



# Applying for an ED Grant

How to |

This resource is designed to support you as you prepare your organization to apply for Department of Education grants.



3-12 months prior to competition



## Preparation



### Register for a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number

- To register in SAM.gov, click on the "Get Started" link under the "Register Your Entity..." heading in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).



### Register with Grants.gov

- Familiarize yourself with grants.gov and register your organization by clicking "Register" in the top right corner of Grants.gov.



### Review grants forecast

- Visit [ed.gov](https://ed.gov) to review the [grants forecast](#) to determine which grant competitions may be running



### Brainstorm project ideas

- Review program websites to see if there are prior NIAs and/or examples of project applications to give a sense of what a program might require



### Engage potential partners and implementation sites

- Begin thinking about how a potential project would be implemented and what people and organizations would be essential partners for the project

## Applying

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### Review the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) once published

- Go to the [Federal Register](#) (FR) to search for the NIA.
- You can set automatic NIA publishing alerts by 1) creating an account with FR 2) select Browse > Agencies 3) Click Education Department 4) Click Subscribe (top right)

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### Register for a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number

- To register in SAM.gov, click on the "Get Started" or "Renew Entity" link under the "Register Your Entity..." heading in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).
- This registration is free and must be maintained annually, so make sure to renew each year as you prepare to apply!

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### Apply for the grant!

- Visit the government-wide website, <http://www.grants.gov>.
- Click on "Search Grants" and enter the grant number (e.g., "84.411B") in the keyword search bar.
- Click on the Opportunity Number in the search results and follow instructions after hitting "Apply."



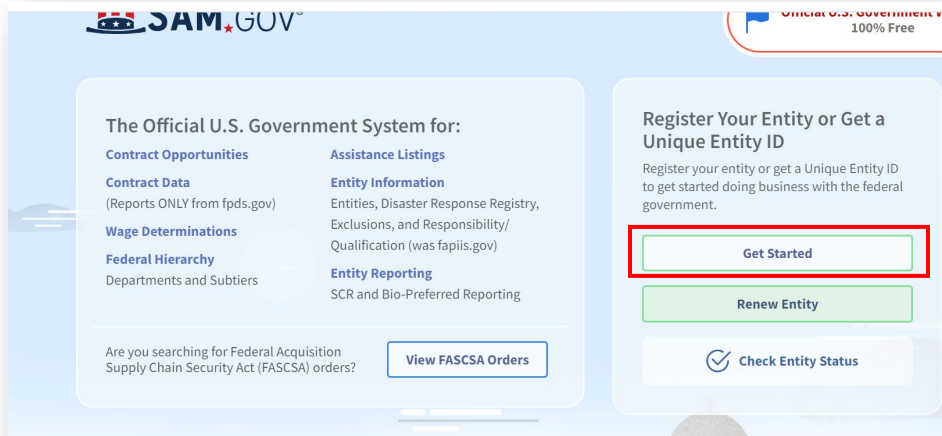
- Visit the program website (easiest to type the program name into a search engine) for helpful information, frequently asked questions, dates of future webinars or workshops, and clarifications.



# How to Register for a UEI

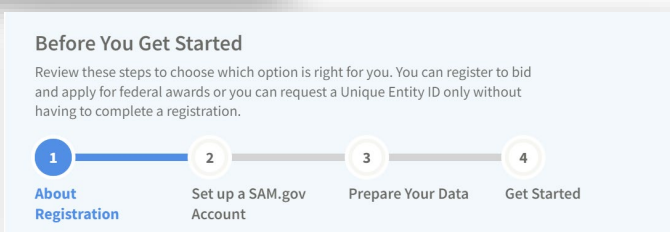


To apply for a Department grant in Grants.gov, an applicant must have a UEI number which is obtained by **registering on sam.gov**. This usually takes approximately 7 to 10 business days but can take longer. UEI registrations in SAM.gov expire on an annual basis and it is the responsibility of each applicant to access their SAM.gov account and complete the renewal process.



