

## REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

### Low-Cost, Short-Duration Evaluation of Special Education Interventions CFDA Number: 84.324L

Competition	August 2017	March 2018
<i>Letter of Intent Due</i> <a href="https://iesreview.ed.gov/">https://iesreview.ed.gov/</a>	June 22, 2017	January 11, 2018
<i>Application Package Available</i> <a href="http://www.grants.gov/">http://www.grants.gov/</a>	June 22, 2017	January 11, 2018
<i>Application Due no later than 4:30:00 pm Washington DC time</i> <a href="http://www.grants.gov/">http://www.grants.gov/</a>	<b>August 3, 2017</b>	<b>March 1, 2018</b>
<i>Applicants Notified</i> <a href="https://iesreview.ed.gov/">https://iesreview.ed.gov/</a>	By January 2, 2018	By July 16, 2018
<i>Possible Start Dates</i>	January 2 to March 1, 2018	July 16 to September 17, 2018

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# PART I: OVERVIEW AND GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

## A. INTRODUCTION

In this announcement, the Institute of Education Sciences (Institute) requests applications for its Low-Cost, Short-Duration Evaluation of Special Education Interventions (Low-Cost Evaluation) grant program. The program is designed to support rigorous evaluations of [interventions](#) that state and/or local education agencies (or other state or local agencies that oversee early intervention services; see [Part I.C. Applicant Requirements](#)) expect to produce meaningful improvements in [education outcomes](#) for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with or at risk for a disability within a short period (for example, within a single semester or academic year). These evaluations are to be conducted for \$250,000 or less and completed within two years. The program will be carried out by research institutions and state or local agencies working together as partners. The evaluations will use randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity designs, or single-case experimental designs to determine the impact of interventions on education outcomes for infants, toddlers, children and youth, and will rely on [administrative data](#) or other sources of [secondary data](#) to provide measures of these outcomes.

The Institute views Low-Cost Evaluation projects as a means to obtain rigorous evidence of impact that state and local agencies can use in making timely decisions regarding the scaling-up or revision of education interventions. Such evidence may help state and local education agencies meet their new responsibilities under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in identifying and adopting research-based school improvement practices. Through this grant program, the Institute intends to support education agency decision-making on interventions they implement, contribute to a larger evidence base about the effectiveness of education interventions, and learn more about the value of this type of evaluation and what it can contribute to the field.

The Institute recognizes that Low-Cost Evaluation projects may provide less information than could be obtained from studies with larger budgets and longer timeframes. However, Low-Cost Evaluation projects may provide better evidence than what education agencies currently have available to make decisions, and may identify situations where a larger evaluation should be done before a costly acquisition is made. The Institute recognizes that Low-Cost Evaluation projects fill a specific niche in the evaluation process and are not a good fit for all types of interventions (e.g., multi-year interventions) or situations (e.g., where the necessary data are not available from a secondary source).

### *Key Attributes of Low-Cost, Short-Duration Evaluation of Special Education Intervention Projects*

1. Evaluation of an education intervention implemented by a state or local agency that is intended to have meaningful impacts on education outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with or at risk for a disability within a single semester or academic year.
2. Project carried out by a partnership between a research institution and a state or local agency.
3. Evaluation uses a randomized controlled trial, regression discontinuity design, or a single-case experimental design.
4. Evaluation relies on administrative data or other sources of secondary data.
5. Results of analysis shared with partner agency and in a written brief for the public during the second year of the project.

The Institute has several grant programs that support research conducted through partnerships between research institutions and state or local agencies. These researcher-practitioner partnerships are intended to address the education agency's priorities, involve the agency in the design and implementation of the research, and support the agency's decision-making by providing timely access to the findings. This program, the Low-Cost Evaluation grant program, provides funds for researchers and practitioners to work together to conduct rigorous evaluations of education agency interventions (broadly defined as education practices, programs, and policies) within a short timeframe and using available data.

Applicants may propose to evaluate interventions intended to improve a range of outcomes for children and youth with or at risk for a disability, including infants, toddlers, and children/students in preschool through Grade 12.<sup>1</sup> The Institute is not specifying categories of interventions beyond those that can be evaluated in a timely fashion and are of high importance to the agency. Note that the costs of interventions and their implementation are to be covered by the state or local agency; they will not be covered by this grant program.

The evaluations supported under this program are intended, if study designs are well-implemented, to meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations (see WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/handbooks>). Specifically, applicants must propose randomized controlled trials (RCTs), regression discontinuity designs (RDDs), or single-case experimental designs (SCDs). Within the first year of the project, the intervention must be implemented and the key outcomes should be obtained through administrative data systems or other secondary data sources. Project researchers should acquire the data no later than the first quarter of the second year of the study. In the remainder of the second year of the study, project teams should complete the analysis, provide results to their agency partner, and begin broader dissemination. Because of this schedule, Low-Cost Evaluation projects should not evaluate interventions that extend beyond one academic year or that rely on outcome measures that are not readily available.

Applicants must demonstrate that the intervention will be in operation during the first year of the project and that they will obtain and analyze data from that year (i.e., the study must use [prospective data](#)). Evaluating the intervention as it is implemented during the first year of the project ensures that the education agency remains invested in the intervention and that the most recent version of the intervention will be evaluated. Applicants may also propose to include data in their evaluation from years prior to the grant award (i.e., [retrospective data](#)) as long as there was an appropriate design employed to measure program effectiveness (e.g., a lottery was used to assign students to program and control group conditions, an RDD-appropriate assignment variable was used, the single-case experimental design includes at least the minimum number of data points and phases). Applicants who wish to analyze solely retrospective data may apply to the Special Education Research Grants program (CFDA 84.324A) for a retrospective evaluation under the Efficacy and Replication goal.

Low-Cost Evaluation projects are expected to rely on administrative data or other sources of secondary data and grant funds are not to be used to collect primary data. As a result, project teams may not have the data necessary for additional analyses required or recommended under evaluations funded by other Institute grant programs, such as studies of [fidelity of implementation](#), [comparison group practice](#), [mediators](#) and [moderators](#), and [costs](#). If the data for these types of analyses are available in the administrative data or other sources of secondary data, applicants are encouraged to propose to use these data, but these types of analyses are not required. If the results of a Low-Cost Evaluation project indicate the need for more in-depth research or longer-term follow-up, the Institute will encourage project teams to apply for a grant under another program, such as the Special Education Research Grants

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<sup>1</sup> Grade 12 includes students who are 18 years or older and are still receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

program (CFDA 84.324A) or the Evaluation of State and Local Education Policies and Programs (CFDA 84.305H).

The Institute intends for the results of Low-Cost Evaluation projects to be disseminated within the partner agency and to the practitioner community, the academic community, and the general public. To this end, applicants are required to describe the plans for dissemination of their findings in their applications including the provision of at least one oral briefing and release of one publicly-available written brief before the end of the grant.

The Institute will consider only applications that are [responsive](#) and [compliant](#) to the requirements described in this Request for Applications (RFA) *and* submitted electronically via Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) on time. This Request for Applications (RFA) is organized as follows. [Part I](#) sets out the requirements and recommendations for your grant application. [Part II](#) provides general information on submission and review. [Part III](#) describes how to prepare your application. [Part IV](#) describes how to submit your application electronically using Grants.gov. You will also find a [Glossary](#) of important terms located at the end of this RFA. The first use of each term is hyperlinked to the Glossary within each Part of this RFA.

## 1. Technical Assistance for Applicants

The Institute encourages you to contact the Institute's Program Officer as you develop your application. Program Officers can offer advice on substantive aspects of your application and answer other questions prior to submitting your application. The Program Officer is:

Kimberley (Kim) Sprague, Ed.M.  
Email: [Kimberley.Sprague@ed.gov](mailto:Kimberley.Sprague@ed.gov)  
Telephone: (202) 245-8464

The Institute asks potential applicants to submit a Letter of Intent (see [Part II.C.1](#)) prior to the application submission deadline. Letters of Intent are optional but strongly encouraged by the Institute. If you submit a Letter of Intent, the Program Officer will contact you regarding your proposed research. Institute staff also use the information in the Letters of Intent to identify the expertise needed for the scientific peer review panels and to secure a sufficient number of reviewers to handle the anticipated number of applications.

In addition, the Institute encourages you to sign up for the Institute's Funding Opportunities Webinars for information on its research competitions, including advice on choosing the correct research competition, grant writing, or submitting your application. For more information regarding webinar topics, dates, and the registration process, see <http://ies.ed.gov/funding/webinars/index.asp>.

## 2. Reading the Request for Applications

Both **Principal Investigators and Authorized Organization Representatives should read this Request for Applications** to learn how to prepare an application that meets two types of criteria.

1. Criteria that we require for an application to be sent forward for scientific peer review (Requirements).
2. Criteria that make for a strong (i.e., competitive) application and are used by the scientific peer reviewers (Recommendations for a Strong Application).

### a) Requirements

- **RESPONSIVENESS**

- Meets **General requirements** (see [Part I.B](#)).
- Meets **Applicant requirements** (see [Part I.C](#)).
- Meets **Project Narrative requirements** (see [Part I.D](#)).
- Meets the **Award requirements** (see [Part I.D](#)) of a maximum budget request of \$250,000 and a maximum grant duration of 2 years.
- **COMPLIANCE**
  - Includes all **required content** (see [Part III.D](#)).
  - Includes all **required appendices**:
    - [Appendix A](#): Dissemination Plan (All Applications).
    - [Appendix B](#): Response to Reviewers (Resubmissions Only).
    - [Appendix E](#): Letters of Agreement (All Applications).
- **SUBMISSION**
  - Submit electronically via Grants.gov no later than **4:30:00 pm**, Washington, DC time, on August 3, 2017 (or on March 1, 2018).
  - Completed using the **correct application package** in Grants.gov (see [Part III.B](#)).
  - Includes **PDF files** that are **named and saved appropriately** and that are **attached to the proper forms** in the application package (see [Parts III.D](#) and [IV](#)).

#### b) Recommendations for a Strong Application

The Institute provides recommendations (see [Part I.E](#)) to improve the quality of your application. The scientific peer reviewers are asked to consider these recommendations in their evaluation of your application.

### 3. Changes in the FY 2018 Request for Applications

**All applicants and staff involved in proposal preparation and submission**, whether submitting a new application or submitting a revised application, **should carefully read all relevant parts of this RFA**, including the requirements listed under [Part I: Overview and General Requirements](#) as well as the instructions for preparing your application (see [Part III: Preparing Your Application](#)).

Major changes to the Low-Cost Evaluation competition in FY 2018 include the following:

- Two competitions will be held with applications accepted for either the August 3, 2017 deadline (with possible start dates between January 2 and March 1, 2018) or the March 1, 2018 deadline (with possible start dates between July 16 and September 17, 2018). The former deadline is to support evaluations of interventions implemented in the second semester of the 2017-18 school year or following summer session and the latter deadline is to support evaluations of interventions implemented in the 2018-19 school year.
- The Institute **has added a requirement** for a Dissemination Plan to be included in Appendix A of your application. **If your application does not include the required Dissemination Plan in Appendix A, it will be deemed noncompliant and will not be forwarded for scientific peer review.** The Resources section of the Project Narrative now asks you to link your

discussion of the resources you have available for dissemination to your Dissemination Plan detailed in [Appendix A](#).

- Because the new, required Dissemination Plan goes in Appendix A, the alpha identifiers for the other appendices have been changed. The alpha identifiers and descriptive titles for all appendices, both required and optional, are listed below and described fully in [Part III.D PDF Attachments](#).
  - Appendix A: Dissemination Plan (Required).
  - Appendix B: Response to Reviewers (Required for Resubmissions Only).
  - Appendix C: Supplemental Charts, Tables, and Figures (Optional).
  - Appendix D: Examples of Intervention or Assessment Materials (Optional).
  - Appendix E: Letters of Agreement (Required).
- Additional details have been added to the Research Plan section within Recommendations for a Strong Application to consider when proposing a regression discontinuity designs or single-case experimental designs.

## B. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Applications under the Low-Cost Evaluation grant program **must meet the requirements** set out under the subheadings below, (1) Child/Student Disability, (2) Child/Student Education Outcomes, (3) Authentic Education Settings, (4) Interventions to Improve Child/Student Outcomes in Education, (5) Partnerships, and (6) Dissemination, in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

### 1. Child/Student Disability

All research supported under the Low-Cost Evaluation program **must** focus on children and youth with or at risk for a disability.

For the purpose of the Institute's special education research programs, a child/student with a disability is defined in Public Law 108-446, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), as a child "(i) with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this title as 'emotional disturbance'), orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and (ii) who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services" (Part A, Sec. 602). An infant or toddler with a disability is defined in IDEA as, "an individual under 3 years of age who needs early intervention services because the individual (i) is experiencing developmental delays, as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures in 1 or more of the areas of cognitive development, physical development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive development; or (ii) has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay" (Part C, Sec. 632).

*The Institute encourages research on children/students with high-incidence and low-incidence disabilities, as well as English learners with disabilities, across topic areas of importance to state and local agencies.*

For the purpose of the Institute's special education research programs, a student at risk for a disability is identified on an individual child basis. If you study children at risk for a disability, present research-based evidence of an association between risk factors in your proposed sample and the potential identification of specific disabilities. The determination of risk may include, for example, factors used for moving children to higher tiers in a Response to Intervention model. Evidence consisting only of general

population characteristics (e.g., labeling children as “at risk for disabilities” because they are from low-income families or are English learners) is not sufficient for this purpose. In addition, you should clearly identify the disability or disability categories that the sampled children are at risk of developing.

Students without disabilities may be included in your sample (e.g., an inclusive classroom) if appropriate for the research questions. For example, students without disabilities may be part of the comparison population. If your focus is on education outcomes for children or youth without a disability, you may apply to the Low-Cost, Short Duration Evaluation of Education Interventions grant program (84.305L) run by the National Center for Education Research (NCER).

## 2. Child/Student Education Outcomes

All research supported under the Low-Cost Evaluation program **must** address (1) children and youth in the age/grade levels described below and (2) [education outcomes](#) of those children and youth, and **must** include measures of these outcomes.

The Institute is most interested in child/student outcomes that support success in school and afterwards, including: [academic and developmental outcomes, social and behavioral competencies, and functional skills](#).

- For **infants and toddlers**, the primary outcomes are developmental outcomes pertaining to cognitive, communicative, linguistic, social, emotional, adaptive, functional or physical development.
- For **preschool students**, the primary outcomes are developmental outcomes (cognitive, communicative, linguistic, social, emotional, adaptive, functional or physical development) and school readiness (e.g., pre-reading, language, vocabulary, early science and mathematics knowledge, social and behavioral competencies that prepare young children for school).
- For **kindergarten through Grade 12 students**, outcomes include learning, achievement, and higher-order thinking in the core academic content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science measured by specific [assessments](#) (e.g., researcher-developed assessments, standardized tests, grades, end-of-course exams, exit exams) and student progression through education (e.g., high school graduation, dropout). A range of student social skills, attitudes, and behaviors may be important to students' education and post-school success, so important outcomes also include behaviors that support learning in academic contexts. In addition, the Institute is interested in functional outcomes that improve educational results and transitions to employment, independent living, and postsecondary education for students with disabilities.

