



Request for Applications

Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences

CFDA Number: 84.305B

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Part I: Overview and General Requirements

A. Introduction

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) provides scientific evidence to improve education practice and policy and shares that evidence in a way that can be used by educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public. Within IES, the National Center for Education Research (NCER) supports research focused on practices and policies that improve education outcomes and access to education opportunities for all learners from early childhood through adulthood, particularly those at risk of failure. The specific purpose of IES-supported training programs is to further the training of education researchers and policymakers. In doing so, IES aims to increase the quality, accessibility, use, and relevance of education research.

1. Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences (CFDA 84.305B)

In this Request for Applications (RFA), IES requests applications for training projects that will contribute to NCER's Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences (Research Training).

For FY 2020, IES is accepting applications for training under three programs:

- [Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training Program in the Education Sciences](#) (Predoctoral Training Program);
- [Postdoctoral Research Training in the Education Sciences](#) (Postdoctoral Training Program); and
- [Methods Training Program for Education Researchers](#) (Methods Training Program).

IES training programs prepare individuals to conduct education research that meets the requirements and recommendations under its Education Research Grants program (CFDA 84.305A) and its Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replications in Education program (CFDA 84.305R), advances knowledge within the field, and addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners. As part of the training programs, IES supports

- new approaches to train and mentor students and researchers from diverse backgrounds in order to encourage their entry into and success in education research careers;
- training that includes new ideas, approaches, and perspectives to address long-standing education issues; and
- training that helps researchers and state and local education agency staff acquire skills necessary to obtain and generate evidence needed for policy and programmatic decisions.

Separate funding announcements are available on the IES website (<https://ies.ed.gov/funding>) that pertain to other discretionary grant competitions funded through the National Center for Education Research (<https://ncer.ed.gov>) and the National Center for Special Education Research (<https://ncser.ed.gov>). An overview of IES research grant programs is available at <https://ies.ed.gov/funding/overview.asp>.

All applications for the FY 2020 Research Training Programs are expected to address, where appropriate, the new IES-wide *Standards for Excellence in Education Research* (SEER), which includes pre-registering studies; focusing on outcomes meaningful to student success; documenting intervention implementation to inform use in other settings; identifying core intervention components; analyzing costs; facilitating generalization of study findings; making research findings, methods, and data available to others; and supporting the future scaling of interventions. Additional information about the SEER standards is available on the IES website (<https://ies.ed.gov/seer.asp>). Expectations regarding SEER for each of the training programs are detailed in the sections below.

2. RFA Organization

The RFA is organized as follows. [Part I](#) provides an overview of the NCER Training Programs and sets out the general requirements for your grant application. [Part II](#) provides detail on the specific requirements of each training program. [Part III](#) provides information about the appendices and other narrative content. [Part IV](#) provides information on competition regulations and the review process.

3. Eligible Applicants

IES does not provide funds directly to individuals seeking training. IES provides funds to institutions to establish training programs and independently recruit and train participants for those programs. See [Part II: Training Program Requirements](#) for information about eligible institutions for the different types of training programs.

Broadening Participation in the Education Sciences: IES is interested in broadening institutional participation in its research training programs. IES encourages applications from minority-serving institutions (MSIs), alone or in combination with other institutions, that meet the eligibility criteria for this RFA. MSIs include Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCU), Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Predominantly Black Institutions (PBI), and Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions. MSI applicants are encouraged to review the *IES Funding Opportunities for Minority Serving Institutions* webinar (available at <https://ies.ed.gov/funding/webinars/>).

The Principal Investigator: Your institution is responsible for identifying the Principal Investigator/Training Director (PI) on a grant application. Other personnel may share the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the training project, and these persons may be listed as Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) or other types of key personnel. The PI is the individual who has the authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the training, including the appropriate use of federal funds and the submission of required scientific progress reports.¹

4. Technical Assistance for Applicants

IES provides technical assistance to applicants that addresses the appropriateness of project ideas for this competition and substantive issues concerning research training in the education sciences. IES Program Officers work with applicants through a variety of formats up until the time of Grants.gov submission. If you submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) at <https://iesreview.ed.gov>, a Program Officer will contact you regarding your proposed project. IES also provides Funding Opportunities Webinars (live and on demand at <https://ies.ed.gov/funding/webinars/>) that include advice on choosing the correct competition, grant writing, and submitting your application.

B. Changes in the FY 2020 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.** Major changes to the FY 2020 RFA for the Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences (CFDA 84.305B) competition are listed below and described fully in the relevant sections of the RFA.

1. IES created a separate application submission guide that provides information about required electronic submission of applications through Grants.gov and an overview of the general IES funding process. Please see the IES Application Submission Guide

¹ IES uses the uniform format for reporting performance progress on federally funded research projects, the Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR) <https://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/rppr/> for these reports.

(<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf>) for important information about submitting your application on-time through Grants.gov.

2. All Training Programs are to address, where appropriate, the new IES-wide [Standards for Excellence in Education Research](#) (SEER).
3. Under the Predoctoral Training Program, fellows are required to take part in two types of apprenticeships.²
 - a. An ongoing research apprenticeship with faculty mentors, university research institutes, or research firms for a minimum of 1 year for 2-year fellowships and a minimum of 2 years for 3- to 4-year fellowships.
 - b. At least one policy/practice apprenticeship with an education agency or organization (such as a state or local education agency, public postsecondary system, non-profit education organization) for a minimum of 1 year.
4. For the Predoctoral Training Program, IES intends to make no more than five awards. However, should funding be available, IES may consider making additional awards to high-quality applications that remain unfunded after five awards have been made.
 - a. The maximum award amount for the Predoctoral Training Program has been increased from \$4 million to \$4.6 million.
 - b. The maximum stipends have been increased to \$34,000 per fellowship year; and the maximum tuition/fees amount has been raised to \$12,000 per fellowship year.
5. Under the Postdoctoral Training Program:
 - a. Research training must focus on one of four content areas: adult learners with low skills, career and technical education, educational leadership, or English learners.
 - b. The maximum grant award has been increased to \$766,000; the maximum fellow stipend has been increased to \$60,000; and the maximum additional fellow support has been increased to \$25,000.
6. For the Methods Training Program:
 - a. IES now requires a dissemination plan in [Appendix A](#) in which you describe opportunities for non-participants to have access to the training.
 - b. IES encourages Methods Training Program applicants to propose the recruitment of employees of state and local education agencies and focus on their training needs. Grant funds may support travel for training participants who are employees of state and local education agencies.

C. Getting Started

In order to submit a compliant, responsive, and timely application, you will need to review two documents:

1. This RFA to learn how to prepare an application that is compliant and responsive to the requirements; and

² Predoctoral fellows can have multiple apprenticeships of different lengths as long as the combined length of the apprenticeships meet the requirements.

2. The IES Application Submission Guide³ (<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf>) for important information about submission procedures and IES-specific guidance and recommendations to help you ensure your application is complete and received without errors on time through Grants.gov.

We strongly recommend that both the PI and the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) read both documents, whether submitting a new or revised application.

Only compliant and responsive applications received before the date and time deadline are peer reviewed for scientific merit. The PI and the AOR should work together to ensure that the application meets these criteria.

- **On-Time Submission** - see the separate IES Application Submission Guide at <https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf>.
 - Received and validated by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on August 29, 2019.
- **Compliance**
 - Includes the **required Training Program Narrative** (see [Part II](#))
 - Includes all **required Appendices** (see [Part III](#)).
 - [Appendix A: Dissemination Plan](#) (Methods Training Program only)
 - [Appendix B: Response to Reviewers](#) (Resubmissions only)
 - [Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects](#) (All Applications)
 - [Appendix D: Example Letter of Agreement for Fellows](#) (Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Training Applications only)
 - [Appendix E: Letters of Agreement from Training Partners](#) (Predoctoral and Methods Training Applications only)
- **Responsiveness**
 - Meets **General Requirements** for all applications (see below)
 - Meets **Training Program Narrative Requirements** for the selected Training Program (see [Part II](#))

D. General Requirements

1. Programs

Your application must be directed to one of the following training programs listed below and meet the requirements set out for each program as described in [Part II](#) in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

- The **Predocutorial Training Program** funds interdisciplinary programs at doctoral-granting institutions to train doctoral students to conduct rigorous and relevant education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education leaders and practitioners. These students are also expected to engage with education policy and practice by participating in an apprenticeship with a state or local education agency or

³ Please note that the [IES Application Submission Guide](#) includes application submission information that used to be included in the Request for Applications but has now been pulled out as a separate document.

an education-focused organization such as a professional education association or a Regional Educational Laboratory.

