. Smith Administrator DFA IGS/State Technology Office of Intergovernmental Services Department of Finance and Administration 1515 W. 7th St., Room 412 Little Rock, Arkansas 72203 Telephone: (501) 682-5242 Fax: (501) 682-5206 doris.smith@dfa.arkansas.gov</p>
<p><b>CALIFORNIA</b></p> <p>Grants Coordination State Clearinghouse Office of Planning and Research P.O. Box 3044, Room 113 Sacramento, California 95812-3044 Telephone: (916) 558-3164 Fax: (916) 323-3018 state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov</p>	<p><b>DELAWARE</b></p> <p>Micheale Smith Budget Development, Planning and Administration Office of Management and Budget 122 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., South Dover, DE 19901 Telephone: (302)-672-5126 micheale.smith@delaware.gov</p>

STATE	STATE
<p><b>DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA</b></p> <p>Office of Partnerships and Grant Services  441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW (Judiciary Square)  Suite 707 North  Washington, DC 20001  Telephone: (202) 727-8900  <a href="http://opgs.dc.gov">http://opgs.dc.gov</a></p>	<p><b>FLORIDA</b></p> <p>Chris Stahl  Florida State Clearinghouse  Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection  3800 Commonwealth Blvd.  Mail Station 47  Tallahassee, FL 32399-2400  Telephone: (850) 717-9076  Chris.Stahl@FloridaDEP.gov  Submissions: State.Clearinghouse@FloridaDEP.gov</p>
<p><b>INDIANA</b></p> <p>Luke Kenworthy  Director of Federal Grants Policy and  Management Indiana State Budget Agency  200 West Washington Street, Room 212  Indianapolis, IN 46204  Telephone: 317-234-2079  Fax: N/A  LKenworthy@sbaJN.go</p>	<p><b>IOWA</b></p> <p>Debra Scrowther  Iowa Department of Management  State Capitol Building, Room G12  1007 E. Grand Avenue  Des Moines, IA 50319  Telephone: (515) 281-7076  Fax: (515) 242-5897  Debra.Scrowther@iowa.gov</p>

STATE	STATE
<p><b>KENTUCKY</b></p> <p>Lee Nalley  The Governor's Office for Local Development  100 Airport Drive, 3rd Floor  Frankfort, KY 40601  Telephone: (502) 892-3462  Fax: (502) 573-1519  Lee.Nalley@ky.gov</p>	<p><b>LOUISIANA</b></p> <p>Terry Thomas  Louisiana SPOC for EPA  Grant Office of Management and Finance  LA Department of Environmental Quality  P.O. Box 4303  Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4303  Phone (225) 219-3840  Fax: (225) 219-3846  Terry.Thomas@la.gov</p>
<p><b>MARYLAND</b></p> <p>Jason Dubow, Manager  Resource Conservation &amp; Management  Maryland Department of Planning  301 West Preston Street, Suite 1101  Baltimore, MD 21201-2305  Telephone: (410) 767-4490  Fax: (410) 767-4480  mdp.clearinghouse@maryland.gov  <a href="http://planning.maryland.gov/pages/ourwork/grantresources.aspx">http://planning.maryland.gov/pages/ourwork/grantresources.aspx</a></p>	<p><b>MISSOURI</b></p> <p>Sara VanderFeltz  Federal Assistance Clearinghouse  Office of Administration  Commissioner's Office  Capitol Building, Room 125  Jefferson City, MO 65102  Telephone: (573) 751-0337  Fax: (573) 751-1212  sara.vanderfeltz@oa.mo.gov</p>
<p><b>NEVADA</b></p> <p>Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management  Single Point of Contact  406 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, First Floor  Carson City, NV 89701  Telephone: (775) 684-0156  Fax: (775) 684-0246  grants@admin.nv.gov</p>	<p><b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b></p> <p>Alexis LaBrie  Grants Program Coordinator  Division of Administration  New Hampshire Office of Energy  21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10  Concord, NH 03301  Telephone: (603) 271-3670  Fax: None  nhspoc@energy.nh.gov</p>
<p><b>SOUTH CAROLINA</b></p> <p>David Seigler  Grants and Financial Services  Executive Budget Office  1205 Pendleton Street  Edgar A Brown Building, Suite 529  Columbia, SC 29201  Telephone: (803) 734-0485  Fax: None  david.seigler@admin.sc.gov</p>	<p><b>UTAH</b></p> <p>Brad Newbold  Federal Assistance Management Officer  Utah State Clearinghouse  Governor's Office of Planning and Budget  350 N State Street #150  Salt Lake City, UT 84114  Telephone: (801) 538-1543  Stategrants@utah.gov</p>