## 3. Authentic Education Settings

Proposed research **must** be relevant to education in the United States (U.S.) and **must** address factors under the control of the U.S. education system (state or local). To help ensure such relevance, the Institute requires researchers to work within or with data from [authentic education settings](#). Authentic education settings include both in-school settings and formal programs that take place after school or out of school (e.g., early intervention and early childhood special education settings, preschool or infant/toddler/child care settings, natural settings for special education services, after-school programs, distance learning programs, online programs, alternative schools such as those in juvenile justice settings) and are under the control of state or local agencies. Formal programs not under the control of state or local agencies are not considered as taking place in an authentic education setting and are not appropriate for study under the Low-Cost Evaluation program.

#### 4. Interventions to Improve Child/Student Education Outcomes

Interventions proposed for evaluation **must** be of high importance to the state or local agency partner and aimed at improving outcomes for infants, toddlers, children or youth with or at risk for disabilities. Implementation of the intervention **must** be completed within the first project year. Therefore, interventions lasting more than one academic year or that are not expected to produce beneficial child/student outcomes quickly should not be proposed for evaluation under the Low-Cost Evaluation grant program.

#### 5. Partnerships

The Low-Cost Evaluation program requires partnerships between research institutions and state or local agencies (i.e., education agencies and other agencies that manage early intervention services) but can also include community agencies and other organizations working with local or state agencies to provide services to children and youth with or at risk for disabilities (see [Part I.C. Applicant Requirements](#)). The partnerships **must** include a Principal Investigator (PI) from the research institution and a PI from the state or local agency. The Institute does not endorse a specific model of research partnerships (for example, see Coburn, Penuel, and Geil, 2013 for a discussion of different models). The Institute envisions that work supported by the Low-Cost Evaluation program will be collaborative from start to finish. Together, the partners are expected to determine the intervention to be evaluated, agree on the evaluation design and its implementation, establish a process to discuss the results as they are obtained, consider the practice and policy implications of the results, and disseminate the full results to multiple audiences (e.g., practitioners, policymakers, and researchers).

The role of each partner may vary within partnerships due to differences in research capacity. Research institutions may take the lead on the evaluation design and analysis, though some state or local agencies may have the capacity to take on large or equal roles in this work. State or local agencies are expected to take the lead on identifying the intervention to be evaluated; play an important role in determining whether and how the evaluation design is actually implemented in the authentic education setting; and have at least an equal role in discussing the results, their implications, and their dissemination. Relevant decision-makers from across the agency are expected to take part in this process as are other key stakeholders. Education agencies are also expected to ensure that the intervention is implemented and the administrative data for the evaluation are collected using funds not provided by this grant. To maintain the objectivity of the research, personnel involved in the evaluation design, implementation of the evaluation, and data analysis at all partner organizations are expected to be independent of the development, distribution, and implementation of the intervention.

#### 6. Dissemination

Low-Cost Evaluation projects are intended to aid state and local education agencies in making decisions regarding their education interventions as well as advance scientific knowledge and theory on learning, instruction, and education systems in order to provide solutions to the education problems in our nation. To this end, the Institute is committed to making the results of Institute-funded research available to a wide range of audiences. For example, the Institute has a public access policy (see <http://ies.ed.gov/funding/researchaccess.asp>) that requires all grantees to submit their peer-reviewed scholarly publications to the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and that requires grantees to share final research data from causal inference studies no later than the time of publication in a peer-reviewed scholarly publication.

To ensure that findings from the Low-Cost Evaluation grant program are shared with all interested audiences, the Institute also **requires all applicants** to present a plan to disseminate project findings in [Appendix A: Dissemination Plan](#) of the application. **Applications that do not contain a**

**Dissemination Plan in Appendix A will be deemed noncompliant and will not be accepted for review.**

Dissemination plans should be tailored to the audiences that may benefit from the findings. In your dissemination plan, you should

- Identify the audiences that you expect will be most likely to benefit from your research (e.g., state policymakers and program administrators, state and local school system administrators, school administrators and school staff, parents and students, other education researchers).
- Discuss the different ways in which you intend to reach these audiences through the major publications, presentations, and products you expect to produce.
  - Your dissemination plans **must** include:
    - An agency-wide oral briefing that includes stakeholders from across the education agency.
    - A written brief available free to the public. The brief should be written for a non-technical audience and should include the research questions, methodology, main results, policy implications, and possible next steps.
    - A plan for distributing this brief within the agency, to other interested agencies, to the public, and to [ERIC](#).
  - Stronger applications will also include other means of dissemination, for example:
    - Joint presentation by personnel from both the research institution and the education agency on the results of the project at a practitioner conference.
    - Joint presentation by personnel from both the research institution and the education agency on the results of the project at an academic conference.
    - A toolkit or guide for other education agencies offering recommendations on how to conduct a similar study.
    - An article for publication in a practitioner journal.
    - An article for publication in a research journal.
    - Online forms of dissemination, such as posts, webinars, and podcasts.

The Institute considers all types of findings from Low-Cost Evaluation projects to be potentially useful to researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, and expects dissemination to include:

- Findings of a beneficial impact on student outcomes: these support the wider use of the intervention and a more in-depth further evaluation.
- Findings of no impacts or negative impacts on student outcomes: these are important for decisions regarding the ongoing use and wider dissemination of the intervention, further revision of the intervention and its implementation, and revision of its theory of change.

See [Part III.D.3 \(Appendix A: Dissemination Plan\)](#) for more information about the **required Dissemination Plan** to include in your application.

## **C. APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS**

Applications under the Low-Cost Evaluation grant program **must meet the requirements** set out under (1) Eligible Applicants and (2) Principal Investigator and Authorized Representative in order to be [responsive](#) and sent forward for scientific peer review.

## 1. Eligible Applicants

- At a minimum, applications must include a research institution and a U.S. state or local agency proposing to work together in partnership.
- Applicants that have the ability and capacity to conduct scientific research are eligible to apply as the research institution partner(s). These include, but are not limited to, non-profit and for-profit organizations and public and private agencies and institutions, such as colleges and universities, and research firms.
- The U.S. agency partners may include:
  - State education agencies such as education agencies, departments, boards and commissions that oversee early learning, elementary, and secondary education. The term *state agencies* includes U.S. territories' education agencies and tribal education agencies.
  - Local education agencies that are primarily public school districts<sup>2</sup> and may also include county or city agencies that have primary responsibility for infant and child care, early intervention services, or preschool.
    - Intermediate districts (sometimes called service districts) that provide services to multiple districts but do not have decision-making authority over implementing programs and policies cannot serve as the agency partner. Applications that include them will need to include one or more districts that have decision-making authority as the agency partner.
    - Non-public organizations that oversee or administer schools (e.g., charter or education management organizations) can apply as long as they include the state or local education agency with oversight of the schools they manage as an agency partner.
    - Individual schools or groups of schools that do not form a school district are not eligible to apply as the local education agency partner. In the case that a single school is recognized as a local education agency, they are eligible to apply as the agency partner, but the Institute notes that reviewers may consider the work less significant than projects that involve education agencies having multiple schools.
  - Other state or local agencies, including state or local health agencies and state agencies overseeing child care or early intervention services.
- The Institute encourages the proposed partnerships to include other organizations that can contribute to the successful outcome of the work such as other state or local agencies (e.g., juvenile justice programs, social services, early intervention services, child or infant care, preschool), community organizations, parent organizations, and teacher and staff organizations.
- To help demonstrate a working partnership, the Institute recommends that the key research institution(s) and the state or local agency(s) forming the partnership to submit a joint Letter

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<sup>2</sup> As defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) a local education agency is a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.

of Agreement (placed in [Appendix E](#) of the application), rather than separate letters, documenting their participation and cooperation in the partnership and clearly setting out their expected roles and responsibilities in the partnership. Any other institution involved in the proposed partnership should submit a separate Letter of Agreement.

## 2. The Principal Investigator and Authorized Organization Representative

### *The Principal Investigator*

Applications must include at least one Principal Investigator (PI) from a research institution and at least one PI from a state or local education agency. When you discuss the PIs in your application, it is helpful to the reviewers to identify which partner they represent.

The partnership must choose one PI (either the PI from the research institution or partner agency) to have overall responsibility for the administration of the award and interactions with the Institute. This PI is the individual who has the authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the research, including the appropriate use of federal funds and the submission of required scientific progress reports.<sup>3</sup> This person should be identified on the application as the Project Director/Principal Investigator. All other Principal Investigators should be listed as Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs).

The PI and a Co-PI (representing the research institution and the education agency) will attend one meeting each year (for up to 2 days) in Washington, DC, with other grantees and Institute staff. The project's budget should include this meeting. Should either the PI or Co-PI not be able to attend the meeting, he/she may designate another person whom is key personnel to attend.

### *The Authorized Organization Representative*

The Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) for the applicant institution is the official who has the authority to legally commit the applicant to (1) accept federal funding and (2) execute the proposed project. When your application is submitted through Grants.gov, the AOR automatically signs the cover sheet of the application and, in doing so, assures compliance with U.S. Department of Education policy on public access to scientific publications and data as well as other policies and regulations governing research awards (see [Part II.B: Additional Award Requirements](#)).

## D. PRE-AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Applicants that are being considered for funding following scientific peer review are required to provide further information on their proposed research activities before a grant award is made (see [Part II.B](#)). For example, you will be required to provide updated Letters of Agreement showing access to the secondary data sets you have proposed to analyze. You may be asked for additional information about your Research Plan and Dissemination Plan. If significant revisions to the project arise from these information requests they will have to be addressed under the original budget.

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<sup>3</sup> The Institute uses the uniform format for reporting performance progress on Federally-funded research projects, the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rppr/>) for these reports.

## E. PROJECT NARRATIVE AND AWARD REQUIREMENTS

Applications under the Low-Cost Evaluation program **must meet the requirements set out under (1) Project Narrative and (2) Awards** in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review. The requirements are the minimum necessary for an application to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

In order to improve the quality of your application, the Institute offers Recommendations following each set of Project Narrative Requirements. The peer reviewers are asked to consider the recommendations in their evaluation of your application.

### 1. Project Narrative

The Project Narrative (recommended length: no more than 15 pages) **must** include 5 sections – Significance, Partnership, Research Plan, Personnel, and Resources. The Institute recommends the following page ranges for each of the sections:

- Significance: 2-3 pages
- Partnership: 1-2 pages
- Research Plan: 5-7 pages
- Personnel: 1-2 pages
- Resources: 1-2 pages

#### a) Significance – The purpose of this section is to describe the intervention and justify the importance of evaluating it.

**Requirements:** In order to be responsive and sent forward for peer review, applications **must** describe the

- (i) Specific education intervention to be evaluated.

**Recommendations for a Strong Application:** In order to address the above requirements, the Institute recommends that you include the following in your Significance section to provide a compelling rationale for the proposed research.

- Explain the problem or issue the education agency is attempting to address with the intervention and why the agency believes the intervention is the appropriate response.
  - You may describe the problem and the intervention's importance to other education agencies. However, primary significance for this grant program is defined as the importance of the issue and the intervention to the participating education agency partner.
- Describe the components of the intervention.
- Provide a rationale for why the intervention is expected to improve student education outcomes within one year. This may include a discussion and diagram of the [theory of change](#) for the education intervention. Discuss how the intervention is sufficiently different from the status quo to affect student outcomes.
- Note findings from previous studies that have attempted to evaluate the intervention and discuss why your proposed study would be an important improvement on past work (an extensive literature review is not required).
- Make clear that the education agency has adopted the intervention and will manage and oversee its implementation. Evaluations of interventions that the agency is allowing a researcher or organization to try out in the state or district are not appropriate for this

grant program and may be submitted to the Special Education Research Grants program (84.324A) under the Efficacy and Replication goal.

- Describe the implementation of the intervention, including evidence that it has adequate funding and will occur at a level sufficient to affect student education outcomes.
- Make clear how the intervention will be implemented during the first year of the project (not using funds from this grant), how the data are to be collected in the administrative data or other secondary data source, and how the data to be used in the evaluation will be obtained by the researchers for analysis by the first quarter of the second year of the project.

**b) Partnership - The purpose of this section is to describe the partners involved in the evaluation of the special education intervention.**

**Requirements:** In order to be responsive and sent forward for peer review, applications **must** describe the

- (i) Research institution and the state or local educational agency that together form the basis of the partnership.

**Recommendations for a Strong Application:** In order to address the above requirements, the Institute recommends that you include the following in your Partnership section to demonstrate that the proposed evaluation will be conducted in partnership.

*Description of the Partnership*

- Describe all organizations that will form the partnership.
- Describe all the offices/divisions within the education agency whose cooperation is necessary to complete the project (e.g., the office that determines who receives the intervention, the office implementing the intervention, the office in charge of the [administrative data](#), the office providing analysis support).
- Describe how the partnering organizations determined that they should focus on evaluating the specific special education intervention chosen.
- Discuss the partnership's agreement and strategy for obtaining the data to be used in the impact analysis and how the data will be provided to the researchers for analysis by the first quarter of the second year of the project.
- Include a joint Letter of Agreement in [Appendix E](#) from the primary partnering institutions (the research institution and the educational agency) documenting their participation and cooperation and clearly setting out their expected roles and responsibilities in the partnership. Include separate similar Letters of Agreement from any other members of the partnership.

**c) Research Plan - The purpose of this section is to describe the proposed plan for the evaluation of the special education intervention.**

**Requirements:** In order to be responsive and sent forward for peer review, applications **must** describe the

- (i) Research design (must be a randomized controlled trial, regression discontinuity design, or single-case experimental design).
- (ii) Power analysis.

(iii) Data analysis procedures.

**Recommendations for a Strong Application:** In order to address the above requirements, the Institute recommends that you include the following in your Research Plan section to strengthen the methodological rigor of the proposed evaluation.

*Sample and Setting:*

- Discuss the population you intend to study and how your sample and sampling procedures will allow you to draw inferences for this population. Note how the sample size was set to address expected attrition.
  - Address these same points for any retrospective data you intend to include in the study. Discuss whether the retrospective data will be combined with or analyzed separately from your prospective sample, and explain how you will handle missing retrospective data.
- Describe the setting in which the study will take place and how this may affect the generalizability of your study within the education agency (i.e., will the study apply to all students or schools within the agency or to a subset of them?).

*Research Design:*

- Describe how you will be able to make causal inferences based on the results from your design and how potential threats to internal validity will be addressed. Your research design must be a randomized controlled trial, regression discontinuity design, or single-case experimental design.
  - Randomized controlled trials
    - Clearly identify and present a convincing rationale for the unit of randomization (e.g., student, classroom, teacher, school) and explain the procedures for random assignment, including how the integrity of the assignment process was or will be ensured.
    - Random assignment is often done through:
      - Assignment of all appropriate units or a subset of units (e.g., volunteers for a program).
      - Lotteries when a program cannot be received by all who wish to receive it. For lotteries, it is important to document oversubscription and how the design will address participants who enter multiple lotteries or participants who are assigned to the control condition but seek alternative programs (e.g., control students who do not gain entry to a magnet school may go to a private school and be lost to the study).
      - A staggered roll-out of the special education intervention under which the control group will receive the intervention at a later time while the treatment group receives it immediately. For staggered roll-outs, it is important to justify that the time between roll-out for the treatment group and the control group is long enough to expect to see an improvement in the treatment students' education outcomes.
      - Randomly assigning groups to different versions of the special education intervention (e.g., a basic and an enhanced version).