- The **Postdoctoral Training Program** funds programs to prepare researchers with a doctoral degree to conduct high-quality education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education leaders and practitioners. These researchers are expected to learn how to conduct independent research, take on leadership positions within research teams, work directly with practitioners and policymakers, and clearly communicate their findings to multiple audiences.
- The **Methods Training Program** funds programs to help current education researchers maintain and upgrade their research and analysis skills in order to conduct rigorous and relevant education research.

E. Common Applicant Questions

- *May I submit an application if I did not submit a Letter of Intent (LOI)?* Yes. However, IES strongly encourages you to submit one. If you miss the deadline for submitting a LOI, contact the appropriate Program Officer.
- *May I submit the same application to more than one of the IES grant programs?* No. Please see [Part III.C.2 Multiple Submissions](#).
- *May I submit multiple training applications to the same program?* It depends on the program. An institution may submit only one application to the Predoctoral Training Program. An institution may submit multiple applications to the Postdoctoral Training Program or Methods Training Program **only if** the applications are substantively different from one another **and** do not include any key personnel that are also on another application to the same program.
- *May I submit applications to more than one training program or to a training program and a research grant program?* Yes. An institution may submit separate applications to more than one training program. Submitting an application to any training grant program has no bearing on applying to the research grant programs.
- *May I apply if I intend to copyright products (e.g., curriculum) developed using grant funds?* Yes. Products derived from IES-funded grants may be copyrighted and used by the grantee for proprietary purposes, but the U.S. Department of Education reserves a royalty-free, non-exclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such products for Federal purposes and to authorize others to do so [2 C.F.R. § [200.315\(b\)](#)(2014)].
- *May I apply if I am not located in the United States?* No. Training grants are awarded only to institutions within the territorial United States.

F. Award Limits

Applications to the Research Trainings Programs competition **must** conform to the following limits on award duration and cost.

Program	Maximum Grant Duration	Maximum Grant Award
Predoctoral Training Program	5 years	\$4,600,000
Postdoctoral Training Program	5 Years	\$766,000
Methods Training Program	3 Years	\$800,000

Part II: Training Program Requirements and Recommendations

A. Applying to a Training Program

For the FY 2020 Research Training Programs, you **must** submit your application to one of the three research training programs described in this section. You must identify your chosen topic area on the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance form (Item 4b) in the Application Package for this competition (see the [IES Application Submission Guide](#)), or IES may reject your application as nonresponsive to the requirements of this RFA.

The programs differ by eligible applicants, individuals being trained, the training to be provided, and the outcomes expected.

Across all programs, in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review,

- **You must meet the general requirements** outlined in [Part I.D: General Requirements](#); and
- **You must meet the relevant program requirements** listed under [Part II: Training Program Requirements and Recommendations](#).

For each training program,

- **See the Purpose section** for the types of research training supported under each training program;
- **See the Requirements section** for the specific content that you must address in the Training Program Narrative in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review;
- **See the Award Limits section** for duration and cost maximums; and
- **See the Recommendations for Strong Applications section** for recommendations to improve the quality of your application. The scientific peer reviewers are asked to consider these recommendations in their evaluation of the quality of your application. IES strongly encourages you to incorporate the recommendations into your Project Narrative and relevant appendices. Where appropriate, recommendations are aligned with the SEER Principles (<https://ies.ed.gov/seer.asp>) to ensure that research is transparent, actionable, and focused on meaningful outcomes that have the potential to dramatically improve education.

Each program name is linked to the program page on the IES website, where you can find more information and view the abstracts of previously funded projects.

Under all three programs, training may prepare participants to conduct research that includes subgroups of students with disabilities, but such students **must not** be the primary focus of the research unless they are over 16-years old and not in the K-12 system (for example, they are enrolled in adult education or postsecondary education programs). IES supports training to do research primarily on students with or at risk for disabilities from birth through high school through separate training grant programs run by the National Center for Special Education Research (<https://ies.ed.gov/ncser/>).

IES strongly encourages you to contact the relevant Program Officer to discuss the appropriateness of your proposed training program for submission under a specific program.

B. Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training Program in the Education Sciences

Program Officer: Dr. Katina Stapleton (202-245-6566; Katina.Stapleton@ed.gov)

1. Purpose

The [Predoctoral Training Program](#) funds training programs to prepare doctoral students to conduct high-quality education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners. These researchers are expected to learn how to conduct research that advances knowledge within the field and addresses issues important to education leaders and practitioners, work directly with practitioners and policymakers, and clearly communicate their findings to multiple audiences.

Predoctoral Training Program grants are awarded to institutions of higher education to create graduate training programs in which predoctoral students from different academic disciplines receive interdisciplinary training in the education sciences, earn an Education Sciences Certificate, and graduate within their academic discipline. The lead department may be any of the participating departments, but the focus of the training program must be on applied research in education.

Predoctoral Training Programs may vary in their format but must include a coordinated curriculum, an ongoing lecture series or proseminar opportunities, a research apprenticeship, a policy/practice apprenticeship, and an Education Sciences Certificate that signifies that fellows have completed the training program's requirements. Predoctoral fellows are expected to gain subject-matter and methodological knowledge and skills, research experience through collaboration with experienced researchers, experience working directly with practitioners and policymakers, skills to communicate research findings to multiple audiences, grant-writing skills, research administration and grant management skills, and knowledge of career opportunities.

In the Final Performance Report submitted to IES, all Predoctoral Training Program grantees will describe

- the training program as realized over the course of the grant, including descriptions of all key components discussed in the original application, the fellows accepted to the program, who completed and who did not, and their research products;
- the measures used to track the progress of fellows through the training program;
- the program's level of success in recruiting, training, and placing fellows;
- the program's success in preparing fellows with the appropriate skills and knowledge to carry out the type of research described in the original application including
 - fellows' contributions to the field of education sciences;
 - fellows' contributions to practice and policy;
 - fellows' place and type of employment after completing the program; and
 - analysis of the cost per fellow training year including recruitment efforts; and
- recommendations for future predoctoral training programs.

Predoctoral Training Programs

prepare doctoral students to be interdisciplinary researchers able to conduct the type of research IES funds under its research grant programs and address issues important to education leaders and practitioners.

2. Requirements

Applications under the Predoctoral Training Program **must** meet the requirements for the (1) Training Program Focus, (2) Eligible Applicants, (3) Key Personnel, and (4) Training Program Narrative in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

(1) Training Program Focus

In your Predoctoral Training Program application, you **must** propose a focused training program that addresses U.S. education (prekindergarten through high school and postsecondary and adult education). Your training program focus **must** include a content area based on the research programs identified in the Education Research Grants program (84.305A) RFA and a methodological focus based on the project types identified in the Education Research Grants program (84.305A) RFA and the Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replications in Special Education (84.305R) RFA. These RFAs are available at <https://ies.ed.gov/funding/>.

(2) Eligible Applicants

The applicant **must** be an academic institution located in the territorial United States that confers doctoral degrees in academic fields relevant to education

IES is accepting applications for new predoctoral training programs and applications to renew existing training programs. An academic institution may host no more than one IES-supported predoctoral training program at a time. Therefore,

- an academic institution may submit only one application; and
- academic institutions that currently have a predoctoral training program that will still be operating in August 2020 can apply only to renew the existing training program. The research training and budget narratives should describe how the applicant proposes to transition the training program from the existing grant to the new award.

The applying academic institution must be able to

- implement a strategy to recruit fellows from groups underrepresented in doctoral programs;
- provide fellows a research apprenticeship on research grants or contracts carrying out the type of research supported by IES;
- provide fellows a policy/practitioner apprenticeship with an education agency or education-focused organization;
- award an Education Sciences Certificate to fellows who successfully complete the program; and
- provide fellows training in career opportunities and support their entry into the labor market when the fellowship ends.