STATE	STATE
<p><b>WEST VIRGINIA</b></p> <p>Mackenzie Moss  Community Advancement and Development WV  Department of Economic Development  State Capitol  Building 3, Suite 700  Charleston, WV 25305  Telephone: (304) 558-2234  clearinghouse@wv.gov  <a href="https://wvcad.org/sustainability/clearinghouse">https://wvcad.org/sustainability/clearinghouse</a></p>	<p><b>AMERICAN SAMOA</b></p> <p>Mr. Jerome Ierome  Administrator, Office of Grants Oversight and  Accountability Coordinator,  ASG High Risk Task Force  Office of the Governor  American Samoa Government (ASG)  A.P. Lutali Executive Office Building  American Samoa, 96799  Telephone: (684) 633-4116  Mobile: (684) 254-4533  Fax: (684) 633-2269  jerome.ierome.asg.govoffice@gmail.com</p>
<p><b>PUERTO RICO</b></p> <p>Jose I. Marrero Rosado  Puerto Rico Planning Board  Federal Proposals Review Office  P.O. Box 9023228  San Juan, PR 00902-3228  Telephone: (787)-725-9420  Fax: (787)-725-7066  Jmarrero@ogp.pr.gov</p>	<p><b>VIRGIN ISLANDS</b></p> <p>Jenifer C. O’Neal  Director  Office of Management and Budget  No. 5041 Norre Gade  Emancipation Garden Station, 2nd Floor  St Thomas, VI 00802  Telephone: (340) 774-0750  Jenifer.Oneal@omb.vi.gov</p>

Changes to this list can be made only after OMB is notified by a State's officially designated representative. E-mail messages can be sent to [MBX.OMB.OFFM.Grants@OMB.eop.gov](mailto:MBX.OMB.OFFM.Grants@OMB.eop.gov).

**Please note:** Inquiries about obtaining a Federal grant should not be sent to the OMB e-mail shown above. The best source for this information is the Assistance Listings at (<https://beta.sam.gov/>) and the Grants.gov website (<https://www.grants.gov/>).

## Electronic Notification Option for Grant Awards

If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); **OR** we may send you an e-mail containing a link to access G5, the Department's Grant Management System. The email will be sent to both the project director and certifying representative in order for them to view and print the Adobe Acrobat version of the electronically signed GAN. If neither the project director nor certifying representative is registered in G5, they will immediately be prompted to register once the link is accessed. **The electronic signature and issuance of the GAN makes it crucial that your application include correct email addresses for both the project director and certifying representative.**

**SECTION I**  
**COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**  
**PROGRAM APPLICATION INDIRECT COST INSTRUCTIONS**  
**UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER (UEI) FACT SHEET**

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## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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### **Q. What happens to my application after it is received in the Department?**

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- A. The Department's Application Control Center receives each application, assigns each an identifying number (PR/Award number), confirms receipt of applications, and sends the applications to the appropriate program office, which screens them for eligibility. The program conducts a peer review of all eligible applications sent to a program competition, ranks them and recommends the highest ranked applications for funding with exceptions as provided by law. The responsible official for the applicable program reviews the program office's recommendations, checks the adequacy of the documentation supporting the recommendations, and approves a final list, or slate, of recommended projects and funding amounts. RSA program staff discusses the recommendations with the successful applicants and award the grants.

### **Q. What happens to my application if the Department finds it to be ineligible?**

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- A. The Department immediately returns an application that does not meet the eligibility criteria for the particular program. A letter from the Department explaining why it is not being reviewed in the competition accompanies the application.

### **Q. How does the Department review an application?**

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- A. Each application is assessed by knowledgeable persons from outside and sometimes inside the Department who are asked for their judgments about the quality and significance of the proposed project. These persons represent a diversity of disciplines and institutional, regional, and cultural backgrounds. The advice of these experts is compiled by Departmental staff who comment on matters of fact or on significant issues that would otherwise be missing from the review. The results are then presented to the responsible official responsible for the program who approves the recommendations for funding.