- Explain how you will document that the treatment and comparison groups are equivalent at baseline (i.e., the outset of the study).
  - Regression discontinuity designs
    - Explain the appropriateness of the assignment variable, the assignment variable's resistance to manipulation, the level of independence of the cutoff point from the assignment variable, and the policy relevance of the cutoff point.
    - Describe how you will determine that:
      - There is a true discontinuity at the cutoff point (and not at other points where a discontinuity would not be expected).
      - No manipulation of the assignment variable has occurred.
      - The treatment and comparison groups have similar baseline characteristics (except for the assignment variable), i.e., they do not differ in ways that would indicate selection bias.
      - There are high levels of compliance to assignment (i.e., most treatment group members receive the intervention) and few crossovers (i.e., comparison group members who receive the intervention).
    - Research teams with access to retrospective data on assignment to the intervention can prepare stronger applications by providing the results from the analyses identified above on the retrospective data to check for (1) a true discontinuity, (2) no signs of manipulation of the assignment variable, (3) similar baseline characteristics in the treatment and comparison groups, and (4) high levels of compliance to assignment.
    - Research teams that do not have access to retrospective data on assignment to the intervention while preparing their applications should make a persuasive case that the intervention will be implemented in a manner likely to lead to the findings of (1) a true discontinuity, (2) no signs of manipulation of the assignment variable, (3) similar baseline characteristics in the treatment and comparison groups, and (4) high levels of compliance to assignment.
    - Discuss the sensitivity analyses and robustness checks that will be used to assess the influence of key procedural or analytic decisions (e.g., functional forms and bandwidths) on the results.
  - Single-case experimental designs
    - Provide a strong argument supporting the use of a single-case experimental design as opposed to a randomized controlled trial (e.g., focusing on students with low-incidence disabilities).
    - Describe the single-case experimental design that you will employ (e.g., reversal/withdrawal, multiple baseline, alternating treatment, changing criterion), the rationale for selecting this particular design, and details regarding the study execution including:
      - The repeated, systematic measurement of a dependent variable before, during, and after the active manipulation of an independent variable (i.e., the intervention).

- How the study will include at least three attempts to demonstrate an intervention effect at three different points in time.
  - Information about how the outcome variable will be measured systematically over time by more than one assessor for each case.
  - The collection of inter-assessor agreement data in each phase and in at least 20% of the data points in each condition and how this agreement will meet minimal thresholds.
  - How outcome measures are not strictly or overly aligned with the intervention.
- Describe how you will document, where applicable the:
    - Levels of no shows (i.e., treatment group members who do not receive the intervention) and crossovers (i.e., comparison group members who receive the intervention).
    - Level of bias occurring from overall and differential attrition rates.
  - Discuss how your study will meet WWC standards without reservations.<sup>4</sup>

*Power Analysis (for randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity designs):*

- Discuss the statistical power of the research design to detect a reasonably expected and important effect of the intervention on the student education outcomes and consider how the clustering of participants (e.g., students in classrooms, schools, districts) will affect statistical power.
- Identify the minimum effect of the intervention that you will be able to detect, justify why this level of effect would be expected, and explain why this would be a practically important effect.
- Detail the procedure used to calculate the power for detecting the minimum effect including:
  - Statistical formula(s) used.
  - Parameters whose values are known and were used in the formula (e.g., number of clusters, number of participants within the clusters).
  - Parameters whose values are estimated and how those estimates were made (e.g., intraclass correlations, role of covariates).
  - Other aspects of the design and how they may affect power (e.g., stratified sampling/blocking, repeated observations).
  - Predicted attrition and how it was addressed in the power analysis.

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<sup>4</sup> See the WWC's Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 at: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/documentsum.aspx?sid=19> (primarily Chapter III and Appendix D). Please note that the WWC has revised its regression discontinuity designs standards <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/documentsum.aspx?sid=258>. Single-case experimental designs are intended to demonstrate a causal or functional relationship between two variables using a small number of cases. A case is a unit of intervention administration and data analysis. A case may be a single participant or a cluster of participants (e.g., a classroom or community). Single-case experimental designs are not descriptive case studies. Note that the WWC has draft SCD standards included in Appendix E. [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference\\_resources/wwc\\_procedures\\_v3\\_0\\_standards\\_handbook.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/reference_resources/wwc_procedures_v3_0_standards_handbook.pdf).

- Provide a similar discussion regarding power for any causal analyses to be done using subgroups of the proposed sample or tests of mediation or moderation.

*Measures:*

- Describe the key measures and variables to be used. Child/student education outcome measures are to be of practical interest to early intervention or childcare providers; agencies; or schools, districts, and states.
- Describe how the data resulting from implementation of the intervention during the first year of the project will be collected (i.e., through [administrative data](#) collections or other sources of secondary data) and how those data will be obtained by the researchers for analysis by the first quarter of the second year.
  - Describe any [retrospective](#) data collected before the project began that will be used in the analysis and how the evaluation design requirements are to be met in Year 1 of the project.<sup>5</sup>

*Optional Measures and Analyses:*

- The administrative data and other sources of secondary data used in this project may or may not include the information necessary to conduct an analysis of [moderators](#) and [mediators](#), [fidelity of implementation](#), [comparison group practice](#), or [costs](#).<sup>6</sup> The Institute encourages such analyses when administrative or secondary data sources include these data, but does not require them.
- If you intend to conduct analyses of moderators and mediators, fidelity of implementation, comparison group practices, or costs, explain how you will obtain the data and what questions you will answer.

*Data Analysis:*

- Detail your data analysis procedures for all analyses proposed.
  - For randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity designs, include and explain the model(s) you will estimate to determine the impact of the intervention.
  - For randomized controlled trials, describe your intention-to-treat analysis and any additional analyses (e.g., treatment-on-the-treated, variation in impacts for subgroups or sites).
  - For regression discontinuity designs, show how your analysis reflects whether you expect to have a sharp or fuzzy design and describe how you will analyze impacts at the cutoff point.
    - If you expect to have a sharp design, describe alternative analyses you will carry out should no-shows and crossovers require it.

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<sup>5</sup> If you are proposing to use only retrospective data, you may apply under the Special Education Research Grants program (84.324A) under the Efficacy and Replication goal, which has a Retrospective projects category.

<sup>6</sup> Education agencies often track fidelity of implementation for important interventions and typical moderators (such as student and school subgroups) are often available in administrative data. However, comparison group and other moderators and mediators are less likely to be available from secondary data sources.

- For single-case experimental designs, detail all analytic methods including visual analysis and quantitative methods for analyzing the data (e.g., between-case effect size calculations).<sup>7</sup>
- Make clear how the data analyses directly answer your research questions.
- Address any clustering of children or students in classes, schools, or other settings.
- Discuss how exclusion from testing and missing data will be handled in your analysis.
- If you intend to link multiple data sets, provide sufficient detail for reviewers to judge the feasibility of the linking plan.

*Timeline:*

- Provide a timeline for your project and the intervention you will evaluate, including such actions as sample selection and assignment, implementation, administrative data collection, impact analysis, and dissemination.
- Make clear how you will complete the project in two years.
- The timeline may be placed in either the Project Narrative or [Appendix C: Supplemental Charts, Tables, and Figures](#) but may only be discussed in the Project Narrative.

**d) Personnel - The purpose of this section is to describe the relevant expertise of your research team, the responsibilities of each team member, and each team member's time commitments.**

**Requirements:** In order to be responsive and sent forward for peer review, applications **must** describe the

- (i) PI or Co-PI from the research institution;
- (ii) PI or Co-PI from the education agency; and
- (iii) Other key personnel at both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions.

**Recommendations for a Strong Application:** In order to address the above requirements, the Institute recommends that you include the following in your Personnel section to demonstrate that your team possesses the appropriate training and experience and oversight over the intervention, and will commit sufficient time to competently implement the proposed research.

- Identify and briefly describe the following for all key personnel (e.g., Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators) on the project team: qualifications to carry out the proposed work, roles and responsibilities within the project, percent of time and calendar months per year (academic plus summer) to be devoted to the project, and past success at working in similar partnerships, producing products of value to an education or other state or local agency, and disseminating research findings in peer-reviewed scientific journals and venues for policymakers and practitioners.
- Describe the education agency personnel's role in making decisions regarding the intervention being evaluated. Agency personnel should include persons with responsibility for the intervention and its implementation across the district or state to ensure findings from the project will be included in decision-making regarding the intervention.

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<sup>7</sup> See the following website publication for more information on calculating effect sizes appropriate for single-case experimental design research: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncser/pubs/2015002/>

- Describe the project team's expertise with the evaluation design proposed. This expertise may include past experience using such a design and/or training in the design's use.
- Describe the PI's qualifications and experience for managing a grant of this type.
- Make sure at least one key person has a large enough time commitment to help maintain the progress of the work throughout the project.
- The grant application should include the specific methodological or policy experts that will work on the grant (i.e., do not propose to hire experts after the grant is received).
- If any key personnel are to be funded from another source or intend to donate time to the project, this time should be listed in the budget and budget narrative and described as cost sharing. The Institute does not require or request such cost sharing nor considers it in award decisions, but does require that it be documented. Personnel proposing to donate their time should demonstrate that they have such time available.
- Explain how you will ensure the objectivity of the research if key personnel were involved in the development of the intervention, were or will be involved in its implementation, are from entities involved in its commercial production or distribution, or have a financial or professional interest in the outcome of the research. Your explanation should address how assignment of units to treatment and comparison conditions, supervision of outcome data collection and coding, and data analysis will be conducted by project staff who were not involved in the development of the intervention and have no financial or professional interest in the outcome of the evaluation.

**e) Resources - The purpose of this section is to justify how the partnership has both the institutional capacity to complete a project of this type and the access to the resources needed to successfully complete this project and disseminate the results.**

**Requirements:** In order to be responsive and sent forward for peer review, applications **must** describe the

- (i) Resources to conduct the project.

**Recommendations for a Strong Application:** In order to address the above requirements, the Institute recommends that you include the following in your Resources section to demonstrate that your team has a plan for acquiring or accessing the facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources required to support the proposed work and the commitments of each partner for the implementation and success of the project.

*Resources to conduct the project:*

- Describe your institutional capacity and experience managing a grant of this type.
- Describe your access to resources available at the primary institution and any subaward institutions (including the partner organization).
- Describe your plan for acquiring any resources that are not currently accessible, will require significant effort or expenditure, and are necessary for the successful completion of the project.
- Identify where the support (e.g., financial) for the implementation of the intervention will come from given that the grant cannot be used to support implementation.
- Describe your access to all data sets required. Include Letters of Agreement, data licenses, or existing Memorandum of Understanding in [Appendix E](#) to document that you will have access to the data for the proposed use.

*Resources to disseminate the results:*

- Describe your resources to carry out your plans to disseminate the results from your evaluation as described in the required [Appendix A](#).
  - Note any specific offices or team members expected to take part in your dissemination plans and their specific roles.

## 2. Awards

A Low-Cost Evaluation project **must** conform to the following limits on duration and cost:

### Duration Maximums:

- **The maximum duration is 2 years.** An application proposing a project length of greater than two years will be deemed nonresponsive to the Request for Applications and will not be accepted for review.

### Cost Maximums:

- **The maximum award is \$250,000 (total cost = direct costs + indirect costs).** An application proposing a budget higher than the maximum award will be deemed nonresponsive to the Request for Applications and will not be accepted for review.
  - Grant funds **must** be used solely for evaluation purposes, including implementing the evaluation design, obtaining secondary data, data cleaning, preparation, merging and analysis, and dissemination of results.
  - Grant funds **must not** be used to support primary data collection nor implementation of the intervention (e.g., materials, texts, software, computers, assessments, training, technical assistance, coaching required for implementation). Likewise, funds **must not** be used to provide incentives for individuals, schools, or districts to take part in the project.

## PART II: COMPETITION REGULATIONS AND REVIEW CRITERIA

### A. FUNDING MECHANISMS AND RESTRICTIONS

#### 1. Mechanism of Support

The Institute intends to award grants pursuant to this Request for Applications.

#### 2. Funding Available

Although the Institute intends to support the research described in this announcement, all awards pursuant to this Request for Applications are contingent upon the availability of funds and the receipt of meritorious applications. The Institute makes its awards to the highest quality applications, as determined through scientific peer review. Contingent on the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2019 from the list of unfunded applications from the FY 2018 competitions.

**The size of the award depends on the research proposed and scope of the project.** Please attend to the duration and budget maximums of 2 years and \$250,000 respectively. If you request a project length longer than the maximum or a budget higher than the maximum, your application will be deemed nonresponsive and will not be reviewed.

#### 3. Special Considerations for Budget Expenses

##### *Indirect Cost Rate*

When calculating your expenses for research conducted in field settings, you should apply your institution's federally negotiated off-campus indirect cost rate. Questions about indirect cost rates should be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Indirect Cost Group <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgindex.html>.

Institutions, both primary grantees and subawardees, not located in the territorial U.S. may not charge indirect costs.

##### *Meetings and Conferences*

If you are requesting funds to cover expenses for hosting meetings or conferences, please note that there are statutory and regulatory requirements in determining whether costs are reasonable and necessary. Please refer to OMB's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), 2 CFR, [§200.432 Conferences](#).

In particular, federal grant funds cannot be used to pay for alcoholic beverages or entertainment, which includes costs for amusement, diversion, and social activities. In general, federal funds may not be used to pay for food. A grantee hosting a meeting or conference may not use grant funds to pay for food for conference attendees unless doing so is necessary to accomplish legitimate meeting or conference business. You may request funds to cover expenses for working meetings (e.g., working lunches); however, the Institute will determine whether these costs are allowable in keeping with the Uniform Guidance Cost Principles. Grantees are responsible for the proper use of their grant awards and may have to repay funds to the Department if they violate the rules for meeting- and conference-related expenses or other disallowed expenditures.

#### 4. Program Authority

20 U.S.C. 9501 et seq., the “Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002,” Title I of Public Law 107-279, November 5, 2002. This program is not subject to the intergovernmental review requirements of Executive Order 12372.

#### 5. Applicable Regulations

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) codified at CFR Part 200. The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 77, 81, 82, 84, 86 (part 86 applies only to institutions of higher education), 97, 98, and 99. In addition 34 CFR part 75 is applicable, except for the provisions in 34 CFR 75.100, 75.101(b), 75.102, 75.103, 75.105, 75.109(a), 75.200, 75.201, 75.209, 75.210, 75.211, 75.217, 75.219, 75.220, 75.221, 75.222, and 75.230.

### B. ADDITIONAL AWARD REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. Public Availability of Results

Recipients of awards are expected to publish or otherwise make publicly available the results of the work supported through this program. Institute-funded investigators must submit [final manuscripts](#) resulting from research supported in whole or in part by the Institute to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC, <http://eric.ed.gov>) upon acceptance for publication. An author’s final manuscript is defined as the final version accepted for journal publication and includes all graphics and supplemental materials that are associated with the article. The Institute will make the manuscript available to the public through ERIC no later than 12 months after the official date of publication. Investigators and their institutions are responsible for ensuring that any publishing or copyright agreements concerning submitted articles fully comply with this requirement.

#### 2. Special Conditions on Grants

The Institute may impose special conditions on a grant pertinent to the proper implementation of key aspects of the proposed research design or if the grantee is not financially stable, has a history of unsatisfactory performance, has an unsatisfactory financial or other management system, has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant, or is otherwise not responsible.

#### 3. Demonstrating Access to Data and Authentic Education Settings

The research you propose to do will require that you have (or will obtain) access to [authentic education settings](#) (e.g., classrooms, schools, districts, early intervention and early childhood special education settings, preschool or infant/toddler/child care settings, natural settings for special education services, after-school programs, distance learning programs, online programs, alternative schools such as those in juvenile justice settings), administrative data sets, or studies currently under way. In such cases, you will need to provide evidence that you have access to these resources prior to receiving funding. You will need to include Letters of Agreement in [Appendix E](#) from those who have responsibility for or access to the data or settings you wish to incorporate when you submit your application. Even in circumstances where you have included such letters with your application, **the Institute may require additional supporting evidence prior to the release of funds**. If you cannot provide such documentation, the Institute may not award the grant or may withhold funds.