(3) Key Personnel

- Faculty members serving as PI, Co-PIs, or core training faculty must be able to provide intensive training in the education sciences including research methodology and statistics.
- The PI, any Co-PIs, and core training faculty are considered key personnel and **must** be named and listed as key personnel in the application.

(4) Training Program Narrative

The Training Program Narrative (recommended length: no more than 20 pages) for a Predoctoral Training Program application **must** include four sections – Significance, Research Training Plan, Personnel, and Resources.

i. Significance - The purpose of this section is to describe the focus of your training program and how it will develop researchers capable of conducting and communicating high-quality scientific research that addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners.

- You **must describe**
 - the content area and methodological focuses of your training program. These must be selected from the list in the table below. Your focus may include more than one content area and more than one methodological focus.

List of Acceptable Content and Methodological Focuses for Predoctoral Training Program Grants

Content Area	Methodological Area
Career and Technical Education	Exploration
Cognition and Student Learning	Development and Innovation
Early Learning Programs and Policies	Efficacy
Education Technology	Replication
Effective Instruction	Measurement
English Learners	
Improving Education Systems	
Postsecondary and Adult Education	
Reading and Writing	
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	
Social and Behavioral Context for Academic Learning	

ii. Research Training Plan - The purpose of this section is to outline the specific activities your training program will provide from fellow recruitment to post-fellowship career development.

- You **must describe**
 - a recruitment plan (see the section on [Additional Budget Parameters and Award Requirements](#) for eligibility requirements/considerations for fellows);
 - the research training activities;
 - the financial support to be provided to individual fellows and to the overall training program;
 - a plan for tracking fellows' progress;
 - a plan for awarding the Education Sciences Certificate; and
 - a plan for determining the success of the training program.

iii. Personnel – The purpose of this section is to describe your training team, including their relevant expertise, responsibilities, and time commitments to the training program.

- You **must describe** all key personnel on the project team including the PI, any Co-PIs, and the other core faculty.

iv. Resources – The purpose of this section is to describe your access to institutional resources and your access to schools and data sets where applicable.

Core Faculty

The five or more participating faculty members who conduct education research and will conduct the training activities including teaching courses, mentoring fellows, supervising research, and monitoring fellows' progress.

- You **must** describe the institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions.

3. Award Limits

Awards made under the Predoctoral Training Program **must** conform to the following limits on duration and cost.

Duration Maximums:

- The maximum duration of a Predoctoral Training Program project is **5 years**.

Cost Maximums:

- The maximum award for a Predoctoral Training Program project is **\$4,600,000** (total cost = direct costs + indirect costs).
- For Predoctoral Training Program grants, indirect costs are (except for State, local, and tribal governments) subject to 34 CFR 75.562. That provision limits indirect cost reimbursement to the recipient's actual indirect costs, as determined by its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base (MTDC) whichever amount is less. MTDC, under 34 CFR 75.562, means the total direct costs minus the following: the amount of each sub-award in excess of \$25,000, stipends, tuition and related fees, and equipment, as defined in 2 CFR 200.33. State, local, and tribal governments can charge indirect costs consistent with their approved indirect cost rate and other requirements set out in 34 CFR Part 75 and 2 CFR Part 200. (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-sec200-68.pdf>).
- A grant award can be used to support a maximum of 68 fellow years and must support a minimum of 30 fellow years. Your requested budget should depend upon the number of fellows to be supported, the number of years of support for each fellow, and the training program support funds requested (which can be no greater than \$1,336,000).
- IES expects that the majority of training programs funded will not enroll fellows into the training program in the first year of the grant. As a result, requests for Year 1 funding are expected to be lower than the following years as expenditures will primarily be for program development and recruitment costs rather than fellowship costs.

Maximum Number of Awards:

- IES intends to make no more than five awards. However, should funding be available, IES may consider making additional awards to high-quality applications that remain unfunded after five awards have been made.

4. Recommendations for Strong Applications

These recommendations are intended to improve the quality of your application, and the peer reviewers are asked to consider these recommendations in their evaluation of your application.

Significance

Training Program Focus and Framework

- Describe the content and methodological focus of your training program and the need for researchers prepared to do research within that focus.
- Discuss how your training program will provide opportunities for fellows to work in partnership with education practitioners and policymakers in designing, conducting, and communicating research.
- Show your training program will provide opportunities for fellows to explore careers and make connections outside of academia.
- Describe how the training will prepare fellows to take part in competitive applications for research funding in these areas.

- Describe how your program's focus integrates multiple academic disciplines.
- Discuss what will distinguish your training program from other predoctoral training programs both in the training provided and the expectations for the fellows' future work. If you have had a previous IES Predoctoral Training Program grant, describe how the proposed training program builds off the lessons learned from the previous one.

Skills and Knowledge

- Describe the skills and knowledge fellows are expected to master and explain their importance to education research and practice. These should include
 - **research skills and knowledge**, such as developing a research agenda and gaining specific content and methodological expertise;
 - **skills related to the SEER standards**, including pre-registering studies, focusing on outcomes meaningful to student success, documenting intervention implementation, identifying core intervention components, analyzing costs, facilitating generalization of study findings, making research findings, methods, and data available to others, and supporting future scaling of interventions;
 - **leadership and entrepreneurial skills**, such as networking, conducting needs assessments and market analyses, developing and testing products, communicating and collaborating with stakeholders, and forming and working with teams; and
 - **professional skills**, such as preparing grant applications; communicating research findings to researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and the public; collaborating with other researchers; working in partnership with education practitioners and policymakers; writing articles for publication; and the management skills necessary for overseeing research projects and grants.

Predocctoral Fellows

- Discuss the characteristics, interests, and needs of fellows that you are likely to recruit, including their fields, existing skills and expertise, previous work experience, and gaps in skills and knowledge. Describe how you intend to recruit fellows from subgroups underrepresented in the education sciences. By describing the fellows you intend to recruit, you will be better able to discuss the training needed to produce the intended type of researchers.

Research Training Plan

Recruitment Plan, Eligibility Requirements, and Selection Criteria

- Identify the underrepresented groups from which you intend to recruit; describe your plan to recruit fellows from these groups; and estimate the budget and personnel time to be spent on recruitment and the expected results.
 - IES encourages programs to consider fellows who may come from smaller or less well-known undergraduate programs, including those at minority-serving institutions (MSIs).
- Describe how you will recruit candidates from multiple disciplines and departments.
- If applicable, describe how you will transition fellows from an existing IES training grant program to the new award.
- Provide a timeline (either in the Research Training Plan or [Appendix F](#)) that shows when you expect to recruit and train each fellow.
 - Predoctoral Training Programs can begin from July 1 to September 1, 2020. IES encourages programs to use the first 6 to 12 months of the grant for recruitment with fellows starting in 2021.

Research Training Activities

- Describe the components of your training program and how they contribute to the knowledge and skills to be developed by the fellow.

List of Training Activities and the Knowledge and Skills to be Taught for Predoctoral Training Program Grants

Training Activities	Knowledge and Skills
Coordinated curriculum Proseminar or lecture series Research apprenticeship Practice/policy apprenticeship Independent research or research done in collaboration with other fellows Attending outside conferences and training courses Other training activities	Content area Methodological area SEER Principles Research skills Entrepreneurship Collaboration with practitioners and policymakers Communication (written and oral) with multiple audiences Grant-writing Research administration and grant-management Career development

- **Coordinated curriculum:** The set of required courses, from multiple disciplines, that complement one another and form a coherent curriculum that all fellows complete. The coordinated curriculum may vary for fellows from different disciplines. Discuss the courses to be required and how the coordinated curriculum will prepare fellows for research in the content and methodological focus areas.
- **Proseminar or lecture series:** This series of seminars should provide additional interdisciplinary training in the content and methodological focuses of the training program. It can also be used to address the other skills and knowledge to be covered and may be open to other graduate students. You should specify the content of the proposed lecture series, how often it will be offered, and how it will be integrated into the coordinated curriculum.
- **Research apprenticeship:** Describe the timing of the research apprenticeships (how they will correspond with the other training activities) that fellows will take part in, the research projects available and the core faculty overseeing them, and fellows' likely roles on them (noting the knowledge and skills they will learn from these roles).
- **Practice/policy apprenticeship:** Describe the opportunities fellows will have for apprenticeships at a state or local education agency, postsecondary system, or education-focused organization that will allow them to carry out research in collaboration with practitioners and/or policymakers and present their findings to multiple audiences.
- **Other training activities:** Detail the other training activities to be provided, including what they are, how they will contribute to the development of the fellows' skills and knowledge, how you will decide which fellows will participate in them, and how the program will monitor their contribution to the fellows' professional development.
- **Career development activities:** Describe the specific activities to support the fellows' transition to their next positions after the fellowship. The training program should help fellows learn how to identify and obtain appropriate career opportunities both within and outside of academia.
- If fellows will be offered opportunities to teach courses or perform consulting work for additional remuneration, discuss how these activities contribute to the program's training focus and do not detract from the fellows' research responsibilities and training activities. Programs will need to justify the value of such activities to IES before allowing fellows to engage in them.