### **Q. What Criteria do the reviewers use when scoring an application?**

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- A. Reviewers score each application using the selection criteria published in the *Federal Register* as part of the program regulations, which are given in **Section C** of this application package. Reviewers are instructed to use only the published criteria.

### **Q. Is a recommended application guaranteed funding?**

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- A. No. Funding is not final until discussions have been successfully concluded and a grant award notification has been signed by the grants office and mailed to the applicant.

### **Q. How do the invitational, competitive and absolute priorities differ?**

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#### **A. Invitational Priority**

The Secretary may simply invite applicants to meet a priority. However, an application that addresses invitational priorities receives no competitive or absolute preference over applications that do not meet this priority.

**Competitive Priority**

If a program uses weighted selection criteria, the Secretary may award selection points to an application that meets the priority. These points are in addition to any points the application earns under the selection criteria. The notice states the maximum number of additional points that the Secretary may award to applications that meet the priority in a particularly effective way. Or the Secretary may simply select applications that meet the competitive priority over applications of comparable merit that do not meet the priority.

**Absolute Priority**

Under an absolute priority, the Secretary may select for funding only those applications that meet the priority.

**Q. Can changes in the size of subsequent year awards be made after the multi-year budget has been negotiated?**

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- A. Yes, a grantee can renegotiate his or her multi-year budget and may be awarded additional funds if sufficient justification is presented to the Secretary and funds are available. Also, funds can be decreased if it is determined that the multi-year budget was overestimated.

**Q. How will funding continuation decisions be made?**

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- A. Grantees will be required to complete annual performance reports that describe the projects' accomplishments, evaluations and finances. These performance reports, along with other information, will be used by the Department to decide whether to continue funding projects.

## PROGRAM APPLICATION INDIRECT COST INSTRUCTIONS

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Each Program is required to select, and include in its application package, one of the following indirect cost instructions, as appropriate to the program.

**First Option** — *For programs reimbursing the full share of indirect costs (Full reimbursement), use the following:*

The Department of Education (ED) reimburses grantees for its portion of indirect costs that a grantee incurs in projects funded by the (NAME OF PROGRAM, 84.xxx). Any grantee charging indirect costs to a grant from this program must use the indirect cost rate negotiated with its *cognizant agency for indirect costs*.

**Note:** Applicants should pay special attention to specific questions on the application budget form (U.S. Department of Education Budget Information Non-Construction Programs Form 524 **Sections A, B and C**) about their cognizant agency and the indirect cost rate they are using in their budget.

If an applicant selected for funding under this program has not already established a current indirect cost rate with its cognizant agency, ED generally will authorize the grantee to use a **temporary** rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages authorized under [EDGAR §75.560](#), or a **de minimis** rate of 10 percent of MTDC, as authorized under [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).

In accordance with EDGAR §75.560, use of the **temporary** rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages is subject to the following limitations:

- 1) The grantee must submit an indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency within 90 days after ED issues the GAN.
- 2) If after the 90-day period, the grantee has not submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency, the grantee may not charge its grant for indirect costs (except when ED finds exceptional circumstances, see [34 CFR § 75.560\(d\)\(2\)](#)) until it has negotiated an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.
- 3) A grantee that opts to use the temporary rate, and that obtains a federally recognized indirect cost rate, may then use the federally recognized rate to retroactively claim indirect costs reimbursement. The recovery is subject to the following limitations:
  - a) The grantee may only recover indirect costs incurred on or after the date it submitted its indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency, or at the start of the project period, whichever of the two occurs later.
  - b) The total amount of funds recovered by the grantee under the federally recognized indirect cost rate is reduced by the amount of indirect costs previously recovered under the temporary indirect cost rate.

- c) The grantee must obtain prior approval from the Secretary to shift direct costs to indirect costs in order to recover indirect costs at a higher negotiated indirect cost rate.
- d) The grantee may not request additional funds to recover indirect costs that it cannot recover by shifting direct costs to indirect costs.