You will need supporting evidence of partnership or access for:

- *Conducting research in or with authentic education settings* - You will need to provide documentation in Appendix E that you have access to the necessary settings in order to receive the grant. This means that you must have permission to conduct the proposed project in the necessary number of settings at the time of application. Before the award is made, the Institute may ask you to provide documentation that the settings originally recruited for the application are still willing to partner in the research.
- *Using administrative data sets* - You will need to provide documentation that you have access to the necessary data sets in order to receive the grant. This means you must have permission to use the proposed data sets at the time of application. In Appendix E of your application, you must provide documentation from the entity controlling the data set(s) before the grant will be awarded. This documentation must indicate that you have permission to use the data for the proposed research for the time period discussed in the application. Before an award is made, the Institute may ask you to provide updated documentation indicating that you still have permission to use the data to conduct the proposed research during the project period.
- *Building off of existing studies* - You may propose studies that piggyback onto an ongoing study (i.e., that require access to subjects and data from another study). In such cases, the Principal Investigator of the existing study should be one of the members of the research team applying for the grant to conduct the new project.

In addition to obtaining evidence of access, the Institute strongly advises applicants to establish a written agreement, within 3 months of receipt of an award, among all key collaborators (e.g., Principal and Co-Principal Investigators) and their institutions regarding roles, responsibilities, access to data, publication rights, and decision-making procedures.

## C. OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION AND PEER REVIEW PROCESS

### 1. Submitting a Letter of Intent

The Institute strongly encourages potential applicants to submit a Letter of Intent on the relevant due date (either June 22, 2017 or January 11, 2018) for the competition you plan to submit. Letters of Intent are optional, non-binding, and not used in the scientific peer review of a subsequent application. However, when you submit a Letter of Intent, one of the Institute's Program Officers will contact you regarding your proposed research to offer assistance. The Institute also uses the Letter of Intent to identify the expertise needed for the scientific peer review panels and to secure a sufficient number of reviewers to handle the anticipated number of applications. Should you miss the deadline for submitting a Letter of Intent, you still may submit an application. If you miss the Letter of Intent deadline, the Institute asks that you inform the relevant Program Officer of your intention to submit an application.

Letters of Intent are submitted online at (<http://iesreview.ed.gov>). **Select the Letter of Intent form for the grant program under which you plan to submit your application.** The online submission form contains fields for you to provide information on the seven content areas listed below. The project description should be single-spaced and is recommended to be no more than one page (about 3,500 characters).

- Descriptive title
- Program (Low-Cost Evaluation)

- Brief description of the proposed project
- Name, institutional affiliation, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the Principal Investigator and all Co-Principal Investigators
- Name and institutional affiliation of any key collaborators and contractors
- Duration of the proposed project (do not exceed the 2-year Duration maximum)
- Estimated total budget request (do not exceed the \$250,000 Budget maximum)

## 2. Resubmissions and Multiple Submissions

If you intend to revise and resubmit an application that was submitted to one of the Institute's previous competitions but that was not funded, you must indicate on the [SF-424 Form of the Application Package \(Items 4a and 8\) \(see Part IV.E.1\)](#) that the FY 2018 application is a resubmission (Item 8) and include the application number of the previous application (an 11-character alphanumeric identifier beginning "R324" entered in Item 4a). Prior reviews will be sent to this year's reviewers along with the resubmitted application. You must describe your response to the prior reviews using [Appendix B \(see Part III.D.4.\)](#). Revised and resubmitted applications will be reviewed according to this FY 2018 Request for Applications.

If you submitted a somewhat similar application in the past and did not receive an award but are submitting the current application as a new application, you should indicate on the application form that the FY 2018 application is a new application. In [Appendix B \(see Part III.D.4.\)](#), you should provide a rationale explaining why your FY 2018 application should be considered a new application rather than a revision. If you do not provide such an explanation, then the Institute may send the reviews of the prior unfunded application to this year's reviewers along with the current application.

You may submit applications to more than one of the Institute's FY 2018 grant programs. In addition, within a particular grant program or topic, you may submit multiple applications. However, you may submit a given application only once for the FY 2018 grant competitions (i.e., you may not submit the same application or similar applications to multiple grant programs, multiple topics, or multiple times within the same topic). If you submit the same or similar applications, the Institute will determine whether and which applications will be accepted for review and will be eligible for funding.

## 3. Application Processing

**Applications must be submitted electronically and received no later than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time** on the relevant due date (either **August 3, 2017** or **March 1, 2018**) using Workspace on the Grants.gov website <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>. These application procedures and submission requirements are described in detail in [Part III: Preparing Your Application](#) and [Part IV: Submitting Your Application](#).

After receiving the applications, Institute staff will review each application for [compliance](#) and [responsiveness](#) to this Request for Applications. Applications that do not address specific requirements of this request will not be considered further.

Once you formally submit an application, Institute staff will not comment on its status until the award decisions are announced for the competition you submit to except with respect to issues of compliance and responsiveness. This communication will come through the Applicant Notification System (<http://iesreview.ed.gov>).

**Once an application has been submitted and the application deadline has passed, you may not submit additional materials for inclusion with your application.**

#### **4. Scientific Peer Review Process**

The Institute will forward all applications that are compliant and responsive to this Request for Applications to be evaluated for scientific and technical merit. Scientific reviews are conducted in accordance with the review criteria stated below and the review procedures posted on the Institute's website, [http://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/peer\\_review/application\\_review.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/peer_review/application_review.asp), by a panel of scientists who have substantive and methodological expertise appropriate to the program of research and Request for Applications.

Each compliant and responsive application is assigned to one of the Institute's scientific review panels, [http://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/peer\\_review/reviewers.asp](http://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/peer_review/reviewers.asp). At least two primary reviewers will complete written evaluations of the application, identifying strengths and weaknesses related to each of the review criteria. Primary reviewers will independently assign a score for each criterion, as well as an overall score, for each application they review. Based on the overall scores assigned by primary reviewers, the Institute calculates an average overall score for each application and prepares a preliminary rank order of applications before the full peer review panel convenes to complete the review of applications.

The full panel will consider and score only those applications deemed to be the most competitive and to have the highest merit, as reflected by the preliminary rank order. A panel member may nominate for consideration by the full panel any application that he or she believes merits full panel review but that would not have been included in the full panel meeting based on its preliminary rank order.

#### **5. Review Criteria for Scientific Merit**

The purpose of Institute-supported research is to contribute to solving education problems and to provide reliable information about the education practices that support learning and improve academic achievement and access to education for all students. The Institute expects reviewers for all applications to assess the following aspects of an application in order to judge the likelihood that the proposed research will have a substantial impact on the pursuit of that goal. Information pertinent to each of these criteria is described in [Part I.E.](#)

##### **a) Significance**

Does the applicant provide a compelling rationale for the significance of the intervention to be evaluated as described in the Significance section?

##### **b) Partnership**

Does the applicant provide a description of the partnership of a research institution and a state or local education agency in line with what is requested in the Partnership section?

##### **c) Research Plan**

Does the applicant meet the Requirements and Recommendations in the Research Plan section for their proposed evaluation design (i.e., a randomized controlled trial, regression discontinuity design, or single-case experimental design)?

##### **d) Personnel**

Does the description of the personnel make it apparent that personnel have expertise in the proposed evaluation design, that the Principal Investigator from the education agency has decision-making authority over the special education intervention being evaluated, and that all key personnel possess appropriate training and experience and will commit sufficient time to competently implement the proposed research?

## e) Resources

Does the applicant have the facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources required to support the proposed activities? Do the commitments of each partner show support for the implementation and success of the project. Does the applicant have adequate capacity for the dissemination of the project's findings to a range of audiences in ways that are useful to them?

## 6. Award Decisions

The following will be considered in making award decisions for responsive and compliant applications:

- Scientific merit as determined by scientific peer review;
- Performance and use of funds under a previous federal award;
- Contribution to the overall program of research described in this Request for Applications; and
- Availability of funds.

## 7. Common Applicant Questions

- *May I submit an application if I did not submit a Letter of Intent?* Yes, but the Institute strongly encourages you to submit a Letter of Intent. If you miss the deadline for submitting a Letter of Intent, contact the appropriate Program Officer to make sure your idea is responsive to this Request for Applications. Please see [Part II.C.1: Submitting a Letter of Intent](#) for more information.
- *May I submit multiple applications?* Yes. You may submit multiple applications if they are substantively different from one another.
- *May I submit the same application to more than one of the Institute's grant programs?* No.
- *Is there a limit on the number of times I may revise and resubmit an application?* No. Currently, there is no limit on resubmissions. Please see [Part II.C.2: Resubmissions and Multiple Submissions](#) for important information about requirements for resubmissions.
- *May I apply if I work at a for-profit developer or distributor of an intervention or assessment?* Yes. You may apply if you or your collaborators develop, distribute, or otherwise market products or services (for-profit or non-profit) that can be used as interventions, components of interventions, or assessments in the proposed research activities. However, the involvement of the developer or distributor must not jeopardize the objectivity of the research. In cases where the developer or distributor is part of the proposed research team, you should discuss how you will ensure the objectivity of the research in the Project Narrative.
- *May I apply if I am not located in the U.S. or if I want to collaborate with researchers located outside of the U.S.?* The research institution partner may be located outside the territorial U.S., but the agency partner must be a U.S. agency. You may also propose working with subawardees who are not located in the territorial U.S. Your proposed work must be relevant to education in the U.S. Institutions not located in the territorial U.S. (both primary grantees and subawardees) may not charge indirect costs.

# PART III: PREPARING YOUR APPLICATION

## A. OVERVIEW

**All applications for Institute funding must be self-contained.** As an example, reviewers are under no obligation to view an Internet website if you include the site address (URL) in the application. In addition, **you may not submit additional materials directly to the Institute after you submit your application through Grants.gov.**

## B. GRANT APPLICATION PACKAGE

The Application Package for this competition (84-324L2018) provides all of the forms that you must complete and submit. The application form approved for use in the competition specified in this Request for Applications is the government-wide SF-424 Research and Related (R&R) Form (OMB Number 4040-0001).<sup>8</sup>

### 1. Date Application Package is Available on Grants.gov

The Application Package will be available on <http://www.grants.gov/> by the following dates:

- Application Package for August 2017 Competition Available by June 22, 2017
- Application Package for March 2018 Competition Available by January 11, 2018

### 2. How to Find the Correct Application Package

To find the Application Package for this competition in Grants.gov, first search by the CFDA number without the alpha suffix: CFDA 84.305.

This search will yield more than one Application Package. For the Low-Cost Evaluation program, select the Application Package for the competition deadline:

- Low-Cost Evaluation CFDA 84.324L-1 (for August 2017 Competition)
- Low-Cost Evaluation CFDA 84.324L-2 (for March 2018 Competition)

See [Part IV: Submitting Your Application](#), for a complete description of the forms that make up the application package and directions for filling out these forms.

## C. GENERAL FORMATTING

For a complete application, you must submit the following as individual attachments to the R&R forms that are contained in the application package for this competition in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF):

- Project Summary/Abstract;

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<sup>8</sup> 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 numbers for this information collection are 4040-0001 and 4040-0010. 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, gather the data needed, and complete and review information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this family of forms, please write to the U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

- Project Narrative, Appendix A: Dissemination Plan; Appendix E: Letters of Agreement; and if applicable, Appendix B: Response to Reviewers; Appendix C: Supplemental Charts, Tables, and Figures; and Appendix D: Examples of Intervention or Assessment Materials (all together as one PDF file);
- Bibliography and References Cited;
- Research on Human Subjects Narrative (i.e., Exempt or Non-Exempt Research Narrative);
- A Biographical Sketch for each senior/key person;
- A Narrative Budget Justification for the total Project budget; and
- Subaward Budget(s) that has (have) been extracted from the R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form, if applicable.

Information about formatting all of these documents except the [Subaward budget attachment \(see Part IV.E.6.](#) is provided below.

## **1. Page and Margin Specifications**

For all Institute research grant applications, a “page” is 8.5 in. x 11 in., on one side only, with 1 inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

## **2. Page Numbering**

Add page numbers using the header or footer function, and place them at the bottom or upper right corner for ease of reading.

## **3. Spacing**

We recommend that you use single spacing.

## **4. Type Size (Font Size)**

Small type size makes it difficult for reviewers to read the application. To ensure legibility, we recommend the following:

- The height of the letters is not smaller than a type size of 12 point.
- Type density, including characters and spaces, is no more than 15 characters per inch (cpi). For proportional spacing, the average for any representative section of text does not exceed 15 cpi.
- Type size yields no more than 6 lines of type within a vertical inch.

As a practical matter, if you use a 12-point Times New Roman font without compressing, kerning, condensing, or other alterations, the application will typically meet these recommendations. When converting documents into PDF files, you should check that the resulting type size is consistent with the original document.

## **5. Graphs, Diagrams, and Tables**

We recommend that you use black and white in graphs, diagrams, tables, and charts. If color is used, you should ensure that the material reproduces well when photocopied in black and white. Text in figures, charts, and tables, including legends, should be readily legible.

## D. PDF ATTACHMENTS

The information you include in these PDF attachments provides the majority of the information on which reviewers will evaluate the application.

### 1. Project Summary/Abstract

#### a) Submission

You must submit the project summary/abstract as a separate PDF attachment at Item 7 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

#### b) Recommended page length

We recommend that the project summary/abstract be no more than 1 page.

#### c) Content

The project summary/abstract should include the following:

- **Title** of the project.
- The **competition** to which you are applying (Low-Cost Evaluation).
- **Partner Institutions**: Identification of the institutions working together on the project.
- **Intervention**: Identification of the education intervention the partnership will evaluate.
- **Purpose**: A brief description of the purpose of the project and its significance in improving education outcomes for U.S. students.
- **Setting**: A brief description of the location (e.g., schools, district, state) where the research will take place and other important characteristics of the locale (e.g., urban/suburban/rural).
- **Population/Sample**: A brief description of the sample that will be involved in the study (e.g., number of participants (e.g., schools or students), its composition (e.g., age or grade level, race/ethnicity, SES), and the population the sample is intended to represent.
- **Partnership Activities**: A brief description of activities that the partnership will do and the role of each partner in them.
- **Research Design and Methods**: Briefly describe the major features of the evaluation design and methodology to be used.
- **Key Measures**: A brief description of key measures and outcomes and the administrative data source they will be obtained from.
- **Data Analytic Strategy**: A brief description of the data analytic strategies that will be used to answer research questions.

Please see <http://ies.ed.gov/ncser/projects> for examples of the content to be included in your project summary/abstract.

### 2. Project Narrative

#### a) Submission

You must submit the project narrative as a separate PDF attachment at Item 8 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

### **b) Recommended page length**

We recommend that the Project Narrative be no more than 15 pages. To help reviewers locate information and conduct the highest quality review, write a concise and easy to read narrative, with pages numbered consecutively using the header or footer function to place numbers at the top or bottom right-hand corner.

### **c) Citing references in text**

We recommend you use the author-date style of citation (e.g., James, 2004), such as that described in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Ed. (American Psychological Association, 2009).

### **d) Content**

Your project narrative **must** include five sections in order to be [compliant](#) with the requirements of this Request for Applications: (1) Significance, (2) Partnership, (3) Research Plan, (4) Personnel, and (5) Resources. Information to be included in each of these sections is detailed in [Part I.E: Project Narrative and Award Requirements](#).