- Describe the requirements for receiving the Education Sciences Certificate (e.g., completion of specific coursework, research and collaboration activities, other training activities, other assignments and assessments) and the procedures for awarding the Certificate (also include a Letter of Agreement from the institution agreeing to award the Certificate in [Appendix D](#)).

Financial Support

- Describe both the overall allocation of funds for supporting the fellows and the training program and the specific uses of the funds. Specify the length of the fellowship to be provided for each fellow.
 - **Note:** Fellowships may last from 2 to 4 years per fellow.⁴ A predoctoral training program may support a maximum of 68 fellowship years of training with each fellow receiving from 2 to 4 years of support. A predoctoral training program must support a minimum of at least 15 fellows for 2 years apiece (30 fellowship years).
- Describe how the program funds will be used, such as for recruitment or training purposes. Be sure to meet the [Additional Budget Parameters and Award Requirements](#).
- Note whether your institution is providing supplementary support funding and, if so, how it will be used.

Tracking Fellows' Progress and Program Success

- Discuss how you will identify each fellow's strength and weakness upon entry to the program and how opportunities will be aligned with those strengths and needs.
- Describe how you will track each fellow's progress.
- Describe the measures you will use to determine that the training program is successful.

Personnel

- Identify and briefly describe the following for all key personnel:
 - qualifications to carry out the proposed work;
 - roles and responsibilities within the project;
 - percent of time and calendar months per year to be devoted to the project;
 - past success at mentoring predoctoral students;
 - past success at collaborating on research with and disseminating findings to policymakers and practitioners;
 - past success in obtaining funding to support research.
 - past success at disseminating research findings in peer-reviewed scientific journals;
 - past success in creating education products or technologies that have been adopted in classrooms or schools; and
 - strong applications will have five or more core faculty who can demonstrate the above listed qualifications.
- Discuss how the collective research and training expertise and experience of your team (including non-key personnel, visiting scholars, etc.) align with and support the content and methodological foci of your training program and the expected training outcomes for your fellows.

Resources

- Describe the institutional resources available to support the training program at the participating institution, including research collaborations with other research institutions and state and local education agencies, other education-focused organizations.

⁴ Note: Fellows transferred from an IES predoctoral training program funded in FY2014 or FY2015 are still limited to a maximum of 4 years of IES support.

- Describe the process and requirements for awarding the Education Sciences Certificate (link this discussion to the required letter from the university stating its commitment to award the Education Sciences Certificate required in [Appendix E](#)).
- Describe your access to field settings, such as schools and districts, or data sources that may be used to support fellows' research projects.
- Describe the ongoing education research projects led by the core faculty that fellows are likely to work on as part of their research apprenticeships (detailed in [Appendix C](#)) and how they align with the focus of your training program.
- Describe the state or local education agencies or education-focused organizations that will provide the opportunities for fellows to engage in a practice/policy apprenticeship and discuss how these apprenticeships will align with the focus of your training program.
- Describe the success of any previous Predoctoral Training Grants you or the other core faculty have received from IES (these are to be detailed in your [Appendix C](#)). Also describe any lessons learned from these grants and discuss how you incorporated into the proposed training program.
 - The success of previous fellows can include publications and grants, changes in LEA/SEA practice and policy based on fellows' research, as well as in activities such as acquiring patents or developing products or education programs.

5. Additional Budget Parameters and Award Requirements

The following requirements for Predoctoral Training Program applications will not be used in determining responsiveness to the RFA, but applications recommended for funding will be required to adjust their plans and budgets, if necessary, to meet them before receiving grant funds.

- If you receive an award under the Predoctoral Training Program, you will have to certify that your training participants (fellows) meet the following requirements:⁵
 - Predoctoral fellows **must** be enrolled full-time in a doctoral program for each term during which they receive fellowship support.
 - Predoctoral fellows' research (including dissertations) must be relevant to practical issues in U.S. education.
 - Predoctoral fellows **must** be citizens or permanent residents of the United States.
- Participant Support Costs: Your request for grant funds for direct support of fellows should depend upon the number of fellow years (minimum of 30 and maximum of 68) you intend to provide under your training program. Direct support of fellows is contingent on fellows' making satisfactory progress in their research activities. Grant funds provided for direct support to the fellows may include the following:⁶
 - \$34,000 in stipend per fellow per year (12 months) for 2 to 4 years;
 - Up to \$12,000 per fellow per year for tuition, health insurance, and normal fees; and
 - Up to \$2,000 per fellow per year in support of research, travel, and conference attendance.⁷
- Program Support Costs: You may request a maximum of \$1,336,000 (direct plus indirect costs) in funding for program supports. Grant funds provided for program support may be used for the following:

⁵ Grant funds expended on fellows who do not meet these requirements will be disallowed (namely, you will have to return such expended funds).

⁶ The academic institution may supplement the direct support of fellows. Such a supplement would be considered cost-sharing and should be described in your Training Program Narrative and noted in your budget and budget narrative.

⁷ Institutions may allow fellows to "carryover" a maximum of \$1,000 from one academic year to the next for research, travel, and conference attendance.

Research Training Programs / Awards Beginning FY2020

- recruitment of fellows;
- a limited set of personnel costs to develop and run the training program:
 - Up to 2 months of salary support per year for the PI (or distributed among the PI and Co-PIs) to support management of the program, teaching the course/seminar, and similar operational activities;
 - Up to 6 months of salary support per year combined for a Program Coordinator to provide logistical and clerical support for the program and/or for other personnel to support implementation of the research apprenticeships (you may request additional months if you can show a need for them);
 - Half the salary of a new faculty member per year specifically recruited to enhance the quality of the program; and
 - 5 months of salary support for faculty over the entire grant period to develop new curricula or courses;
- additional training activities (such as apprenticeships, workshops, colloquia, seminars, fellows' presentations) including guest speakers and trainers;
- tracking of fellows' progress and program success;
- a training program website;
- the PI's attendance at the IES annual meeting (for up to 3 days) in Washington, DC; and
- indirect costs.
- Grant funds **must** not be used for the following:
 - faculty research;
 - faculty salaries for purposes outside the limited set of personnel expenditures allowed; or
 - facility construction, renovation, or maintenance.
- Predoctoral fellows are also expected to respond to periodic surveys and other requests for information from IES.

C. Postdoctoral Research Training Program in the Education Sciences

Program Officers: Dr. Meredith Larson (202-245-7037; Email: Meredith.Larson@ed.gov)

Dr. Corinne Alfeld (202-245-8203; Email: Corinne.Alfeld@ed.gov)

1. Purpose

The [Postdoctoral Training Program](#) supports training programs⁸ that prepare researchers with a doctoral degree to conduct high-quality education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners. These researchers are expected to learn how to conduct research independently, take on leadership positions within research teams, work directly with practitioners and policymakers, and clearly communicate their findings to multiple audiences.