In accordance with [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#), use of the **de minimis** rate of 10 percent of MTDC is subject to the following limitations:

- 1. State and local governments may not use the de minimis rate; thus, this rate may only be used by institutions of higher education (IHE) and non-profit organizations that have never had a negotiated indirect cost rate if:
  - a. The grant for which the applicant seeks support is not:
    - 1) Supported under a program that requires use of a restricted indirect cost rate;
    - 2) Supported under a program that requires the use of the ED training grant rate; or
    - 3) Supported under another program that prohibits or limits indirect cost recovery.
  - b. A grantee that decides to use the de minimis rate of 10 percent of MTDC must use the rate for at least one fiscal year for all its Federal awards and may continue to use the rate indefinitely thereafter until it decides to negotiate an agreement with its cognizant agency. MTDC consists of all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and subawards and subcontracts up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (i.e., subgrant or subcontract). The MTDC base excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs (distorting), tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.
  - c. Once a grantee obtains a federally recognized indirect cost rate that is applicable to its grant, the grantee may use that indirect cost rate to claim indirect cost reimbursement; however, the reimbursement is subject to the following limitations:
    - 1) The grantee may only recover indirect costs incurred on or after the date it submitted its indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency, or at the start of the project period, whichever of the two occurs later.

- 2) The total amount of funds recovered by the grantee under the federally recognized indirect cost rate is reduced by the amount of indirect costs previously recovered under the de minimis rate.
- 3) The grantee must obtain prior approval from the Secretary to shift direct costs to indirect costs in order to recover indirect costs at a higher negotiated indirect cost rate.
- 4) The grantee may not request additional funds to recover indirect costs that it cannot recover by shifting direct costs to indirect costs.

Applicants should be aware that ED is not always the cognizant agency for its own grantees. Rather, ED accepts, for the purpose of funding its awards, the current indirect cost rate established by the appropriate cognizant agency.

Applicants are encouraged to have an accountant calculate a proposed indirect cost rate using current information from its audited financial statements, actual cost data, or IRS Form 990. Applicants should use this proposed rate in their application materials and describe which of these methods they used to calculate the rate. Guidance related to calculating an indirect cost rate can be found on ED's website at:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgindex.html>.

Applicants with questions about using indirect cost rates under this program should contact the program contact person shown elsewhere in this application package or in the *Federal Register* application notice of MM/DD/YYYY, (FILL IN FED REG CITE HERE).

**Second Option — *For programs with restricted indirect cost rates (Partial Reimbursement).***

The Department of Education (ED) generally reimburses a grantee for its indirect costs. These kinds of costs generally are recovered through an indirect cost rate that the grantee negotiates with its *cognizant agency for indirect costs*.

The statute authorizing (NAME OF PROGRAM, CFDA #) contains a supplement-not-supplant provision that requires a reduction in the indirect cost rate so that costs that are unallowable under the supplement-not-supplant program are not recovered through the indirect cost rate. To ensure that these types of costs are not recovered, grantees must use a restricted indirect cost rate when claiming indirect cost reimbursement (see [EDGAR § 75.563](#)). The detailed requirements of restricted rates are in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) at §§75.563 and 76.563-569.

1. All grantees under supplement-not-supplant programs may only recover indirect costs at the restricted rate included on their negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. For guidance on how to calculate the restricted rate, an applicant that

already has a negotiated indirect cost rate and that plans to apply under this program should review ED's website at:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgindex.html>

The applicant should then use this separate, restricted rate in estimating indirect costs in the budget submitted with its application.

2. Restricted rates for SEAs are included on the SEA's negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. Restricted rates for LEAs are negotiated with the SEA, using a methodology described in the State's indirect cost plan submitted under EDGAR § 75.561(b) and approved by the ED Indirect Cost Group (ICG).
3. Applicants for discretionary grants that are not a State or a local government and that do not have a negotiated restricted rate may use a temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages until they negotiate a restricted rate.
  - a. In accordance with EDGAR §75.560, use of the temporary rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages is subject to the following limitations:
    - 1) The grantee must submit an indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency within 90 days after ED issues the GAN.
    - 2) If after the 90-day period, the grantee has not submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency, the grantee may not charge its grant for indirect costs (except when ED finds exceptional circumstances, see [34 CFR § 75.560\(d\)\(2\)](#)) until it has negotiated an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.
  - b. Once a grantee obtains a federally recognized indirect cost rate that is applicable to its grant, the grantee may use that indirect cost rate to claim indirect cost reimbursement; however, the reimbursement is subject to the following limitations:
    - 1) The grantee may only recover indirect costs incurred on or after the date it submitted its indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency, or at the start of the project period, whichever of the two occurs later.
    - 2) The total amount of funds recovered by the grantee under the federally recognized indirect cost rate is reduced by the amount of indirect costs previously recovered under the de minimis rate.
    - 3) The grantee must obtain prior approval from the Secretary to shift direct costs to indirect costs in order to recover indirect costs at a higher negotiated indirect cost rate.
    - 4) The grantee may not request additional funds to recover indirect costs that it cannot recover by shifting direct costs to indirect costs.