## **3. Appendix A: Dissemination Plan (Required)**

### **a) Submission**

Appendix A must be included at the end of the project narrative, and submitted as part of the same PDF attachment at Item 8 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

### **b) Recommended page length**

We recommend that Appendix A be no more than 2 pages.

### **c) Content**

In Appendix A, describe your required plan to disseminate the findings from the proposed project. In your dissemination plan, you should:

- Identify the audiences that you expect will be most likely to benefit from your research (e.g., state policymakers and program administrators, state and local school system administrators, school administrators and school staff, parents and students, and other researchers).
- Discuss the different ways in which you intend to reach these audiences through the major publications, presentations, and products you expect to produce.
  - Your dissemination plans **must** include:
    - An agency-wide oral briefing that includes stakeholders from across the education agency.
    - A written brief available free to the public. The brief should be written for a non-technical audience and should include the research questions, methodology, main results, policy implications, and possible next steps.
    - A plan for distributing this brief within the agency, to other interested agencies, to the public, and to the Institute's Education Resources Information Center (ERIC, <http://eric.ed.gov>).
  - Strong applications will also include other manners of dissemination, for example:
    - Joint presentation by personnel from both the research institution and the education agency on the results of the project at a practitioner conference.
    - Joint presentation by personnel from both the research institution and the education agency on the results of the project at an academic conference.

- A toolkit or guide for other education agencies offering recommendations on how to conduct a similar study.
- An article for publication in a practitioner journal.
- An article for publication in a research journal.
- Online forms of dissemination, such as posts, webinars, and podcasts.

The Institute considers all types of findings from Low-Cost Evaluation projects to be potentially useful to researchers, policymakers, and practitioners, and expects dissemination activities to include:

- Findings of a beneficial impact on student outcomes: these support the wider use of the intervention and a more in-depth further evaluation.
- Findings of no impacts or negative impacts on student outcomes: these are important for decisions regarding the ongoing use and wider dissemination of the intervention, further revision of the intervention and its implementation, and revision of its theory of change.

The Dissemination Plan is the only information that should be included in Appendix A.

#### **4. Appendix B: Response to Reviewers (Required for Resubmissions)**

##### **a) Submission**

If your application is a resubmission, you **must** include Appendix B. If your application is one that you consider to be new but that is similar to a previous application, you should include Appendix B. Include Appendix B after Appendix A as part of the same PDF attachment at Item 8 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4 Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

##### **b) Recommended page length**

We recommend that Appendix B be no more than 3 pages.

##### **c) Content**

Use Appendix B to describe the required response to reviewers, which details how the revised application is responsive to prior reviewer comments.

If you have submitted a somewhat similar application in the past but are submitting the current application as a new application, you should use Appendix B to provide a rationale explaining why the current application should be considered a “new” application rather than a “resubmitted” application.

This response to the reviewers is the only information that should be included in Appendix B.

#### **5. Appendix C: Supplemental Figures, Charts, and Tables (Optional)**

##### **a) Submission**

If you choose to have an Appendix C, you must include it following Appendix B (if included) and Appendix A (required), which follow the project narrative, and submit it as part of the same PDF attachment at Item 8 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

##### **b) Recommended page length**

We recommend that Appendix C be no more than 5 pages.

##### **c) Content**

You may include figures, charts, tables (e.g., a timeline for your research project, a diagram of the management structure of your partnership), or measures (e.g., individual items, tests, surveys,

observation and interview protocols) used to collect data for your project. These are the only materials that should be included in Appendix C.

## **6. Appendix D: Examples of Intervention Materials (Optional)**

### **a) Submission**

If you choose to have an Appendix D, you must include it at the end of the project narrative, following Appendix C (if not it should follow any Appendices included), and submit it as part of the same PDF attachment at Item 8 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

### **b) Recommended page length**

We recommend that Appendix D be no more than 5 pages.

### **c) Content**

In Appendix D, for the education intervention you are evaluating you may include examples of intervention materials to help illustrate the components and workings of the intervention. These are the only materials that should be included in Appendix D.

## **7. Appendix E: Letters of Agreement (Required)**

### **a) Submission**

Appendix E must be included at the end of the project narrative, following Appendix D if included (if not it should follow any Appendices included), and submit it as part of the same PDF attachment at Item 8 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

### **b) Recommended page length**

We do not recommend a page length for Appendix E.

### **c) Content**

At a minimum, Appendix E must include (1) the Letters of Agreement from the research institution and the state or local education agency (the Institute strongly encourages a joint Letter of Agreement) and (2) the Letter of Agreement from the office in charge of the agency's administrative data. A joint letter from the research institution and the education agency should document their participation and cooperation in the partnership clearly setting out their expected roles and responsibilities in the partnership, and stating the partners' willingness to publically disseminate all the results of the project. The letter from the office in charge of the agency's administrative data should clearly state that the project will have access to the administrative data described in the application and the date the data can be accessed by the project team. Letters of Agreement may also be included from other partnering institutions and consultants.

Ensure that the letters reproduce well so that reviewers can easily read them. Do not reduce the size of the letters. See [Part IV.D.4: Attaching Files](#) for guidance regarding the size of file attachments.

These are the only materials that should be included in Appendix E.

## **8. Bibliography and References Cited**

### **a) Submission**

You must submit this section as a separate PDF attachment at Item 9 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

**b) Recommended page length**

We do not recommend a page length for the Bibliography and References Cited.

**c) Content**

You should include complete citations, including the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), titles (e.g., article and journal, chapter and book, book), page numbers, and year of publication for literature cited in the project narrative.

**9. Research on Human Subjects Narrative****a) Submission**

The Human Subjects Narrative must be submitted as a PDF attachment at Item 12 of the Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)).

**b) Recommended page length**

We do not recommend a page length for the Human Subjects Narrative.

**c) Content**

The Human Subjects Narrative should address the information specified by the U.S. Department of Education's Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (see <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/humansub.html> for additional information).

*Exempt Research on Human Subjects Narrative*

Provide an "exempt" narrative if you checked "Yes" on Item 1 of the Research & Related Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)). The narrative must contain sufficient information about the involvement of human subjects in the proposed research to allow a determination by the Department that the designated exemption(s) are appropriate. The six categories of research that qualify for exemption from coverage by the regulations are described on the Department's website <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/humansub/overview.html>.

*Non-exempt Research on Human Subjects Narrative*

If some or all of the planned research activities are covered (not exempt) from the Human Subjects Regulations and you checked "No" on Item 1 of the Research & Related Other Project Information form (see [Part IV.E.4: Research & Related Other Project Information](#)), provide a "nonexempt research" narrative. The non-exempt narrative should describe the following: the characteristics of the subject population; the data to be collected from human subjects; recruitment and consent procedures; any potential risks; planned procedures for protecting against or minimizing potential risks; the importance of the knowledge to be gained relative to potential risks; and any other sites where human subjects are involved.

Note that the U.S. Department of Education does not require certification of Institutional Review Board approval at the time you submit your application. However, if an application that involves non-exempt human subjects research is recommended/selected for funding, the designated U.S. Department of Education official will request that you obtain and send the certification to the Department within 30 days after the formal request.

## 10. Biographical Sketches of Senior/Key Personnel

### a) Submission

Each sketch will be submitted as a separate PDF attachment and attached to the Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded) form (see [Part IV.E.2: Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile \[Expanded\]](#)). The Institute encourages you to use the [IES Biosketch template](#) available through [SciENCv](#) or you may develop your own biosketch format.

### b) Recommended page length

We recommend that each Biographical Sketch be no more than 5 pages, which includes Current & Pending Support.

### c) Content

Provide a Biographical Sketch for the Principal Investigator, each co-Principal Investigator, and each co-Investigator that includes information sufficient to demonstrate that key personnel possess training and expertise commensurate with their specified duties on the proposed project (e.g., publications, grants, and relevant research experience). If you'd like, you may also include biographical sketches for consultants (this form will allow for up to 40 biographical sketches in total).

Provide a list of current and pending grants for the Principal Investigator, each Co-Principal Investigator, and other key personnel, along with the proportion of his/her time, expressed as percent effort over a 12-month calendar year, allocated to each project. Include the proposed grant as one of his/her pending grants in this list. If the total 12-month calendar year percent effort across all current and pending projects exceeds 100 percent, you must explain how time will be allocated if all pending applications are successful in the Narrative Budget Justification. If you use [SciENCv](#), the information on current and pending support will be entered into the biosketch template. If you use your own format, you will need to provide this information in a separate table.

## 11. Narrative Budget Justification

### a) Submission

The Narrative Budget Justification must be submitted as a PDF attachment at Section K of the first project period of the Research & Related Budget (SF 424) Sections A & B; C, D, & E; and F-K form for the Project (see [Part IV.E.5: Research & Related Budget \(Total Federal + Non-Federal\) - Sections A & B; C, D, & E; and F-K](#)). For grant submissions with a subaward(s), a separate narrative budget justification for each subaward must be submitted and attached at Section K of the Research & Related Budget (SF 424) for the specific Subaward/Consortium that has been extracted and attached using the R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form (see [Part IV.E.6](#)).

### b) Recommended page length

We do not recommend a page length for the Narrative Budget Justification.

### c) Content

A Narrative Budget Justification must be submitted for the Project budget, and a separate Narrative Budget Justification must be submitted for any subaward budgets included in the application. Each Narrative Budget Justification should provide sufficient detail to allow reviewers to judge whether reasonable costs have been attributed to the project and its subawards, if applicable. The budget justification should correspond to the itemized breakdown of project costs that is provided in the corresponding Research & Related Budget (SF 424) Sections A & B; C, D, & E; and F-K form for each year of the project. The narrative should include the time commitments for key personnel expressed as annual percent effort (i.e., calculated over a 12-month period) and brief descriptions of the responsibilities of key personnel. For consultants, the narrative should include the number of days of

anticipated consultation, the expected rate of compensation, travel, per diem, and other related costs. A justification for equipment purchases, supplies, travel (including information regarding number of days of travel, mode of transportation, per diem rates, number of travelers, etc.), and other related project costs should also be provided in the budget narrative for each project year outlined in the Research & Related Budget (SF 424).

**d) Indirect cost rate**

You must use your institution's federally negotiated indirect cost rate (see [Part II.A.3: Special Considerations for Budget Expenses](#)). When calculating your indirect costs on expenses for research conducted in field settings, you should apply your institution's federally negotiated off-campus indirect cost rate. If your institution does not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate you should consult a member of the Indirect Cost Group (ICG) in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of the Chief Financial Officer <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgreps.html> to help you estimate the indirect cost rate to put in your application.

## PART IV: SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION

This part of the RFA describes important Grants.gov submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received on time (no later than 4:30:00pm Washington DC time on the deadline for which you are submitting (August 3, 2017 or March 1, 2018) and accepted by the Institute. Any questions that you have about submitting your application through Grants.gov should be addressed to the Grants.gov Contact Center ([support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or 1-800-518-4726). You can also access the Grants.gov Self-Service Knowledge Base web portal at <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants> for further guidance and troubleshooting tips.

### A. MANDATORY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS AND DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted electronically through the Grants.gov web site <http://www.grants.gov/> and must be received (fully uploaded and processed by Grants.gov) no later than 4:30:00 pm Washington, DC time on the deadline date. Applications received by Grants.gov after the 4:30:00 pm application deadline will be considered late and will not be sent forward for scientific peer review.

Submission through Grants.gov is required unless you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement *and* submit, no later than 2 weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Institute that you qualify for one of these exceptions. A description of the Allowable Exceptions to Electronic Submissions is provided at the end of this document.

Please consider submitting your application ahead of the deadline date (the Institute recommends 3 to 4 days in advance of the closing date and time) to avoid running the risk of a late submission that will not be reviewed. **The Institute does not accept late applications.**

### B. REGISTER ON GRANTS.GOV

To submit an application to the Institute via Grants.gov, your organization must have four things:

- A Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number,
- An active System for Award Management (SAM) registration,
- An active Grants.gov account, and
- A workspace for your application within Grants.gov.

#### 1. Register Early

Grants.gov registration involves many steps including obtaining a DUNS number if you do not already have one. The DUNS number is necessary to complete registration on SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)), which itself may take approximately one week to complete. Note: SAM registration can take several weeks to complete, depending upon the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM database by the applicant organization. During SAM registration the eBIZ POC role for the organization is assigned. The eBIZ POC is the individual within the organization who oversees all activities within Grants.gov and gives permissions to Authorized Organization Representatives (AORs). AORs are allowed to submit grant applications on behalf of their organization. It is the eBIZ POC's responsibility to renew the organization's SAM registration annually.

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 to 48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov, and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov.

For additional assistance with registering your DUNS number in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, the Department of Education has prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet which you can find at: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>.

## 2. Create a Grants.gov Account

If your organization is new to federal grants or Grants.gov, review the Organization Registration page <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>. If you already have a Grants.gov account, you do not need to register another account.

- Click the Register link <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> in the top-right corner of the Grants.gov banner.
- Click the **Get Registered Now** button on the Register page.
- Complete the **Contact Information** and **Account Details** sections. All fields with a red asterisk (\*) are required.
  - Email Address - When entering an email address, please keep in mind that all correspondence with Grants.gov will be sent to that email address.
- Select whether to subscribe or unsubscribe from Grants.gov Communications. The **Alerts** are important messages about time-sensitive or major system changes. The **Newsletter** features training, system enhancement updates, and other resources to help the federal grants community.
- Decide if you would like to add a profile to your Grants.gov account or click the **Continue** button to log in. You need to add a profile <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html> to submit an application.

## 3. Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account

A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all of your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the DUNS Number for the organization in the DUNS field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov see <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>.

- After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log into Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles. The application can be submitted online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role.
- When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

## C. WORKSPACE (NEW)

To submit your application, you must create or use an existing workspace within Grants.gov. Workspace is a shared, online environment where multiple people may simultaneously access and edit different forms within the application <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>. Creating a workspace for your application allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting. Participants who have assigned roles in the workspace can complete all the required forms online (or by downloading PDF versions and working offline) and check for errors before submission.

The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. Click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page for additional help if needed. Once the application is complete and ready to be submitted, click the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab.

- **Adobe Reader:** If you do not want to complete the forms online, you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace and complete them offline. 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. See the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version if needed <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

For additional training resources on Workspace, including video tutorials, please see <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>. The Institute also offers webinars on the application submission process <http://ies.ed.gov/funding/webinars/index.asp>.

## D. SUBMISSION AND SUBMISSION VERIFICATION

### 1. Submit Early

The Institute strongly recommends that you not wait until the deadline date to submit an application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on the 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.** If Grants.gov rejects your application due to errors in the application package, you will need to resubmit successfully before 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time on the deadline date. As an example, if you begin the submission process at 4:00:00 p.m. Washington, DC time on the deadline date, and Grants.gov rejects the application at 4:15:00 p.m. Washington, DC time, there may not be enough time for you to locate the error that caused the submission to be rejected, correct it, and then attempt to submit the application again before the 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time deadline. **Grants.gov recommends that you begin the submission process 24 to 48 hours before the deadline date and time to ensure a successful, on-time submission.**

**Note:** To submit successfully, **you must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when you were registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov.** This DUNS number should be the same number used when your organization registered with the SAM. If you do not enter the same DUNS number on your application as the DUNS you registered with, Grants.gov will reject your application.