Postdoctoral Training programs support the training of fellows who have high potential but may need more research experience in the education sciences and mentoring before launching their careers. IES encourages recruitment of fellows from groups underrepresented in education research (for example, racial/ethnic minorities, first in their families to graduate college, veterans, individuals from low-income backgrounds, and individuals with disabilities). Fellows who complete an IES-funded postdoctoral training program will have gained the skills necessary to carry out research that meets the requirements and recommendations of the IES research grant programs and to communicate their research findings effectively to researchers, education policymakers, practitioners, and the public. In addition, fellows will have built professional skills and networks that support working with other researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and other education stakeholders.

Postdoctoral Training Programs

prepare researchers to conduct the type of research IES funds under its research grant programs and that is important to practitioners and policymakers.

In the Final Performance Report submitted to IES, all Postdoctoral Training Program grantees will describe

- the training program as realized over the course of the grant, including descriptions of all key components discussed in the original application (such as research projects, professional development opportunities, methodological workshops);
- the fellows accepted to the program, identification of completers and non-completers, and a listing of their research products, including presentations, publications, and other work, such as web-based tools, mobile apps, datasets, or patents;
- the measures used to track the progress of fellows through the training program as well as data demonstrating the program's level of success in recruiting, training, and placing fellows;
- the program's success in preparing fellows with the appropriate skills and knowledge to succeed in the basic and/or applied aspects of the education sciences;
- the cost of training per fellow, including recruitment efforts, broken down by training year; and
- recommendations for future Postdoctoral Training Program projects.

⁸ IES **does not directly fund individuals** seeking postdoctoral support through 84.305B. Individuals seeking such support are encouraged to contact the directors of current IES training programs (<https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/program.asp?ProgID=14>).

2. Requirements

Applications under the Postdoctoral Training Program must meet the requirements listed below for the (1) Training Program Focus, (2) Eligible Applicants, (3) Key Personnel, and (4) Training Program Narrative in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

(1) Training Program Focus

The training program **must** identify a content area focus and a methodological focus. For FY 2020, you **must** propose a focused training program based on one of the following four content areas:⁹

- **Adult Learners with Low Skills:** includes any student who is 16-years old or older, is outside of the K-12 system, and is at or below basic skills (may include students in adult education, career and technical education, or remedial postsecondary education).
- **Career and Technical Education:** includes education and training in the academic, technical, and employability skills and knowledge required to enter into and succeed in specific occupations for secondary and/or postsecondary students.
- **Education Leadership:** addresses K-12 and postsecondary leaders' role in creating safe and supportive learning environments for students, improving the skills of their staffs, implementing policies and programs, managing systems efficiently, and leading organizational change that improves student outcomes.
- **English Learners:** includes students whose home language is not English and whose English language proficiency hinders their ability to meet learning and achievement expectations for students at their grade level.

You **must** also propose a methodological focus area. These include the following:¹⁰

- **Exploration:** hypothesis-generating research based on analysis of primary and/or secondary data or on meta-analysis of existing studies;
- **Development and Innovation:** the development and piloting of new education interventions;
- **Efficacy:** the initial evaluation of the impact of an education intervention on student outcomes;
- **Replication:** the further evaluation of the impact of an education intervention on student outcomes; and
- **Measurement:** the development and validation of assessments.

(2) Eligible Applicants

- The applicant **must** be an academic institution located in the United States and its territories that confers doctoral degrees in fields relevant to education.
- The applying organization/institution may hold more than one Postdoctoral Training Program award from IES and may submit more than one Postdoctoral Training Program application as long as each actual or proposed training program has **a different training focus and no overlap of key personnel** (PI, Co-PI, and core training faculty).
- An applicant may partner with another institution that will provide fellows with research opportunities aligned with the training program focus.

⁹ You may include other content areas that complement the content area focus. Note that for the first content area, Adult Learners with Low Skills, you may focus on typically developing students, students with disabilities, or a combination of both. For the other three content areas, you must focus on typically developing students but may include students with or at-risk for disabilities as a subgroup.

¹⁰ For more information on the methodological focus areas see the Request for Applications for the Education Research Grants (84.305A), and Replication RFA (84.305R) available here: <https://ies.ed.gov/funding/>.

(3) Key Personnel

- The PI, any Co-PIs, and all mentors are considered key personnel and **must** be named and listed as key personnel in the application.
- All key personnel **must** be on one or more new or ongoing education research projects currently supported by the IES or another funding source. These projects should be appropriate for postdoctoral-level research training, and there **must** be at least one active project that will provide training opportunities for postdoctoral fellows for at least the first 2 years of the training grant.
- Key personnel on a postdoctoral training grant can take part in only **one IES-funded postdoctoral training grant at a time**, regardless of whether that training grant is funded by the National Center for Education Research (under CFDA 84.305B) or the National Center for Special Education Research (under CFDA 84.324B).
 - Key personnel on ongoing IES-funded Postdoctoral Training Program grants **may not apply** for another Postdoctoral Training Program grant nor be included on an application as key personnel for a Postdoctoral Training Program grant with a start date before the end of their current award. For example, if a Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, or mentor is part of a postdoctoral research training grant with an end date of July 30, 2020 and wishes to be on a proposal for a new FY 2020 postdoctoral research training grant, the new grant must have a start date between August 1, 2020 and September 1, 2020.

(4) Training Program Narrative

- The Training Program Narrative (recommended length: no more than 20 pages) for a Postdoctoral Training Program application **must** include four sections – Significance, Research Training Plan, Personnel, and Resources.
 - i. **Significance** - The purpose of this section is to describe the focus of your training program and how it will develop researchers capable of conducting and communicating high-quality scientific research that addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners. Describe the specific skills and knowledge fellows will receive and the training program’s potential contribution to the field of education sciences. Discuss how the focus of the program, knowledge and skills to be taught, and type of fellows to be recruited differs from and improves upon what is currently available in postdoctoral programs and fills a need in the field of education sciences.
 - You **must** describe
 - the content area and methodological focuses of your training program. These must be selected from the list in the table below in order to meet the requirements.

List of Acceptable Content and Methodological Focuses for Postdoctoral Training Grants

Content Area	Methodological Area
Adult Learners with Low Skills	Exploration
Career and Technical Education	Development and Innovation
Education Leadership	Efficacy
English Learners	Replication
	Measurement

- If any of the key personnel on the application were PIs of a previous Postdoctoral Training Program grant from IES, you **must** include a summary table in Appendix C describing the previous/ongoing IES-supported Postdoctoral Training Program(s). See Instructions for [Appendix C](#) for what should be included.

- ii. **Research Training Plan** - The purpose of this section is to outline the specific activities and mentoring your training program will provide.
 - You **must** describe
 - a recruitment plan (see the section on [Additional Budget Parameters and Application Requirements](#) for eligibility requirements/considerations for fellows);
 - research training activities;
 - the financial support to be provided to individual fellows and to the overall training program; and
 - a plan for tracking fellows' progress and determining the success of the training program.
- iii. **Personnel** – The purpose of this section is to describe your training team, including their relevant expertise, responsibilities, and time commitments.
 - You **must** describe all key personnel on the project team including the PI, any Co-PIs, and the other mentors.
- iv. **Resources** – The purpose of this section is to describe your access to institutional resources at the participating institution and any subaward institutions and your access to schools and data sets where applicable.
 - You **must** describe the institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions.

3. Awards

A Postdoctoral Training Program project **must** conform to the following limits on duration and cost.

Duration Maximums:

- The maximum duration of a Postdoctoral Training Program is **5 years**.

Cost Maximums:

- The maximum award for a Postdoctoral Training Program project is **\$766,000** (total cost = direct costs + indirect costs).
- For Postdoctoral Training Program grants, indirect costs are (except for State, local, and tribal governments) subject to 34 CFR 75.562. That provision limits indirect cost reimbursement to the recipient's actual indirect costs, as determined by its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base (MTDC) whichever amount is less. MTDC, under 34 CFR 75.562, means the total direct costs minus the following: the amount of each sub-award in excess of \$25,000, stipends, tuition and related fees, and equipment, as defined in 2 CFR 200.33. State, local, and tribal governments can charge indirect costs consistent with their approved indirect cost rate and other requirements set out in 34 CFR Part 75 and 2 CFR Part 200. (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-sec200-68.pdf>).
- The award can be used to support a maximum of 8 fellowship years. Your requested budget should depend upon the number of fellows to be supported, the number of years of support for each fellow, and the training program support funds requested.