4. An applicant that is not a State or local government that already has a regular indirect cost rate must provide a copy of its rate agreement to ICG as the starting point for negotiating a restricted rate with the ICG.
5. If an applicant, other than a State or local government, does not want to negotiate a restricted rate agreement, the applicant has the option of charging indirect costs at 8 percent of the MTDC of its grant for the life of the grant in accordance with EDGAR § 76.564(c)(2)<sup>1</sup>, unless the ICG determines that the actual restricted indirect cost rate is lower than 8 percent of MTDC. If the ICG determines that the actual restricted indirect cost rate is lower, the ICG requires that the lower rate be used in the applicant's budget. If a non-governmental applicant chooses to charge indirect costs at 8 percent of its MTDC, it must maintain records available for audit, demonstrating that the applicant incurred indirect costs of at least 8 percent of MTDC.
6. For grants under restricted rate programs, EDGAR § 76.569 requires that grantees multiply their restricted indirect cost rate by the "total direct costs of the grant minus capital outlays, sub-grants, and other distorting or unallowable items as specified in the grantee's indirect cost rate agreement." This calculation is known as multiplying by a modified total direct cost base.
7. Applicants may have an accountant calculate a proposed restricted indirect cost rate using current information from their audited financial statements and actual cost data. Applicants should use this proposed restricted rate in their application materials and describe which of these methods they used to calculate the rate. Guidance related to calculating a restricted indirect cost rate can be found on ED's website at the above referenced link.
8. Applicants must bear in mind that items of cost excluded from restricted indirect cost rates may not be charged to grants as direct cost items, nor may they be used to satisfy matching or cost-sharing requirements under a grant or charged to other Federal awards.
9. Applicants should be aware that ED is not always the cognizant agency for its own grantees. For restricted indirect cost rates, ED will negotiate the rate with grantees and provide the approved restricted rate to the cognizant agency for inclusion on the rate agreement.

Applicants with questions about using restricted indirect cost rates under this program should contact the program contact person shown elsewhere in this application package or in the *Federal Register* application notice of MM/DD/YYYY, (FILL IN FED REG CITE HERE).

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<sup>1</sup> The 8 percent training grant rate under EDGAR § 75.562 should not be confused with the 8 percent rate under EDGAR § 75.564(d), which incorporates EDGAR § 76.564(c).

**Third Option — For programs that are designated training grants  
(Limited reimbursement at 8 percent).**

Some or all the grants awarded under (NAME OF PROGRAM, 84.xxx) have been designated training grants. The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) limit reimbursement of indirect costs under training grants to non-governmental grantees. These grantees may recover indirect costs under training grants up to the grantee's actual indirect costs as determined by the grantee's negotiated indirect cost agreement or 8 percent of MTDC, whichever rate is lower.

**Note:** This limitation does not apply to State agencies, local governments or federally-recognized Indian tribal governments. [[EDGAR §75.562\(c\)\(2\)](#)]

Applicants should be aware that indirect cost amounts exceeding the limitation, described in the first paragraph of this section, may not be charged to direct cost categories, used to satisfy matching or cost-sharing requirements, or charged to another Federal award. [[EDGAR §75.562\(c\)\(5\)](#)]

Although applicants are not required to submit with their application a copy of their indirect cost agreement to claim the 8 percent training rate for funding received in this program, if they are awarded a grant, they must have documentation available for audit that shows that the indirect costs incurred under the grant are at least 8 percent of MTDC.

If an applicant selected for funding under this program has not already established a current indirect cost rate with its cognizant agency, the Department of Education (ED) generally will authorize the grantee to use a **temporary** rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages authorized under [EDGAR §75.560](#), or a **de minimis** rate of 10 percent of MTDC, as authorized under [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).