**i** To register in SAM.gov, click on the “Get Started” link under the “Register Your Entity...” heading on SAM.gov. If you already have a UEI number and need to renew your registration, click on “Renew Entity.”

**i** After clicking on “Get Started,” there will be information in a “Before You Get Started” box. Included here will be a link to the Entity Registration Checklist (right), which includes comprehensive instructions and checklist for the necessary documentation required for registration.



Register early in the preparation phase!

**i** Information about SAM is available at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). To further assist you with registering in SAM or updating your existing SAM registration, see the [Quick Start Guide for Grant Registrations](#) and the Entity Registration Video at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>. For further assistance, please visit the [UEI and SAM Support page](#) from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.



# How to Read an NIA

The Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) is the official document announcing a grant competition, found on the Federal Register and Grants.gov. Important information about eligibility, requirements, and how applications will be reviewed is contained here.

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Example NIA Table of Contents



Applicants should read the NIA in its entirety. Highlighted below, however, are some of the most important aspects of the NIA explained in further detail.

- Section I:** Competition Priorities & Application Requirements
- Section III:** Eligibility Information
- Section V:** Selection Criteria, Evidence
- Section VI:** Performance Measures



## Competition Priorities

An NIA may include one or more priorities to focus a competition on the activities and objectives consistent with a program's statute. Moreover, an NIA may also include priorities for which the Secretary of Education is particularly interested in receiving applications. There are three types of priorities that can be used in an NIA:

Priority	Explanation
<b>Absolute Priority</b>	An absolute priority (AP) is a requirement and must be met for an application to be considered. No points are assigned to APs. Applicants who do not fully address the AP will not be considered for funding.
<b>Competitive Preference Priority</b>	A competitive preference priority (CPP) is optional. Applicants can earn additional points based on whether or how well they address each CPP in their application. It is strongly encouraged for applicants to address CPPs to increase their opportunity to be recommended for funding.
<b>Invitational Priority</b>	An invitational priority (IP) represents an area of interest for the Department. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to address the IP in project design. IPs are not scored and do not impact funding decisions.

## Application Requirements

Application requirements must be addressed in your application. These requirements are typically specific to the program and outlined in Section I of the NIA. Like an Absolute Priority, these requirements are foundational for the application and must be met for the application to be considered.



# How to Read an NIA, Cont.

The Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) is the official document governing a grant competition. The important information about eligibility, requirements, and how applications will be reviewed is contained here.



## Eligibility Information

Here you will find the types of entities outlined that are eligible to apply for funding. Specific information that may be required to prove eligibility is also included in this section and should be closely reviewed to ensure that this necessary information is included in the application.



## Selection Criteria

Selection criteria are the indicators against which applications are scored. Peer reviewers read and independently score applications against the selection criteria (included in Section V of the NIA). Applicants should keep the selection criteria in mind while developing and writing an application to ensure that they are fully addressing components that peer reviewers will score the application on.



## Evidence

Many grant competitions contain evidence elements, either in the competition priorities (Section I) or the selection criteria (section V). The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) includes [four tiers of evidence](#). The NIA will specify what the evidence requirements are. Applicants should clearly outline how evidence factors into the project design and/or evaluation plan.



## Performance Measures

Performance measures (outlined in Section VI) represent quantitative indicators, statistics, or metrics that will be used to gauge program or project performance. If awarded a grant by the Department, these are the measures that a grantee will be expected to report on. Applicants are encouraged to consider these measures in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of their project. Many programs require applicants to provide, in their applications, baseline data and/or performance targets for program performance measures.