4. Recommendations for a Strong Application

These recommendations are intended to improve the quality of your application, and the peer reviewers are asked to consider these recommendations in their evaluation of your application.

Significance

Training Program Focus and Framework

- Describe the content and methodological focuses of your training program and justify the need for researchers prepared to do research within these focuses.
 - Discuss how these focuses will develop fellows whose research will be useful to other education researchers, practitioners, and policymakers in improving students' education outcomes.
 - Describe how the activities you are proposing will prepare fellows to submit competitive applications for research funding in these areas.
- Describe how your training program will provide fellows with opportunities to
 - work directly with education policymakers and practitioners;
 - conduct independent research;
 - take on leadership positions within research teams; and
 - learn to communicate their findings to multiple audiences.
- Describe how your training program will provide opportunities for fellows to explore careers and make connections outside of academia.
- Discuss what will distinguish your training program from other postdoctoral training programs both in the training provided and the expectations for the fellows' future work.
- Describe a framework that ties together the training needs of the fellows, the training they will receive, the specific skills and knowledge they will learn, and their future work.

Skills and Knowledge

- Describe the skills and knowledge fellows are expected to master and explain their importance to education research and practice. These should include the following:
 - **research skills and knowledge**, such as developing a research agenda and gaining specific content and methodological expertise;
 - **leadership and entrepreneurial skills**, such as networking, conducting needs assessments and market analyses, developing and testing products, communicating and collaborating with stakeholders, forming and working with teams inside or outside of academia, and training and mentoring others;
 - **skills related to the Standards for Excellence in Education Research (SEER)**, such as pre-registering studies, focusing on outcomes meaningful to student success, documenting intervention implementation, identifying core intervention components, analyzing costs, facilitating generalization of study findings, making research findings, methods, and data available to others, and supporting future scaling of interventions; and
 - **professional skills**, such as preparing grant applications; collaborating with other researchers and with education practitioners and policymakers; writing articles for publication; managing research projects and grants; and disseminating research findings to a wide audience including researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and the public.

Postdoctoral Fellows

- Discuss the characteristics, interests, and needs of fellows that you are likely to recruit, including their fields, existing skills and expertise, previous work experience, and gaps in skills and knowledge.

Research Training Plan

Recruitment Plan, Eligibility Requirements, and Selection Criteria

- Identify the underrepresented groups from which you intend to recruit (such as racial/ethnic minorities first in their families to graduate college, veterans, individuals with disabilities) and describe your plan to recruit fellows from these groups.
- Describe how your recruitment plan will locate fellows who have high potential but may need more research experience and mentoring. IES encourages programs to consider fellows who may come from smaller or less well-known doctoral programs, including those at minority-serving institutions (MSIs).
- Describe how you will recruit candidates from multiple disciplines (if applicable).
- Describe how you will recruit non-traditional candidates such as practitioners, administrators, or researchers from industry or business who might be interested in shifting career focus to the education sciences.
- Discuss the criteria that you will use to select fellows.
- Provide a timeline (either in the Research Training Plan or Appendix F) that shows when you expect to recruit and train each fellow.
 - Postdoctoral Training Programs can begin from July 1 to September 1, 2020. IES encourages programs to use the first 6 to 12 months of the grant for recruitment with fellows starting in 2021.

Examples of Training Activities

- Participating in research projects
- Attending seminars
- Auditing courses
- Building cultural competency
- Teaching courses
- Reviewing journal articles
- Learning how to manage a grant
- Collaborating with policymakers
- Delivering practice job talks
- Presenting work at conferences
- Refining communication skills for non-technical audiences
- Writing or revising grant applications

Research Training Activities

- Describe the specific training activities as well as how they align with the program's content and methodological focuses, how they will contribute to the development of the fellows' skills and knowledge, how you will decide which fellows will participate in them, and how the program will monitor their contribution to the fellows' professional development.

Applicants are expected to provide fellows with

- research training through participation in
 - research grants or contracts under which the applicant carries out the type of research supported by IES;
 - other research training opportunities provided within or outside the organization/institution; and
 - research that involves working with education policymakers and practitioners;
 - experience disseminating research to a wide audience, including non-researchers;
 - training and experience developing, scaling up, and commercializing interventions and other products;
 - independent research;
 - lead authorship on articles submitted for publication to peer-reviewed journals;
 - completion and submission of manuscripts for publication based on fellows' dissertations, if applicable; and
 - training in career opportunities and support for transition to new positions outside the organization/institution after the fellowship ends.
- Describe the ongoing education research projects that fellows are likely to work on, including the content and methodological focuses of the projects, possible roles fellows could have, and competencies they could potentially gain through working on the project. Describe the specific

activities to support the postdoctoral fellows' transition to their next positions after the fellowship. The training program should help fellows learn how to identify and obtain appropriate career opportunities both within and outside of academia.

- If fellows will be offered opportunities to teach courses or perform consulting work for additional remuneration, discuss how these activities contribute to the program's training focus and do not detract from the fellows' research responsibilities and training activities. Programs will need to justify the value of such activities to IES before allowing fellows to engage in them.

Financial Support

- Describe both the overall allocation of funds for supporting the fellows and the training program and the specific uses of the funds.
- Describe how the program funds (up to \$16,000 a year) will be used to support program expenses, such as recruitment and administrative support. Be sure to meet the [Additional Budget Parameters and Application Requirements](#).
- Specify the length of the fellowship to be provided for each fellow.
 - Fellowships can last from 1 to 3 years per fellow. A Postdoctoral Training Program grant is permitted to support up at most 8 fellowship years (for instance, 8 fellows at 1 year each, 4 fellows at 2 years each, or 3 fellows at 2 years each and 2 fellows at 1 year each). Applications may propose to support fewer than 8 fellowship years.
- Note whether your institution is providing supplementary support funding and, if so, how it will be used.

Tracking Fellows' Progress and Program Success

- Discuss how you will identify each fellow's strengths and weaknesses upon entry to the program and how opportunities will be aligned with those strengths and needs.
- Describe how you will track each fellow's progress.
- Describe the measures you will use to determine that the training program is developing researchers who can conduct high-quality research that is important to solving critical problems in education.

Personnel

- Identify and briefly describe the following for all key personnel
 - qualifications to carry out the work;
 - roles and responsibilities within the project;
 - percent of time and calendar months per year to be devoted to the project;
 - past success at mentoring postdoctoral fellows;
 - past success at collaborating on research with and disseminating findings to policymakers and practitioners; and
 - past success at disseminating research findings in peer-reviewed scientific journals.
- Discuss how the collective research and training expertise and experience of your team (including non-key personnel, visiting scholars, etc.) align with and support the content and methodological focus of your training program.

Resources

- Describe the institutional resources available to support the training program at the participating institution(s), including research collaborations with state and local education agencies, education-related organizations, and other institutions.
- Describe your access to field settings, such as schools and districts, or data sources that may be used to support fellows' research projects.

- Describe partnerships you have with schools, agencies, or organizations that would provide fellows with opportunities to work with education policymakers and/or practitioners and discuss how these partnerships align with the focus of your training program.
- Describe the success of any previous Postdoctoral Training grants you, co-PIs or the other core training faculty have received from IES.
 - Describe their success in traditional academic terms through publishing in peer-reviewed journals and applying for and receiving grants.
 - Describe previous fellows' other accomplishments (such as developing and sharing programming code, acquiring patents, creating videos or multimedia dissemination products, blogging) as evidence of their success.
- Describe lessons learned from these grants and how you incorporated into them into the proposed training program.

5. Additional Budget Parameters and Application Requirements

The following requirements for postdoctoral training program applications will not be used in determining responsiveness to the RFA, but PIs whose applications are recommended for funding will be required to adjust their plans and budgets, if necessary, to meet them before receiving grant funds.