### 2. Verify Submission is OK

The Institute urges you to verify that Grants.gov and the Institute have received the application on time and that it was validated successfully. To see the date and time that your application was received by Grants.gov, you need to log on to Grants.gov and click on the "Track My Application" link <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/track-my-application.html>. For a successful submission, the

date/time received should be no later than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington DC time on the deadline date, and the application status should be: (1) Validated (i.e., no errors in submission), (2) Received by Agency (i.e., Grants.gov has transmitted the submission to the U.S. Department of Education), or (3) Agency Tracking Number Assigned (the U.S. Department of Education has assigned a unique PR/Award Number to the application).

Note: If the date/time received is later than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time on the deadline date, the application is late. If the application has a status of "Received", it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will change either to "Validated" or "Rejected with Errors." If the status is "Rejected with Errors," the application has not been received successfully. Grants.gov provides information on reasons why applications may be rejected in its Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page.

- Grants.gov FAQ  
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/faqs.html>
- Grants.gov Adobe Reader FAQs  
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/faqs/adobe-reader-faqs.html>

You will receive four emails regarding the status of your submission; the first three will come from Grants.gov and the fourth will come from the U.S. Department of Education. Within 2 days of submitting a grant application to Grants.gov, you will receive three emails from Grants.gov:

- The first email message will confirm receipt of the application by the Grants.gov system and will provide you with an application tracking number beginning with the word "GRANT", for example GRANT00234567. You can use this number to track your application on Grants.gov using the "Track My Application" link <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/track-my-application.html> before it is transmitted to the U.S. Department of Education.
- The second email message will indicate that the application EITHER has been successfully validated by the Grants.gov system prior to transmission to the U.S. Department of Education OR has been rejected due to errors, in which case it will not be transmitted to the Department.
- The third email message will indicate that the U.S. Department of Education has confirmed retrieval of the application from Grants.gov once it has been validated.

If the second email message indicates that the application, as identified by its unique application tracking number, is valid and the time of receipt was no later than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington DC time, then the application submission is successful and on-time.

Note: You should not rely solely on email to confirm whether an application has been received on-time and validated successfully. The Institute urges you to use the "Track My Application" link on Grants.gov to verify on-time, valid submissions in addition to the confirmation emails.  
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/track-my-application.html>

Once Grants.gov validates the application and transmits it to the U.S. Department of Education, you will receive an email from the U.S. Department of Education.

- This fourth email message will indicate that the application has been assigned a PR/Award number unique to the application beginning with the letter R, followed by the section of the CFDA number unique to that research competition (e.g., 324L), the fiscal year for the submission (e.g., 18 for fiscal year 2018), and finally four digits unique to the application, for example

R324L18XXXX. If the application was received after the closing date/time, this email will also indicate that the application is late and will not be given further consideration.

Note: The Institute strongly recommends that you begin the submission process at least 3 to 4 days in advance of the closing date to allow for a successful and timely submission.

### 3. Late Applications

If your application is submitted after 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time on the application deadline date, your application will not be accepted and will not be reviewed. **The Institute does not accept late applications.**

Late applications are often the result of one or more common submission problems that could not be resolved because there was not enough time to do so before the application deadline. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html>. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

If after consulting these resources you still experience problems, contact Grants.gov Customer Support (1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)) or access the Grants.gov Self-Service Knowledge Base web portal <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>.

If the Grants.gov Support Desk determines that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system, and determines that the problem affected your ability to submit the application by the submission deadline, you may petition the Institute to accept your application for review by emailing the Program Officer for the topic designated in your application with an explanation of the technical problem experienced with Grants.gov and the Case Number. However, you should ensure that your problem(s) were not one of those that are identified by Grants.gov as common application errors because these are not grounds for petition. **The Institute will not accept an application that was late due to failure to follow the submission guidelines provided by Grants.gov and summarized in this RFA.**

## E. TIPS FOR WORKING WITH GRANTS.GOV

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

### 1. Dial-up Internet Connections

When using 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.

### 2. 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.

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

### 3. Software Requirements

Grants.gov recommends using Adobe Acrobat Reader for Windows or MAC OS. Grants.gov has an Adobe Software Compatibility page <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html> where you can download the appropriate version of Adobe if needed.

### 4. Attaching Files

You must attach **read-only, flattened .PDF files** to the forms in the application package (see Part IV.D PDF Attachments).

- PDF files are the only approved file type accepted by the Department of Education as detailed in the Federal Register application notice. Applicants must submit individual .PDF files only when attaching files to their application. Specifically, the Department will not accept any attachments that contain files within a file, such as PDF Portfolio files, or an interactive or fillable .PDF file. Any attachments uploaded that are not .PDF files or are password protected files will not be read.
- 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.

## F. REQUIRED RESEARCH & RELATED (R&R) FORMS AND OTHER FORMS

You must complete and submit the R&R forms described below. In Workspace, you can complete these forms online or 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.

### 1. Application for Federal Assistance SF 424 (R&R)

This form asks for general information about the applicant, including but not limited to the following: contact information; an Employer Identification Number (EIN); a DUNS number; a descriptive title for the project; an indication of the grant program; Principal Investigator contact information; start and end dates for the project; congressional district; total estimated project funding; and Authorized Representative contact information.

Because information on this form populates selected fields on some of the other forms described below, you should complete this form first. This form allows you to attach a cover letter; however, the Institute does not require a cover letter so you should not attach one here.

Provide the requested information using the drop down menus when available. Guidance for completing selected items follows.

Note: Although not required fields, Items 4a (Federal Identifier) and b (Agency Routing Number) on the Application for Federal Assistance SF 424 (R&R) form provide critical information to the Institute and should be filled out for an application to this research grant competition.

- Item 1

Type of Submission. Select either "Application" or "Changed/Corrected Application". "Changed/Corrected Application" should only be selected in the event that you need to submit an updated version of an already submitted application (e.g., you realized you left something out of the first application submitted). The Institute does not require pre-applications for its grant competitions.

- Item 2

Date Submitted. Enter the date the application is submitted to the Institute.

Applicant Identifier. Leave this blank.

- Item 3

Date Received by State and State Application Identifier. Leave these items blank.

- Item 4

Note: This item provides important information that is used by the Institute to screen applications for [responsiveness](#) to the competition requirements and for assignment to the appropriate scientific peer review panel. **It is critical that you complete this information completely and accurately or the application may be rejected as nonresponsive or assigned inaccurately for scientific review of merit.**

- Item 4a: Federal Identifier. **Enter information in this field if this is a Resubmission.** If this application is a revision of an application that was submitted to an Institute grant competition in a prior fiscal year (e.g., FY 2018) that received reviewer feedback, then this application is considered a "Resubmission" (see Item 8 Type of Application). You should **enter the PR/Award number that was assigned to the prior submission (e.g., R324L17XXXX) in this field.**
- Item 4b: Agency Routing Number. **Enter the code for the grant program that the application addresses in this field.**

Grant Program	Code
Low-Cost, Short-Duration Evaluation of Special Education Interventions	NCSEER-LCE

**It is critical that you use the appropriate code in this field and that the code shown in this field agrees with the information included in the application abstract.** Indicating the correct code facilitates the appropriate processing and review of

the application. Failure to do so may result in delays to processing and puts your application at risk for being identified as nonresponsive and not considered for further review.

- Item 4c: Previous Grants.gov Tracking ID. If you are submitting a "Changed/Corrected" application (see Item 1) to correct an error, enter the Grants.gov Tracking Number associated with the application that was already submitted through Grants.gov. Contact the Program Officer listed on the application package and provide the Grants.gov tracking numbers associated with both applications (the one with the error and the one that has been corrected) to ensure that the corrected application is reviewed.

- Item 5

Applicant Information. Enter all of the information requested, including the legal name of the applicant, the name of the primary organizational unit (e.g., school, department, division, etc.) that will undertake the activity, and the address, including the county and the 9-digit ZIP/Postal Code of the primary performance site (i.e., the Applicant institution) location. This field is required if the Project Performance Site is located in the United States the field for "Country" is pre-populated with "USA: UNITED STATES." For applicants located in another country, contact the Program Officer before submitting the application. Use the drop down menus where they are provided.

Organizational DUNS. Enter the DUNS or DUNS+4 number of the applicant organization. A **Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)** number is a unique 9-character identification number provided by the commercial company Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) to identify organizations. If your institution does not have a DUNS number and therefore needs to register for one, a DUNS number can be obtained through the Dun & Bradstreet website <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>.

Note: The DUNS number provided on this form must be the same DUNS number used to register on Grants.gov (and the same as the DUNS number used when registering with the SAM). **If the DUNS number used in the application is not the same as the DUNS number used to register with Grants.gov, the application will be rejected with errors by Grants.gov.**

Person to Be Contacted on Matters Involving this Application. Enter all of the information requested, including the name, telephone and fax numbers, and email address of the person to be contacted on matters involving this application. The role of this person is primarily for communication purposes on the budgetary aspects of the project. As an example, this may be the contact person from the applicant institution's office of sponsored projects. Use the drop down menus where they are provided.

- Item 6

Employer Identification (EIN) or (TIN). Enter either the Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Tax Identification Number (TIN) as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service. If the applicant organization is not located in the United States, enter 44-4444444.

- Item 7

Type of Applicant. Use the drop down menu to select the type of applicant. If "Other," please specify.

Small Business Organization Type. If "Small Business" is selected as Type of Applicant, indicate whether or not the applicant is a "Women Owned" small business – a small business that is at least 51% owned by a woman or women, who also control and operate it. Also indicate whether or not the applicant is a "Socially and Economically Disadvantaged" small business, as determined by the U.S. Small Business Administration pursuant to section 8(a) of the Small Business Act U.S.C. 637(a).

- Item 8

Type of Application. Indicate whether the application is a "New" application or a "Resubmission" of an application that was submitted under a previous Institute competition and received reviewer comments. Only the "New" and "Resubmission" options apply to Institute competitions. Do not select any option other than "New" or "Resubmission."

Submission to Other Agencies. Indicate whether or not this application is being submitted to another agency or agencies. If "Yes," indicate the name of the agency or agencies.

- Item 9

Name of Federal Agency. Do not complete this item. The name of the federal agency to which the application is being submitted will already be entered on the form.

- Item 10

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number. Do not complete this item. The CFDA number of the program competition to which the application is being submitted will already be entered on the form. The CFDA number can be found in the Federal Register Notice and on the face page of the Request for Applications.

- Item 11

Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project. **Enter a distinctive, descriptive title for the project.** The maximum number of characters allowed in this item field is 200.

- Item 12

Proposed Project Start Date and Ending Date. Enter the proposed start date of the project and the proposed end date of the project. The start date for applications submitted to the August 3, 2017 deadline date must not be earlier than January 2, 2018, which is the Earliest Anticipated Start Date listed in this Request for Applications, and must not be later than March 1, 2018. The start date for applications submitted to the March 1, 2018 deadline date must not be earlier than July 16, 2018, which is the Earliest Anticipated Start Date listed in this Request for Applications, and must not be later than September 17, 2018. The end date is restricted based on the project duration maximum of two years.

- Item 13

Congressional District of Applicant. For both the applicant and the project, enter the Congressional District in this format: 2-character State Abbreviation and 3-character District Number (e.g., CA-005 for California's 5th district, CA-012 for California's 12th district). Grants.gov provides help for finding this information

<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-fags.html> under “How can I find my congressional district code?” If the program/project is outside the U.S., enter 00-000.

- Item 14

Project Director/Principal Investigator Contact Information. Enter all of the information requested for the Project Director/Principal Investigator, including position/title, name, address (including county), organizational affiliation (e.g., organization, department, division, etc.), telephone and fax numbers, and email address. Use the drop down menus where they are provided.

- Item 15

Estimated Project Funding

- Total Federal Funds Requested. Enter the total Federal funds requested for the entire project period.
- Total Non-federal Funds. Enter the total Non-federal funds requested for the entire project period.
- Total Federal & Non-Federal Funds. Enter the total estimated funds for the entire project period, including both Federal and non-Federal funds.
- Estimated Program Income. Identify any program income estimated for the project period, if applicable.

- Item 16

Is Application Subject to Review by State Executive Order 12372 Process? The Institute is not soliciting applications that are subject to review by Executive Order 12372; therefore check the box “Program is not covered by E.O. 12372” to indicate “No” for this item.

- Item 17

This is the Authorized Organization Representative’s electronic signature.

By providing the electronic signature, the Authorized Organization Representative certifies the following:

- To the statements contained in the list of certifications
- That the statements are true, complete and accurate to the best of his/her knowledge.

By providing the electronic signature, the Authorized Organization Representative also provides the required assurances, agrees to comply with any resulting terms if an award is accepted, and acknowledges that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject him/her to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties.

Note: The certifications and assurances referred to here are described in [Part IV.E.7: Other Forms Included in the Application Package](#).

- Item 18

SF LLL or other Explanatory Documentation. Do not add the SF LLL here. A copy of the SF LLL is provided as an optional document within the application package. See [Part IV.E.7: Other Forms Included in the Application Package](#) to determine applicability. If it is applicable to the grant submission, choose the SF LLL from the optional document menu, complete it, and save the completed SF LLL form as part of the application package.

- Item 19

Authorized Representative. The Authorized Representative is the official who has the authority both to legally commit the applicant to (1) accept federal funding and (2) execute the proposed project. Enter all information requested for the Authorized Representative including name, title, organizational affiliation (e.g., organization, department, division, etc.), address, telephone and fax numbers, and email address of the Authorized Representative. Use the drop down menus where they are provided.

Signature of Authorized Representative. Leave this item blank as it is automatically completed when the application is submitted through Grants.gov.

Date Signed. Leave this item blank as the date is automatically generated when the application is submitted through Grants.gov.

- Item 20

Pre-application. Do not complete this item as the Institute does not require pre-applications for its grant competitions.

- Item 21

Cover Letter. Do not complete this item as the Institute does not require cover letters for its grant competitions.

## **2. Research & Related Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)**

This form asks you to: (1) identify the Project Director/Principal Investigator and other senior and/or key persons involved in the project; (2) specify the role key staff will serve; and (3) provide contact information for each senior/key person identified. The form also requests information about the highest academic or professional degree or other credentials earned and the degree year. This form includes a "Credential/Agency Log In" box that is optional.

This form also provides the means for attaching the Biographical Sketches of senior/key personnel and the Lists of Current and Pending Funding for senior/key personnel as PDF files. This form will allow for the attachment of a total of 40 biographical sketches and 40 lists of current and pending support: one of each for the project director/principal investigator and up to 39 additional sketches and lists for senior/key staff. See [Part III.D.10: Biographical Sketches of Senior/Key Personnel](#) for information about recommended formatting and page lengths, and content to be included in the biographical sketches. The persons listed on this form should be the same persons listed in the Personnel section of the Project Narrative. If consultants are listed there, you may include a biographical sketch for each one listed. The Institute encourages the use of [SciENCv](#) to create IES Biosketches for grant applications to the Institute.

### 3. Project/Performance Site Location(s)

This form asks you to identify the primary site where project work will be performed. You must complete the information for the primary site. If a portion of the project will be performed at any other site(s), the form also asks you to identify and provide information about the additional site(s). As an example, a research proposal to an Institute competition may include the applicant institution as the primary site and one or more schools where data collection will take place as additional sites. The form permits the identification of eight project/performance site locations in total. This form requires the applicant to identify the Congressional District for each site. See above, [Application for Federal Assistance SF 424 \(R&R\)](#), Item 13 for information about Congressional Districts. DUNS number information is optional on this form.