In accordance with EDGAR §75.560, use of the **temporary** rate of 10 percent of budgeted direct salaries and wages is subject to the following limitations:

1. The grantee must submit an indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency within 90 days after ED issues the GAN.
2. If after the 90-day period, the grantee has not submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency, the grantee may not charge its grant for indirect costs (except when ED finds exceptional circumstances, see 34 CFR § 75.560(d)(2)) until it has negotiated an indirect cost rate agreement with its cognizant agency.
3. A grantee that opts to use the temporary rate, and that obtains a federally recognized indirect cost rate, may then use the federally recognized rate to retroactively claim indirect costs reimbursement. The recovery is subject to the following limitations:
  - 1) The grantee may only recover indirect costs incurred on or after the date it submitted its indirect cost rate proposal to its cognizant agency, or at the start of the project period, whichever of the two occurs later.

- 2) The total amount of funds recovered by the grantee under the federally recognized indirect cost rate is reduced by the amount of indirect costs previously recovered under the temporary indirect cost rate.
- 3) The grantee must obtain prior approval from the Secretary to shift direct costs to indirect costs in order to recover indirect costs at a higher negotiated indirect cost rate.
- 4) The grantee may not request additional funds to recover indirect costs that it cannot recover by shifting direct costs to indirect costs.

**Fourth Option — *For programs that do not provide indirect cost reimbursement under awards (No reimbursement).***

The (NAME OF PROGRAM, CFDA 84.xxx) program does not reimburse grantees for indirect costs they incur in carrying out a project funded under the program. Therefore, applicants should not show any dollar amounts for indirect costs on either line 10 of the U.S. Department of Education Budget Information Non-Construction Programs Form 524 **Sections A, B and C**, or in their budget narrative.

Applicants should also be aware that unreimbursed indirect costs under grants of this program may not be charged as direct cost items in the same award, used to satisfy matching or cost-sharing requirements, or charged to another Federal award.

## UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER (UEI) FACT SHEET

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The Federal Government has transitioned from the use of the DUNS Number to the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) as the primary means of entity identification for Federal awards government-wide. UEIs are required in accordance with [2 CFR Part 25](#), and the transition from DUNS to UEI has resulted in the UEI being issued by the Federal Government in [SAM.gov](#). This means entities no longer rely on a third-party to obtain an identifier (i.e., a DUNS issued by Dun and Bradstreet). This change streamlines the entity identification and validation process, making it easier and less burdensome for entities to do business with the Federal Government. Information addressing the reasons for this transition is available at [The New Unique Entity Identifier is Here](#) and at [Why has SAM.gov changed from the DUNS Number to the Unique Entity ID?](#).

Here is what you need to know about this recent transition:

### 1. Direct Grant Recipients and Grant Applicants

- a. If your organization is currently registered in [SAM.gov](#) with either an active or inactive registration, you have already been assigned a UEI. Your UEI is viewable on your entity's registration record in SAM.gov. To learn how to view your UEI, see this guide: [How can I view my Unique Entity ID?](#)
  - On **April 4, 2022**, the Integrated Award Environment (IAE) systems (i.e., SAM.gov, FPDS, eSRS,FSRS, FAPIIS, and CPARS) complied with the Federal Government's requirement to end use of the DUNS Number for Federal award management.<sup>4</sup> **The U.S. Department of Education's Grants Management System (G5) implemented this transition on April 4, 2022.**

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<sup>4</sup> [SAM.gov](#) – Or the System for Awards Management is the official site for registering to do business with the Federal Government.

[FPDS.gov](#) – Or the Federal Procurement Data System is the official site for reporting contracts whose estimated value is \$10K or more.

[eSRS.gov](#) – Or the Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System is the official site for reporting subcontracts. [FSRS.gov](#) – Or the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act Subaward Reporting System (FSRS) is the official reporting site that Federal prime awardees (i.e., prime contractors and prime grants recipients) use to capture and report subaward and executive compensation data regarding their first-tier subawards.

[FAPIIS.gov](#) – Or the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System is the official site in which records are entered and searchable related to Administrative Agreements, Defective Pricing, DoD Determination of Contractor Fault, Non- Responsibility Determination, Recipient Not-Qualified Determination, Termination for Cause, Termination for Default, Termination for Material Failure to Comply, Suspension/Debarment information if the entity has any of these records, and Administrative Proceedings information.