- In addition to the PI, the postdoctoral fellows will attend the annual IES PI meeting (for up to 3 days) in Washington, DC with other IES grantees and IES staff.
- If you receive an award under the Postdoctoral Training Program, you will have to certify that your training participants (fellows) meet the following requirements:¹¹
 - Postdoctoral fellows' research **must** be relevant to education in the United States;
 - Postdoctoral fellows **must** be citizens or permanent residents of the United States; and
 - Postdoctoral fellows **must** have received their doctorate prior to beginning the fellowship.
- In the following cases, IES must approve a candidate for a postdoctoral fellowship before an offer is made:¹²
 - the candidate has received postdoctoral support through any other federal training programs;
 - the candidate has received support through an IES predoctoral training program;
 - the candidate has or had a professional or personal relationship with key personnel, including a previous training or mentoring relationship; or
 - if the candidate is to be hired for a time period different from the primary training model proposed in the application (e.g., if the program wishes to hire him/her for 1 year in a typical 2-year training model).
- *Participant Support Costs:* Direct support of fellows is contingent on fellows' making satisfactory progress in their research activities. Grant funds provided for direct support of fellows include the following:
 - \$60,000 (maximum) in stipend per fellow per year (12 months) for up to 3 years.
 - Up to \$25,000 per fellow per year for additional fellow support to cover the following:
 - Fringe benefits: The fellowship **must include fringe benefits**, such as health insurance, at the level afforded to other employees of the applicant institution who are at a similar level as the postdoctoral fellows.

¹¹ Grant funds expended on fellows who do not meet these requirements will be disallowed (namely, you will have to return such expended funds).

¹² IES may deny the request.

- Support for other training activities including fellows' independent research;¹³ membership in professional organizations or societies; and registration and attendance at workshops, seminars, and professional meetings that provide complementary training.
- Travel to the annual IES PI meeting in Washington, DC. Each fellow should have sufficient funds to cover a 3-day meeting each year of his or her fellowship.
- The training program may supplement the direct support of fellows. Such a supplement would be considered cost-sharing and should be described in your Training Program Narrative and noted in your budget and budget narrative. Although cost sharing is allowed, it is not taken into consideration during the review of the application, nor does it influence the IES funding decision.
- *Training Program Costs:* You may request up to \$16,000 per training program year (not per fellow year) to support related program expenses. Examples of allowable expenses include the following:
 - recruitment of fellows, including advertising, campus visits, and other expenses;
 - the PI's travel to the annual IES PI Meeting;¹⁴
 - administrative support for the postdoctoral fellowship program;
 - honoraria for speakers for the fellows;
 - convening events for the fellows that include researchers, education practitioners, and/or policymakers;
 - tracking fellows' progress and the success of the training program; and
 - indirect costs.
- Grant funds must **not** be used for the following:
 - tuition for semester/quarter-based, credit-bearing courses offered by the grantee institution. Fellows are expected to audit any courses that are part of their training. Fellows may use grant funds to attend workshops or courses at other institutions;
 - faculty research;
 - facility construction, renovation, or maintenance; or
 - travel funds for key personnel other than for travel to the IES annual meeting.
- Postdoctoral fellows are expected to respond to periodic surveys and other requests for information from IES.

¹³ IES expects fellows to be working primarily on the funded research projects of the PI, Co-PIs and other core training faculty. Direct support funds can support independent projects (e.g., local travel to research sites, materials, personal computer).

¹⁴ If the PI of a training grant is also the PI for another IES grant, he or she must make sure that there is someone to represent each grant separately at the time of the annual meeting.

D. Methods Training for Education Researchers

Program Officer: Dr. Phill Gagné (202-245-7139; Phill.Gagne@ed.gov)

1. Purpose

The [Methods Training Program](#) supports training of current education researchers to expand and upgrade their methodological skills. Education researchers include individuals located in colleges and universities as well as individuals working in state and local education agencies, education-focused organizations, and companies that have developed and deployed education related products and services. Supported training should respond to the ongoing development and adaptation of methods concerning the design of education studies, analysis of the data collected, and practical interpretation of the results of analyses.

Methods Training
helps current education researchers expand and upgrade their research and analysis skills.

IES is not specifying the methodologies to be addressed. However, IES encourages applications that will provide training intended to do one or both of the following:

- (1) Support researchers and state and local education agency staff acquire skills necessary to obtain and generate the evidence needed for policy and programmatic decisions, such as the following:
 - creating and analyzing longitudinal data sets based on state, district or postsecondary administrative data;
 - designing and implementing rigorous education research;
 - carrying out cost analyses and cost-effectiveness analyses of education programs and policies and building the capacity to conduct such analyses; or
 - designing and implementing quick low-cost evaluations of interventions implemented by education agencies and postsecondary systems using administrative data.
- (2) Ensure that education researchers keep up with advances in the field, such as the following:
 - examining the variation in impacts across sites in experimental and quasi-experimental studies;
 - designing and implementing replication studies;
 - combining qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the effects of education policy, program implementation, and context on the impact of interventions; or
 - analyzing big data.

You may also propose training in other methods and should document the need for the training and how it will advance the field. IES is interested in projects that provide researchers with targeted, relevant training they can immediately apply in their work rather than supporting broad methodological education of the type provided by certificate or degree programs.

State and local education agencies are being asked to take on greater decision-making authority under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and other legislation. You should include training opportunities for state and local education agency staff responsible for implementing agency programs and policies and for reviewing how well they perform. You might invite agency staff to participate, include both agency staff and education researchers, or even require teams of agency staff and researchers to work together.

IES encourages you to provide methods training opportunities for researchers at minority-serving institutions (MSIs)¹⁵ in order to increase the capacity of their faculty and other research staff to carry out rigorous education research and to prepare participants for more advanced training.¹⁶

In the Final Performance Report submitted to IES, all Methods Training Program grantees will describe

- the training program as realized over the course of the grant, including descriptions of all key components discussed in the original application;
- the program's success in recruiting and training participants and their perceived value of the training;
- the program's success in preparing participants with the skills described in the original application;
- the program's success in meeting the participants' professional goals and/or the goals of the organizations the participants represent;
- opportunities for non-participants to benefit from the project (for example, preparing online videos of the training to share publicly, availability of comprehensive training materials or manual);
- cost per participant, including recruitment efforts; and
- recommendations for future Methods Training programs.

2. Requirements

Applications under the Methods Training program **must** meet the requirements listed below for (1) Eligible Applicants and (2) Training Program Narrative in order to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

(1) Eligible Applicants

- Applicants located in the territorial United States that have the ability and capacity to conduct training in scientific research methods are eligible to apply.
- An applying institution may hold more than one award from IES and may submit more than one application as long as each actual or proposed training program addresses a different issue and includes a different set of key personnel.

(2) Training Program Narrative

The Training Program Narrative (recommended length: no more than 20 pages) for a Methods Training application **must** include four sections – Significance, Research Training Plan, Personnel, and Resources.

- i. Significance** – The purpose of this section is to describe the focus of your training program (the methodological training to be provided) and justify why this focus is important to improving the fields of education research and practice.
 - You **must** describe the
 - specific methodologies that will be the focus of your training program; and
 - the intended participants.

¹⁵ [Minority-serving institutions](#) include Alaska Native-Serving Institutions; American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities; Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs); Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs); Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); Minority Institutions; Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions; Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions; and Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs). If funded, the grantee will work with IES to confirm the MSI status of potential training participants.

¹⁶ For an example, see the 2014 Research Design Workshop for Faculty from Minority-Serving Institutions hosted by Michigan State University and Northwestern University as part of their IES grant (R305U110001) to conduct training on randomized control trials: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/whatsnew/conferences/14MSIworkshop/>.

- ii. **Research Training Plan** – The purpose of this section is to describe the training to be provided, including recruitment for and outcomes of the training.
 - You **must** describe
 - a recruitment plan; and
 - the training content, format, and activities; and
 - a plan for tracking participants' progress and determining the success of the training program.

- iii. **Personnel** – The purpose of this section is to describe the relevant expertise of your research team, the responsibilities of each team member, and the time commitments of each team member.
 - You **must** describe all key personnel on the project team, including the PI, any Co-PIs, and other trainers.
 - Applications **must** name the experts in specific methodologies who will provide the training.
 - Letters of Agreement from key relevant training personnel **must** be included in [Appendix E](#).
 - **IES will not accept applications that propose to hire methods experts once the grant is received.**

- iv. **Resources** – The purpose of this section is to describe both how you have the institutional capacity to complete a project of this size and complexity and your access to the resources you will need to successfully complete this project.
 - You **must** describe the institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions.