### 4. Research & Related Other Project Information

This form asks you to provide information about any research that will be conducted involving Human Subjects, including: (1) whether human subjects are involved; (2) if human subjects are involved, whether or not the project is exempt from the human subjects regulations; (3) if the project is exempt from the regulations, an indication of the exemption number(s); and, (4) if the project is not exempt from the regulations, whether an Institutional Review Board (IRB) review is pending; and if IRB approval has been given, the date on which the project was approved; and, the Human Subject Assurance number. This form also asks you: (1) whether there is proprietary information included in the application; (2) whether the project has an actual or potential impact on the environment; (3) whether the research site is designated or eligible to be designated as an historic place; and, (4) if the project involves activities outside the U.S., to identify the countries involved.

This form also provides the means for attaching a number of PDF files (see [Part III.D: PDF Attachments](#) for information about content and recommended formatting and page lengths) including the following:

- Project Summary/Abstract,
  - Project Narrative and Appendices,
  - Bibliography and References Cited, and
  - Research on Human Subjects Narrative.
- Item 1  
Are Human Subjects Involved? If activities involving human subjects are planned at any time during the proposed project at any performance site or collaborating institution, you must check "Yes." (You must check "Yes" even if the proposed project is exempt from Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects.) If there are no activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed project at any performance site or collaborating institution, you may check "No" and skip to Item 2.

Is the Project Exempt from Federal Regulations? If all human subject activities are exempt from Human Subjects regulations, then you may check "Yes." You are required to answer this question if you answered "Yes" to the first question "Are Human Subjects Involved?"

If you answer "Yes" to the question "Is the Project Exempt from Federal Regulations?" you are required to check the appropriate exemption number box or boxes corresponding to one or more of the exemption categories. The six categories of research that qualify for exemption from coverage by the regulations are described on the U.S. Department of Education's website <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/humansub/overview.html>. Provide an Exempt Research on

Human Subjects Narrative at Item 12 of this form (see [Part III.D.9: Research on Human Subjects Narrative](#)).

If you answer "No" to the question "Is the Project Exempt from Federal Regulations?" you will be prompted to answer questions about the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review.

If no, is the IRB review pending? Answer either "Yes" or "No."

If you answer "Yes" because the review is pending, then leave the IRB approval date blank. If you answer "No" because the review is not pending, then you are required to enter the latest IRB approval date, if available. Therefore, you should select "No" only if a date is available for IRB approval.

Note: IRB Approval may not be pending because you have not begun the IRB process. In this case, an IRB approval date will not be available. However, a date must be entered in this field if "No" is selected or the application will be rejected with errors by Grants.gov. Therefore, you should check "Yes" to the question "Is the IRB review pending?" if an IRB approval date is not available.

If you answer "No" to the question "Is the Project Exempt from Federal Regulations?" provide a Non-exempt Research on Human Subjects Narrative at Item 12 of this form (see [Part III.D.9: Research on Human Subjects Narrative](#)).

Human Subject Assurance Number: Leave this item blank.

- Item 2  
Are Vertebrate Animals Used? Check whether or not vertebrate animals will be used in this project.
- Item 3  
Is proprietary/privileged information included in the application? Patentable ideas, trade secrets, privileged or confidential commercial or financial information, disclosure of which may harm the applicant, should be included in applications only when such information is necessary to convey an understanding of the proposed project. If the application includes such information, check "Yes" and clearly mark each line or paragraph on the pages containing the proprietary/privileged information with a legend similar to: "The following contains proprietary/privileged information that (name of applicant) requests not be released to persons outside the Government, except for purposes of review and evaluation."
- Item 4  
Does this project have an actual or potential impact on the environment? Check whether or not this project will have an actual or potential impact on the environment.
- Item 5  
Is the research site designated, or eligible to be designated as a historic place? Check whether or not the research site is designated, or eligible to be designated as a historic place. Explain if necessary.
- Item 6  
Does the project involve activities outside of the United States or partnerships with international collaborators? Check "Yes" or "No." If the answer is "Yes," then you need to identify the

countries with which international cooperative activities are involved. An explanation of these international activities or partnerships is optional.

- Item 7.  
Project Summary/Abstract. Attach the Project Summary/Abstract as a PDF file here. See [Part III.D: PDF Attachments](#) for information about content and recommended formatting and page length for this PDF file.
- Item 8.  
Project Narrative. Create a single PDF file that contains the Project Narrative as well as, when applicable, Appendix A (required), Appendix B (required for resubmissions), Appendix C (optional), Appendix D (optional), and Appendix E (required). Attach that single PDF file here. See [Part III.D: PDF Attachments](#) for information about content and recommended formatting and page lengths for the components of this PDF file.
- Item 9.  
Bibliography and References Cited. Attach the Bibliography and References Cited as a PDF file here. See [Part III.D: PDF Attachments](#) for information about content and recommended formatting and page lengths for this PDF file.
- Item 10.  
Facilities and Other Resources. The Institute does not want an attachment here. Explanatory information about facilities and other resources must be included in the Resources Section of the Project Narrative for the application and may also be included in the Narrative Budget Justification. In the project narrative of competitive proposals, applicants describe having access to institutional resources that adequately support research activities and access to schools in which to conduct the research. Strong applications document the availability and cooperation of the schools or other education delivery settings that will be required to carry out the research proposed in the application via a Letter of Agreement from the education organization. Include Letters of Agreement in Appendix E.
- Item 11.  
Equipment. The Institute does not want an attachment here. Explanatory information about equipment may be included in the Narrative Budget Justification.
- Item 12.  
Other Attachments. Attach a Research on Human Subjects Narrative as a PDF file here. You must attach either an Exempt Research on Human Subjects Narrative or a Non-Exempt Research on Human Subjects Narrative. See [Part III.D PDF Attachments](#) for information about content and recommended formatting and page length for this PDF file.

If you checked “Yes” to Item 1 of this form “Are Human Subjects Involved?” and designated an exemption number(s), then you must provide an “Exempt Research” narrative. If some or all of the planned research activities are covered by (not exempt from) the Human Subjects Regulations, then you must provide a “Nonexempt Research” narrative.

## **5. Research & Related Budget (Total Federal+Non-Federal)-Sections A & B; C, D, & E; F-K**

This form asks you to provide detailed budget information for each year of support requested for the applicant institution (i.e., the Project Budget). The form also asks you to indicate any non-federal funds supporting the project. You should provide this budget information for each project year using all sections

of the R&R Budget form. Note that the budget form has multiple sections for each budget year: A & B; C, D, & E; and F-K.

- Sections A & B ask for information about Senior/Key Persons and Other Personnel
- Sections C, D & E ask for information about Equipment, Travel, and Participant/Trainee Costs
- Sections F - K ask for information about Other Direct Costs and Indirect Costs

You must complete each of these sections for as many budget periods (i.e., project years) as you are requesting funds.

**Note:** The narrative budget justification for each of the project budget years must be attached at Section K of the first budget period; otherwise, you will not be able to enter budget information for the subsequent project year.

**Note: Budget information for a subaward(s) on the project must be entered using a separate form, the R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form**, described in [Part IV.E.6](#). This is the only form that can be used to extract the proper file format to complete subaward budget information. **The application will be rejected with errors by Grants.gov if subaward budget information is included using any other form or file format.**

Enter the Federal Funds requested for all budget line items as instructed below. If any Non-Federal funds will be contributed to the project, enter the amount of those funds for the relevant budget categories in the spaces provided.

All fields asking for total funds in this form will auto-calculate.

- **Organizational DUNS.**  
If you completed the SF 424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance form first the DUNS number will be pre-populated here. Otherwise, the organizational DUNS number must be entered here. See [Part IV.E.1](#) for information on the DUNS number.
- **Budget Type.**  
Check the box labeled "Project" to indicate that this is the budget requested for the primary applicant organization. If the project involves a subaward(s), you must access the R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form to complete a subaward budget (see Part IV.E.6 below for instructions regarding budgets for a subaward).
- **Budget Period Information.**  
Enter the start date and the end date for each budget period. **Enter no more than the number of budget periods allowed for the project as determined by the Award Duration Maximum of two years** (see [Part I.D: Project Narrative and Award Requirements](#)).  
Note: If you activate an extra budget period and leave it blank this may cause your application to be rejected with errors by Grants.gov.
- **Budget Sections A & B**

A. Senior/Key Person. The Project Director/Principal Investigator information will be pre-populated here from the SF 424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance form if it was completed first. Then, enter all of the information requested for each of the remaining senior/key personnel, including the project role of each and the number of months each will devote to the project, i.e., calendar or academic + summer. You may enter the annual compensation (base salary – dollars) paid by the employer for each senior/key person; however, you may choose to leave this field

blank. Regardless of the number of months devoted to the project, indicate only the amount of salary being requested for each budget period for each senior/key person. Enter applicable fringe benefits, if any, for each senior/key person. Enter the Federal dollars and, if applicable, the Non-Federal dollars.

B. Other Personnel. Enter all of the information requested for each project role listed – for example Postdoctoral Associates, Graduate Students, Undergraduate Students, Secretary/Clerical, etc. – including, for each project role, the number of personnel proposed and the number of months devoted to the project (calendar or academic + summer). Regardless of the number of months devoted to the project, indicate only the amount of salary/wages being requested for each project role. Enter applicable fringe benefits, if any, for each project role category. Enter the Federal dollars and, if applicable, the Non-Federal dollars.

Total Salary, Wages, and Fringe Benefits (A + B). This total will auto calculate.

- Budget Sections C, D & E

C. Equipment Description. Enter all of the information requested for Equipment. Equipment is defined as an item of property that has an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more (unless the applicant organization has established lower levels) and an expected service life of more than 1 year. List each item of equipment separately and justify each in the narrative budget justification. Allowable items ordinarily will be limited to research equipment and apparatus not already available for the conduct of the work. General-purpose equipment, such as a personal computer, is not eligible for support unless primarily or exclusively used in the actual conduct of scientific research. Enter the Federal dollars and, if applicable, the Non-Federal dollars.

Total C. Equipment. This total will auto calculate.

D. Travel. Enter all of the information requested for Travel.

Enter the total funds requested for domestic travel. In the narrative budget justification, include the purpose, destination, dates of travel (if known), applicable per diem rates, and number of individuals for each trip. If the dates of travel are not known, specify the estimated length of the trip (e.g., 3 days). Enter the Federal dollars and, if applicable, the Non-Federal dollars.

Enter the total funds requested for foreign travel. In the narrative budget justification, include the purpose, destination, dates of travel (if known), applicable per diem rates, and number of individuals for each trip. If the dates of travel are not known, specify the estimated length of the trip (e.g., 3 days). Enter the Federal dollars and, if applicable, the Non-Federal dollars.

Total D. Travel Costs. This total will auto calculate.

E. Participant/Trainee Support Costs. Do not enter information here; this category is not used for project budgets for this competition.

Number of Participants/Trainees. Do not enter information here; this category is not used for project budgets for this competition.

Total E. Participants/Trainee Support Costs. Do not enter information here; this category is not used for project budgets for this competition.

- Budget Sections F-K

F. Other Direct Costs. Enter all of the information requested under the various cost categories. Enter the Federal dollars and, if applicable, the Non-Federal dollars.

Materials and Supplies. Enter the total funds requested for materials and supplies. In the narrative budget justification, indicate the general categories of supplies, including an amount for each category. Categories less than \$1,000 are not required to be itemized.

Publication Costs. Enter the total publication funds requested. The proposed budget may request funds for the costs of documenting, preparing, publishing or otherwise making available to others the findings and products of the work conducted under the award. In the narrative budget justification, include supporting information.

Consultant Services. Enter the total costs for all consultant services. In the narrative budget justification, identify each consultant, the services he/she will perform, total number of days, travel costs, and total estimated costs. Note: Travel costs for consultants can be included here or in Section D. Travel.

ADP/Computer Services. Enter the total funds requested for ADP/computer services. The cost of computer services, including computer-based retrieval of scientific, technical, and education information may be requested. In the narrative budget justification, include the established computer service rates at the proposing organization if applicable.

Subaward/Consortium/Contractual Costs. Enter the total funds requested for: (1) all subaward/consortium organization(s) proposed for the project and (2) any other contractual costs proposed for the project. Use the R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form to provide detailed subaward information (see [Part IV.E.6](#)).

Equipment or Facility Rental/User Fees. Enter the total funds requested for equipment or facility rental/user fees. In the narrative budget justification, identify each rental user fee and justify.

Alterations and Renovations. Leave this field blank. The Institute does not provide funds for construction costs.

Other. Describe any other direct costs in the space provided and enter the total funds requested for this "Other" category of direct costs. Use the narrative budget justification to further itemize and justify.

Total F. Other Direct Costs. This total will auto calculate.

- G. Direct Costs

Total Direct Costs (A thru F). This total will auto calculate.

- H. Indirect Costs

Enter all of the information requested for Indirect Costs. Principal investigators should note that if they are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs, this information is to be completed by their Business Office.

Indirect Cost Type. Indicate the type of base (e.g., Salary & Wages, Modified Total Direct Costs, Other [explain]). In addition, indicate if the Indirect Cost type is off-site. If more than one rate/base is involved, use separate lines for each. When calculating your expenses for research

conducted in field settings, you should apply your institution's negotiated off-campus indirect cost rate, as directed by the terms of your institution's negotiated agreement with the federal government.

Institutions, both primary grantees and subawardees, not located in the territorial U.S. cannot charge indirect costs.

If you do not have a current indirect rate(s) approved by a Federal agency, indicate "None--will negotiate". **If your institution does not have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate**, you should consult a member of the Indirect Cost Group (ICG) in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of the Chief Financial Officer <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgreps.html> to help you estimate the indirect cost rate to put in your application.

Indirect Cost Rate (%). Indicate the most recent Indirect Cost rate(s) (also known as Facilities & Administrative Costs [F&A]) established with the cognizant Federal office, or in the case of for-profit organizations, the rate(s) established with the appropriate agency.

If your institution has a cognizant/oversight agency and your application is selected for an award, you must submit the indirect cost rate proposal to that cognizant/oversight agency office for approval.

Indirect Cost Base (\$). Enter the amount of the base (dollars) for each indirect cost type. Depending on the grant program to which you are applying and the applicant institution's approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, some direct cost budget categories in the grant application budget may not be included in the base and multiplied by the indirect cost rate. Use the narrative budget justification to explain which costs are included and which costs are excluded from the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied. If your grant application is selected for an award, the Institute will request a copy of the applicant institution's approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.

Indirect Cost Funds Requested. Enter the funds requested (Federal dollars and, if applicable, the Non-Federal dollars) for each indirect cost type.

Total H. Indirect Costs. This total will auto calculate.

Cognizant Agency. Enter the name of the Federal agency responsible for approving the indirect cost rate(s) for the applicant. Enter the name and telephone number of the individual responsible for negotiating the indirect cost rate. If a Cognizant Agency is not known, enter "None."

- I. Total Direct and Indirect Costs

Total Direct and Indirect Costs (G + H). This total will auto calculate.

- J. Fee.

Do not enter a dollar amount here as you are not allowed to charge a fee on a grant or cooperative agreement.

- K. Budget Justification

Attach the Narrative Budget Justification as a PDF file at Section K of the first budget period (see [Part III.C](#) for information about content and recommended formatting and page length for this

PDF file). Note that if the justification is not attached at Section K of the first budget period, you will not be able to access the form for the second budget period. The single narrative must provide a budget justification for each year of the entire project.

- Cumulative Budget. This section will auto calculate all cost categories for all budget periods included.