# How to Apply

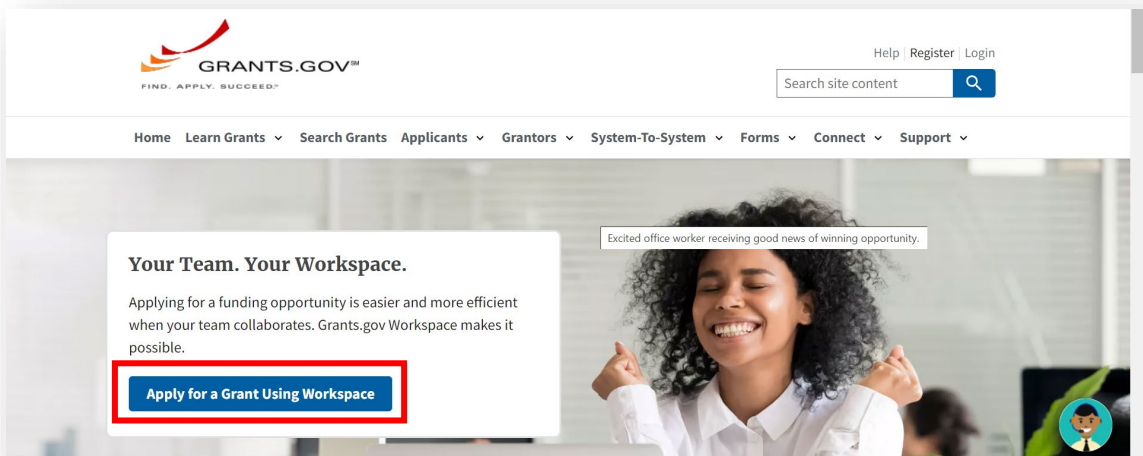


Applicants must apply for Department grants using Grants.gov. Begin by clicking “Search Grants” at the top of the site to find the relevant competition. You will then be required to register with Grants.gov before creating a Workspace to submit an application.

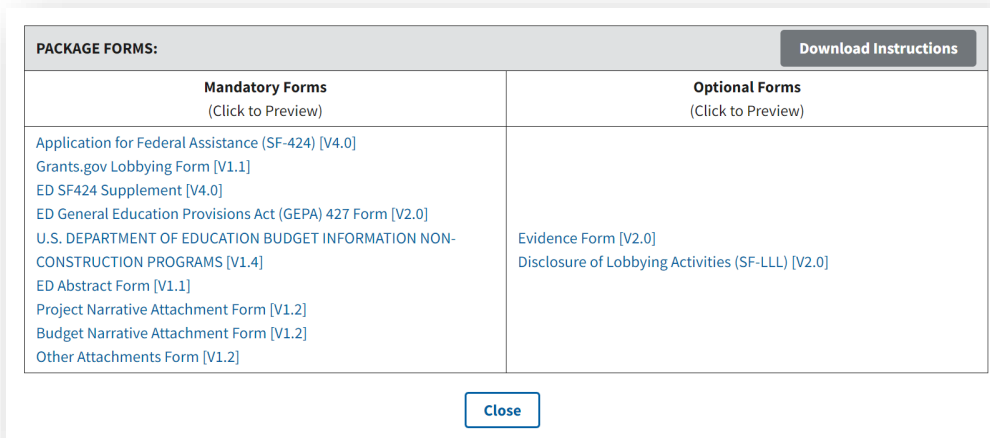
Generally, applicants apply via Grants.gov using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of your grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of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

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



After creating your Workspace, you can view the application package (screenshot below), which includes the forms that will fill out to complete your application.





# How to Apply, Cont.

The application package includes forms that are both pre-populated and must be filled in as well as forms that must be submitted by attaching a file.

An example of a pre-populated form is the Standard Form, SF-424 (pictured, right). Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the SF-424.

SF-424 example

An example of the form where you will submit an attachment is the Project Narrative Attachment Form (pictured, right). Simply attach your file (that is formatted using the standards, below) using the provided buttons in the portal.

Project Narrative Form Attachment



## Content and Formatting Requirements

When attaching files to your application package in grants.gov (for example, ED Abstract form or Project Narrative form) you should follow the guidance in the Common Instructions and Information, linked in the competition NIA. This includes additional context and instructions on applying, including formatting standards (seen below).