[CPARS.gov](#) – Or the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System is the official site in which Federal agencies can create and measure the quality and timely reporting of contractor performance information, and where contractors can review this information and provide comment.

- If you have an inactive registration or need to update your registration, you must ensure that your renewal or updates occur on time and as required, but this does not affect whether you have been assigned a UEI. If you have a registration, you already have a UEI. If your registration has expired, you have been assigned a UEI, but you will need to renew your registration. You can access instructions addressing how to renew your entity registration at: [How to Renew or Update an Entity](#).
- If you are not registered in [SAM.gov](#), create a new registration by clicking on the “Get Started” link under the “Register Your Entity...” heading in [SAM.gov](#). Grantees, and other entities wanting to do business with the U.S. Department of Education (e.g., entities applying for a grant), that are not already registered in [SAM.gov](#) must complete the full “**Register Entity**” registration option and **NOT** the abbreviated “Get a Unique Entity ID” option. The “Get a Unique Entity ID” option, which is not a full registration, is only available to entities that are not grantees (i.e., direct recipients of a U.S. Department of Education grant) and to entities that do not wish to apply for a Federal grant. Failing to complete the “**Register Entity**” option may result in loss of funding, loss of applicant eligibility, and/or delays in receiving a grant award.
- Once assigned, the UEI number will never expire; however, entity registrations do expire annually and require annual renewal. Please ensure that your organization renews its registration prior to the expiration date. The expiration date is listed in your entity record in [SAM.gov](#).

## 2. Subrecipients

- a.) Subrecipients must have a UEI; however, the U.S. Department of Education does not require subrecipients under its grants to register their UEIs in SAM.gov. Unless item 2(b) applies, subrecipients that do not have a UEI may complete the abbreviated “**Get a Unique Entity ID**” option and **NOT** the full “Register Entity” registration option to obtain a UEI. Since the UEI validates the subrecipient’s legal business name and address, subrecipients must update this information when changes occur. For information about how to obtain a UEI without registering an entity, and the difference between only getting a UEI and registering an entity, view the [How to get a Unique Entity ID](#) video.
- b.) The following exception to item 2(a) applies to subrecipients. When subrecipients under U.S. Department of Education grants are also **direct** recipients of U.S. Department of Education grants and/or **direct** recipients of other Federal agency grants, and/or they wish to apply for a Federal grant as a direct recipient, these subrecipients must have an active UEI registration in SAM.gov. Subrecipients that are currently registered in [SAM.gov](#) with either an active or inactive registration have been assigned their UEI. If a subrecipient’s registration has expired, it has been assigned a UEI, but it will need to renew its registration. Registrations expire annually and require annual renewal. To renew expired registrations, these entities may follow the instructions at: [How to Renew or Update an Entity](#). Subrecipients without a registration that are also direct grant recipients under other Federal awards, and/or that wish to apply for a Federal grant as a direct recipient, must register by clicking on the “Get Started” link under the “Register Your Entity...” heading in [SAM.gov](#) and complete the full “**Register Entity**” registration option.

### 3. Where to get help

- a.) The Federal Service Desk, available at [FSD.gov](https://www.fsd.gov), is the help desk that has been established for all IAE systems. [FSD.gov](https://www.fsd.gov) includes resources that address the recent UEI transition and these resources are available at: [Help for the Transition from DUNS to Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#).

There are resources available for grantees, subrecipients, contractors, subcontractors, and Federal employees who use [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov), and for individuals who search for entities on [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov). For example, there are FAQs available that are organized by how an individual uses [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) based on their roles and responsibilities ([FAQs and Resources Based on What You Do in SAM.gov](#)) that are particularly helpful.

- b.) If you have questions about UEIs or the recent UEI transition that are not answered in the FAQs or in other resources available at [FSD.gov](https://www.fsd.gov), you may contact the [FSD.gov](https://www.fsd.gov) by calling, or by choosing “Create an Incident” or engaging in a “Live Chat.”
- c.) For other questions related to your grant, please contact your Education Program Contact listed in box 3 of your Grant Award Notification, or as identified in any other applicable documentation provided by the U.S. Department of Education.