**Final Note: The overall grant budget cannot exceed the maximum grant award of \$250,000. Applications requesting budgets greater than the maximum grant award will not be forwarded for scientific peer review.**

## 6. R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form

This form provides the means to both extract and attach the Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) form that is to be used by an institution that will hold a subaward on the grant. Please note that separate budgets are required only for subawardee/consortium organizations that perform a substantive portion of the project. As with the Primary Budget, the extracted Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) form asks you to provide detailed budget information for each year of support requested for a subaward/consortium member with substantive involvement in the project. The budget form also asks for information regarding non-federal funds supporting the project at the subaward/consortium member level. You should provide this budget information for each project year using all sections of the R&R Budget form. Note that the budget form has multiple sections for each budget year: A & B; C, D, & E; and F-K.

- Sections A & B ask for information about Senior/Key Persons and Other Personnel.
- Sections C, D & E ask for information about Equipment, Travel, and Participant/Trainee Costs.
- Sections F - K ask for information about Other Direct Costs and Indirect Costs.

“Subaward/Consortium” must be selected as the Budget Type, and all sections of the budget form for each project year must be completed in accordance with the R&R (Federal/Non-Federal) Budget instructions provided above in [Part IV.E.5](#). Note that subaward organizations are also required to provide their DUNS or DUNS+4 number.

You may extract and attach up to 10 subaward budget forms. When you use the button “Click here to extract the R&R Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment,” a Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) form will open. Each institution that will hold a subaward to perform a substantive portion of the project must complete one of these forms and save it as a PDF file with the name of the subawardee organization. Once each subawardee institution has completed the form, you must attach these completed subaward budget form files to the R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form. Each subaward budget form file attached to this form must have a unique name.

**Note:** This R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form must be used to attach only one or more Research & Related Budget (Total Fed + Non-Fed) form(s) that have been extracted from this form. Note the form’s instruction: “Click here to extract the R&R Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment”. **If you attach a file format to this form that was not extracted from this attachment form your application will be rejected with errors by Grants.gov.**

## 7. Other Forms Included in the Application Package

You are required to submit the first two forms identified here. You are not required to submit the third form, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities – Standard Form LLL, unless it is applicable.

- SF 424B-Assurances-Non-Construction Programs.
- Grants.gov Lobbying form (formerly, ED 80-0013 form).
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities – Standard Form LLL (if applicable).

## G. SUMMARY OF REQUIRED APPLICATION CONTENT

R&R Form	Instructions Provided	Additional Information
Application for Federal Assistance SF 424 (R & R)	Part IV.E.1	Form provided in Grants.gov application package
Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)	Part IV.E.2	Form provided in Grants.gov application package
Project/Performance Site Location(s)	Part IV.E.3	Form provided in Grants.gov application package
Other Project Information	Part IV.E.4	Form provided in Grants.gov application package
Budget (Total Federal + Non-Federal): Sections A & B Sections C, D, & E Sections F - K	Part IV.E.5	Form provided in Grants.gov application package
R&R Subaward Budget (Fed/Non-Fed) Attachment(s) Form	Part IV.E.6	Form provided in Grants.gov application package. Use this form to <i>extract and attach</i> a subaward budget(s).
SF 424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs Grants.gov Lobbying form Disclosure of Lobby Activities – Standard Form LLL (if applicable)	Part IV.E.7	Forms provided in Grants.gov application package
Project Summary/Abstract	Part III.D.1	Attach PDF at Item 7 of the "Other Project Information" form
Project Narrative and Appendices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrative</li> <li>• Appendix A</li> <li>• Appendix B</li> <li>• Appendix C</li> <li>• Appendix D</li> <li>• Appendix E</li> </ul>	Part III.D.2-7	The Project Narrative and Appendix A, Appendix E; and if applicable, Appendices B, C, and D must ALL be included together in one PDF attached at Item 8 of the "Other Project Information" form.
Bibliography and References Cited	Part III.D.8	Attach PDF at Item 9 of the "Other Project Information" form.
Research on Human Subjects Narrative, if human subjects are involved	Part III.D.9	Attach PDF at Item 12 of the "Other Project Information" form.
Biographical Sketches of Senior/Key Personnel (including Current & Pending Support)	Part III.D.10	Add each as a separate PDF to "Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)" form.
Narrative Budget Justification	Part III.D.11	Attach PDF using <i>Section K – Budget Period 1</i> of the "Budget (Total Federal + Non-Federal)" form.

## H. APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Have each of the following forms been completed?	
	SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance
	For item 4a, is the PR/Award number entered if this is a Resubmission following the instructions in Part IV.E.1?
	For item 4b, is the correct program code included following the instructions in Part IV.E.1?
	For item 8, is the Type of Application appropriately marked as either "New" or "Resubmission" following the instructions in Part IV.E.1?
	Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)
	Project/Performance Site Location(s)
	Other Project Information
	Budget (Total Federal + Non-Federal): Sections A & B; Sections C, D, & E; Sections F - K
	R&R Subaward Budget (Federal/Non-Federal) Attachment(s) form (if applicable)
	SF 424B Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
	Grants.gov Lobbying form (formerly ED 80-0013 form)
	Disclosure of Lobby Activities – Standard Form LLL (if applicable)
Have each of the following items been attached as PDF files in the correct place?	
	Project Summary/Abstract, using Item 7 of the "Other Project Information" form
	Project Narrative, Appendix A, and Appendix E; and where applicable, Appendix B (required for resubmissions), Appendix C, and Appendix D, as a single file using Item 8 of the "Other Project Information" form
	Bibliography and References Cited, using Item 9 of the "Other Project Information" form
	Research on Human Subjects Narrative, either the Exempt Research Narrative or the Non-exempt Research Narrative, using Item 12 of the "Other Project Information" form
	Biographical Sketches of Senior/Key Personnel, using "Attach Biographical Sketch" of the "Senior/Key Person Profile (Expanded)" form that includes Current & Pending Support of the Senior/Key Personnel
	Narrative Budget Justification, using Section K – Budget Period 1 of the "Budget (Total Federal + Non-Federal)" form
	Budget (Total Federal + Non-Federal): Sections A & B; Sections C, D, & E; Sections F – K for the Subaward(s), using the "R&R Subaward Budget (Federal/Non-Federal) Attachment(s)" form, as appropriate, that conforms to the Award Duration, Annual Cost Maximum and Total Cost Maximum for the Topic selected
Have the following actions been completed?	
	The correct PDF files are attached to the proper forms in the Grants.gov application package
	The "Check Package for Errors" button at the top of the grant application package has been used to identify errors or missing required information that causes errors
	The "Track My Application" link has been used to verify that the upload was fully completed and that the application was processed and validated successfully by Grants.gov before 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time on the deadline date

## I. PROGRAM OFFICER CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact the Institute's Program Officers with any questions you may have about the best grant program for your application. Program Officers function as knowledgeable colleagues who can provide substantive feedback on your research idea, including reading a draft of your project narrative. Program Officers can also help you with any questions you may have about the content and preparation of PDF file attachments. However, any questions you have about individual forms within the application package and electronic submission of your application through Grants.gov should be directed first to Grants.gov Applicant Support ([support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>, 1-800-518-4726).

Kimberley (Kim) Sprague, Ed.M.  
Email: [Kimberley.Sprague@ed.gov](mailto:Kimberley.Sprague@ed.gov)  
Telephone: (202) 245-8464

# GLOSSARY

Administrative Data: information that is routinely collected about students, teachers, schools, and districts by state and local agencies to assess progress, monitor programs, or adhere to reporting requirements. Examples of data include student enrollment, class schedules, grades, and assessments; teacher assignments and schedules; electronic communications with students, parents, and teachers; reports completed for ED Facts, Civil Rights Data Collection, and other federal initiatives; and fiscal records. Administrative data may also include non-routine special data collections, for example, on a specific agency program, project or policy or on a specific type of student, teacher, school, or district. Administrative data are a common form of secondary data (also historical data).

Assessment: "Any systematic method of obtaining information, used to draw inferences about characteristics of people, objects, or programs; a systematic process to measure or evaluate the characteristics or performance of individuals, programs, or other entities, for purposes of drawing inferences; sometimes used synonymously with test" (AERA, 2014).

Authentic education setting: Proposed research must be relevant to education in the United States and must address factors under the control of the U.S. education system (be it at the national, state, local, or school level). To help ensure such relevance, the Institute requires research to work within or with data from authentic education settings. Setting refers to the environment where education is being delivered and not the physical location of the researcher. Authentic education setting varies by education level as set out below.

- **Authentic Education Settings for Infants and Toddlers:**
  - Child care (under state or local agency control)
  - Natural settings for early intervention services
  
- **Authentic Preschool Settings are defined as:**
  - Child care (under state or local agency control)
  - Preschool programs
  - Natural settings for early childhood special education services
  
- **Authentic K-12 Education Settings are defined as:**
  - Schools and alternative school settings (e.g., alternative schools or juvenile justice settings)
  - Homes provided that the intervention is school-based (i.e., program must be coordinated through the school or district)
  - School systems (e.g., local education agencies or state education agencies)
  - Settings that deliver direct education services (as defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/index.html>)
  - Career and Technical Education Centers affiliated with schools or school systems

Comparison group practice: What the comparison group is receiving in place of the treatment being evaluated. Understanding comparison group practice is important for determining the level of difference between what the treatment and comparison group are receiving and may provide a possible explanation for why no impact is found for an intervention (i.e., the treatment and comparison conditions were similar).

**Compliant:** The part of the process of screening applications for acceptance for review that focuses on compliance with the application rules (e.g., completion of all parts of the application, inclusion of required appendices).

**Cost Analysis:** A technique used to determine the monetary costs of implementing an intervention (e.g., expenditures for personnel, facilities, equipment, materials, training, and other relevant inputs). For a cost analysis, annual costs should be assessed to adequately reflect expenditures across the lifespan of the program (e.g., start-up costs and maintenance costs). Intervention costs can be contrasted with the costs of comparison group practice to reflect the difference between them.

**End user:** The person intended to be responsible for the implementation of the intervention. Low-Cost Evaluation projects should test an intervention implemented by the end user.

**Feasibility:** The extent to which the intervention can be implemented within the requirements and constraints of an authentic education setting.

**Fidelity of implementation:** The extent to which the intervention is being delivered as it was designed to be by end users in an authentic education setting.

**Final manuscript:** The author's final version of a manuscript accepted for publication that includes all modifications from the peer-review process.

**Intervention:** The wide range of education curricula; instructional approaches; professional development; technology; and practices, programs, and policies that are implemented at the student, teacher, school, district, or state level to improve student education outcomes.

**Mediators:** Factors through which the relationship between the intervention and student education outcomes occurs (e.g., many interventions aimed at changing individual student education outcomes work through changing teacher behavior, student peer behavior, and/or student behavior).

**Moderators:** Factors that affect the strength or the direction of the relationship between the intervention and student education outcomes (e.g., an intervention's impacts may differ by such student characteristics as achievement level, motivation, or social-economic status; and by organizational or contextual factors, such as school or neighborhood characteristics).

**Prospective and Retrospective:** Prospective studies use future (prospective) data that will be gathered during a study. Retrospective studies use data gathered in the past before the study. Low-Cost Evaluation projects must use prospective data resulting from the intervention's implementation during the first year of the study. Low-Cost Evaluation projects may also include retrospective data resulting from the intervention's implementation prior to the first year of the study. Applicants intending to use only retrospective data should not apply to the Low-Cost Evaluation grant program as their applications will not be accepted for review. Instead they may be eligible to apply to the Special Education Research Grants program (84.324A) under the Efficacy and Replication goal for retrospective evaluations.

**Responsive:** The part of the process of screening applications for acceptance for review that focuses on responsiveness to the Request for Applications. This screening includes making sure applications (1) are submitted to the correct competition and topic and (2) meet the basic requirements set out in the Request for Applications.

**Secondary data sets:** Data sets that are often generated from nationally representative surveys or evaluations (e.g., <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/licenses.asp>); administrative data from federal, state, or district agencies or from non-public organizations; and/or data from previous research studies.

Student Outcomes: The outcomes to be changed by the intervention. The intervention may be expected to directly affect these outcomes or indirectly affect them through intermediate student or instructional personnel outcomes. There are five types of child/student education outcomes for this competition.

- Developmental outcomes: Outcomes pertaining to cognitive, communicative, linguistic, social, emotional, adaptive, functional or physical development.
- School readiness: Pre-reading, language, vocabulary, early science and mathematics knowledge, and social and behavioral competencies that prepare young children for school.
- Student academic outcomes: The Institute supports research on a diverse set of student academic outcomes that fall under two categories. The first category includes academic outcomes that reflect learning and achievement in the core academic content areas (e.g., measures of understanding and achievement in reading, writing, math, and science). The second category includes academic outcomes that reflect students' successful progression through the education system (e.g., course and grade completion and retention in grade K through 12; high school graduation and dropout; postsecondary enrollment, progress, and completion).
- Social and behavioral competencies: Social skills, attitudes, and behaviors that may be important to students' academic and post-academic success.
- Functional outcomes: Skills or activities that are not considered academic or related to a child's academic achievement; "functional" is often used in the context of routine activities of everyday living and can include outcomes that improve educational results and transitions to employment, independent living, and postsecondary education for students with disabilities.

Theory of change: The underlying process through which key components of a specific intervention are expected to lead to the desired student education outcomes. A theory of change should be specific enough to guide the design of the evaluation (e.g., selecting an appropriate sample, measures and comparison condition).

Validity: "The degree to which accumulated evidence and theory support a specific interpretation of test scores for a given use of a test. If multiple interpretations of a test score for different uses are intended, validity evidence for each interpretation is needed" (AERA, 2014).

## REFERENCES

- American Educational Research Association (2014). *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. AERA: Washington, DC.
- American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Washington, D.C.: Author.
- Coburn, C.E., Penuel, W.R., and Geil, K.E. (2013). *Research-Practice Partnerships: A Strategy for Leveraging Research for Educational Improvement in School Districts*. William T. Grant Foundation, New York, NY.

## ALLOWABLE EXCEPTIONS TO ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

You may qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement and submit an application in paper format if you are unable to submit the application through the Grants.gov system because: (a) you do not have access to the Internet; or (b) you do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system; and (c) no later than 2 weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar date before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Institute explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit the application. If you mail the written statement to the Institute, it must be postmarked no later than 2 weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax the written statement to the Institute, the faxed statement must be received no later than 2 weeks before the application deadline date. The written statement should be addressed and mailed or faxed to:

Ellie Pelaez, Office of Administration and Policy  
Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education  
550 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Potomac Center Plaza - Room 4107  
Washington, DC 20202  
Fax: 202-245-6752

If you request and qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement you may submit an application via mail, commercial carrier or hand delivery. To submit an application by mail, mail the original and two copies of the application on or before the deadline date to:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Attention: CFDA# (84.324L)  
LBJ Basement Level 1  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202 – 4260

You must show one of the following as proof of mailing: (a) a legibly dated U.S. Postal Service Postmark; (b) a legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service; (c) a dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier; or (d) any other proof of mailing acceptable to the U.S. Secretary of Education (a private metered postmark or a mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Services will not be accepted by the Institute). Note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office. If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, the Institute will not consider your application. The Application Control Center will mail you a notification of receipt of the grant application. If this notification is not received within 15 business days from the application deadline date, call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

To submit an application by hand, you or your courier must hand deliver the original and two copies of the application no later than 4:30:00 p.m. (Washington, DC time) on or before the deadline date to:

U.S. Department of Education  
Application Control Center  
Attention: CFDA# (84.324L)  
550 12th Street, S.W.  
Potomac Center Plaza - Room 7039  
Washington, DC 20202 – 4260

The Application Control Center accepts application deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time), except Saturdays, Sundays and Federal holidays.