We recommend that you 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.



### Page Guidance

- A “page” is 8.5" x 11"
- One sided
- 1" margins
- Double spaced



### Font Size

- 12 point +



### Font Type

- Times New Roman
- Courier
- Courier New
- Arial



# How to Apply, Cont.



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.

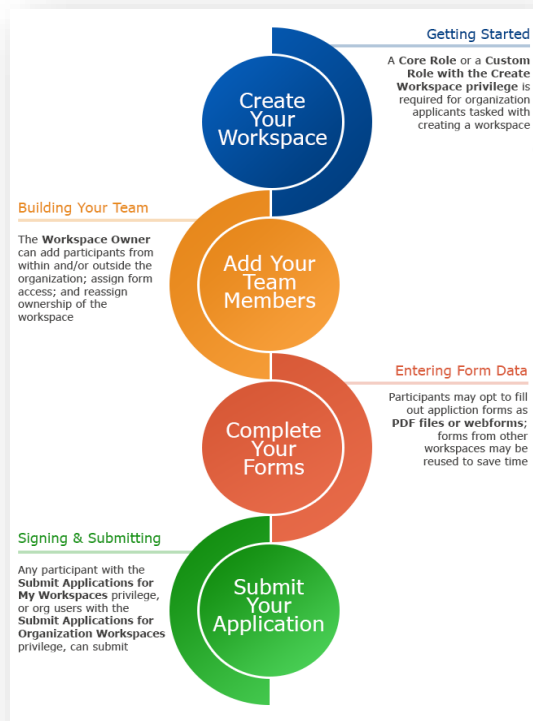
a. Adobe Reader: If you decide not to apply by filling out web forms you can download individual PDF forms to upload in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

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>

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's name, address, and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms



**Grants.gov recommends submitting your application 24-48 hours in advance of the deadline!**

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>



# Additional Resources



## Application Instructions

Grants.gov will also have Application Instructions, which are another helpful resource to guide you through the application process. Click on “Download Instructions” on the Package Forms page in grants.gov to view (pictured, right).

PACKAGE FORMS:		Download Instructions
Mandatory Forms (Click to Preview)	Optional Forms (Click to Preview)	
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) [V4.0] Grants.gov Lobbying Form [V1.1] ED SF424 Supplement [V4.0] ED General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) 427 Form [V2.0] U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION BUDGET INFORMATION NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS [V1.4] ED Abstract Form [V1.1] Project Narrative Attachment Form [V1.2] Budget Narrative Attachment Form [V1.2] Other Attachments Form [V1.2]	Evidence Form [V2.0] Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) [V2.0]	
<a href="#">Close</a>		

## FAQs, Training, and Technical Assistance

- The program webpage is a useful tool that contains many valuable resources, including FAQs. Simply enter the name of the competition in the search function to navigate to the program page.
- The Department offers [online training](#) to prepare applicants and grantees to successfully apply for and administer a grant project.
- Technical Assistance (TA) webinars allow for competition managers to give an overview of the program and tips for applying. The dates, times, and instructions for accessing TA webinars will be posted on the program webpage.

U.S. Department of Education Live Events & Webinars

Subscribe

## Program Contact

Each competition will also have a competition manager that can help to answer questions that you may have. In the NIA, visit the “For Further Information Contact” section to retrieve contact details for this individual. Please note that while competition managers are willing to assist, they cannot give preferential treatment to any applicant. Therefore, they are mainly a resource to help clarify requirements for the application but cannot instruct you on how to respond in your application.

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This resource provides a brief outline of applying for an ED grant. For a more comprehensive overview of discretionary grants at the Department of Education, please visit the [U.S. Department of Education \(ED\), Discretionary Grantmaking at ED: Answers to Your Questions About the Discretionary Grant Process.](#)