3. Award Limits

A Methods Training Program **must** conform to the following limits on duration and cost.

Duration Maximums:

- The maximum duration of a Methods Training Program is **3 years**.

Cost Maximums:

- The maximum award for a Methods Training Program is **\$800,000** (total cost = direct costs + indirect costs).
- For Methods Training Program grants, indirect costs are (except for State, local, and tribal governments) subject to 34 CFR 75.562. That provision limits indirect cost reimbursement to the recipient's actual indirect costs, as determined by its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base (MTDC) whichever amount is less. MTDC, under 34 CFR 75.562, means the total direct costs minus the following: the amount of each sub-award in excess of \$25,000, stipends, tuition and related fees, and equipment, as defined in 2 CFR 200.33. State, local, and tribal governments can charge indirect costs consistent with their approved indirect cost rate and other requirements set out in 34 CFR Part 75 and 2 CFR Part 200. (<https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-sec200-68.pdf>).

4. Recommendations for a Strong Application

In order to improve the quality of your application, IES offers recommendations following each set of the Training Program Narrative requirements.

Significance

- Detail the specific methods that the training will teach and their importance to improving education research and/or the use of research in education practice. When applicable, note which SEER standards are aligned with the focus of the training.
- Describe the type of participants that you intend to recruit, noting their field of work and existing skills and expertise.
 - Justify why this is an important group to train in these methods.
 - Discuss the importance of these methods for the work of the expected participants.
 - Note the number of participants to be trained and whether there will be one or several cohorts of participants.
 - Identify any existing sources from which potential participants could currently obtain the training you propose. If such sources do exist, then justify why a new training program is necessary.
 - Provide a conceptual framework that ties together the training needs of the participants to be recruited, the training to be provided, the specific skills and knowledge that participants will acquire, and how the skills and knowledge will improve participants' ability to carry out their work.

Examples of Training Activities

- Preliminary introduction of participants to the method and to fellow researchers
- Lectures or webinars on the methodology
- Readings of and discussion on the method and its application
- Small group or individual applications using the method
- Application of the method to participants' own research
- Ongoing opportunities to consult with experts
- Presentation and review of participant work

Research Training Plan

Recruitment Plan, Eligibility Requirements, and Selection Criteria

- Discuss how the recruitment plan addresses the type of participants you intend to recruit, as described in the Significance section.
 - In most cases, the focus of Methods Training Programs is on participants who have received their master's degree or doctorate prior to beginning the training and are working in the field of education research. Training focused on state and local education personnel may include people with a bachelor's or master's degree.
 - Eligibility is limited to citizens or permanent residents of the United States.
- Discuss your strategies for recruiting individuals from groups that are underrepresented in the field of education research (for example, racial/ethnic minorities, first in their families to graduate college, veterans, and individuals with disabilities). Note any plans to train researchers at minority-serving institutions.
- Discuss your strategies for recruiting researchers from state and local education agencies, education-related organizations and businesses, as relevant. Describe how you will announce the training opportunity (training cannot be restricted to members/employees of a specific organization).
- Describe the eligibility criteria for participants and the application process.
- Describe the selection criteria, how they will be applied to the applicants, and who will make the decisions regarding admission to the training. Discuss how you will make the selection process fair and avoid any appearances of conflict of interest.
- Provide a timeline (either in the Research Training Plan section or [Appendix F](#)) delineating when the expected recruitment and training of the participants will take place. Methods Training projects can start between July 1, 2020, and September 1, 2020.

Training Activities

- Detail the format of the training.
 - Identify the number of participants to be included.
 - Discuss how the proposed format provides the training in a cost-effective way.
 - Describe how the structure and delivery of the training are organized to reflect adult learning theories (e.g., participants engaging in activities that are relevant and timely, linked to their work, and applicable to the problems of their fields).
 - Note whether the format of the training is intended to build networks among the participants and, if so, how joint learning and collaboration will be encouraged both during and after the training.
 - Describe the specific training activities for the method you are teaching.
 - Describe the specific content to be taught within each activity and how it will develop the expected knowledge, skills, and abilities in the participants.
 - Identify who will lead each activity and how long it will last.
 - Indicate whether participants will bring a specific research issue to work on during the training or will work on developing a plan to further their understanding of the methodological program.
 - IES encourages applicants to include training on how to discuss the methods with education policymakers and practitioners.

Tracking Participants' Progress and Program Success

- Discuss how you will identify the strengths and weaknesses of participants upon their entry to the program and how you will tailor the training accordingly.
- Describe the measures you will use to determine that the training program is developing researchers who can apply the methods being taught to their own research.
- Describe how you will estimate the cost of training per participant, including recruitment costs.

Personnel

- Describe the PI's qualifications and experience for managing a research training grant.
- Briefly describe the following for each key personnel:
 - qualifications and how these contribute to the focus of the training program;
 - roles and responsibilities within the training program;
 - percent of time and calendar months per year to be devoted to the training program; and
 - previous experience providing training for current education researchers.
- Discuss how the combined expertise of the key personnel reflects the methodological focus, format, and activities of the training program.

Resources

- Describe your institutional capacity and experience to manage a grant of this kind.
- Describe your access to resources available at the primary institution and any subaward institutions.
- Describe your plan for acquiring any resources that are not currently accessible, will require significant expenditures, and/or are necessary for the successful completion of the project (for example, equipment, test materials, curriculum or training materials).
- Include Letters of Agreement in [Appendix E](#) from all institutions that will take part in the training.
- Describe your access to any data sets that you will require for training purposes. Include letters of agreement, data licenses, or existing Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) in [Appendix E](#) to document that you will be able to access the data for your proposed use.
- Note any ongoing or recently completed methods research projects led by key personnel on your application related to the training to be provided (these are to be detailed in your [Appendix C](#)).

- Describe the success of any previous Methods Training Grants you or the other key personnel have had from the IES (these are to be detailed in your [Appendix C](#)) and describe any lessons learned incorporated into your application.
- Describe the resources you have to implement your dissemination plan as described in [Appendix A](#), providing opportunities for non-participants to have access to the training.

5. Additional Budget Parameters and Application Requirements

The following requirements for the Methods Training applications will not be used in determining responsiveness to the RFA, but applications recommended for funding will be required to adjust their plans and budgets, if necessary, to meet them before receiving grant funds.

- The budget must include potential costs of accommodations for trainees with disabilities; for example, a sign language interpreter and/or assistive listening devices. These costs should be reasonable given the duration and format of the training and should be budgeted for each training.
- Under the Methods Training program, you will have to certify that your training participants and your support of them meet the following requirements. Grant funds expended on participants in ways that do not meet these requirements will be disallowed (that is, your institution will have to return such expended funds).

Participant Characteristics

- Training participants must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States.
- Training participants should primarily be people who have received their master's degree or doctorate prior to beginning the training and are working in the field of education research. Training focused on state and local education personnel may include people with a bachelor's or master's degree.
- Participants' work must be relevant to education in the United States.

Participant Support

- Methods Training participants and their institutions cannot receive financial recompense for attending a training program.
- Participants are expected to cover their own travel costs with the following exceptions.
 - Reasonable travel costs for state and local education agency personnel attending the training can be covered by the grant.
 - A small number of training participants can have their travel costs covered by the grant if they have been accepted to the training but lack travel funding.
- Lodging and per diem can be covered by the grant but must not exceed federal government reimbursement rates for place and time of year (see <https://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>).
- In general, training grant funds may not be used to pay for food. However, under limited circumstances grant funds may be used to cover the costs of working lunches for attendees of training activities. If you are proposing to use grant funds for working lunches, you should include a clear description of the work to be accomplished during the meal as well as the per person cost. IES will determine whether these working lunch costs are allowable if the grant is awarded. Other meals or snacks should not be included in the grant budget.

Part III: Appendices and Other Narrative Content

A. Required and Optional Appendices

The required Training Program Narrative – Significance, Research Training Plan, Personnel, and Resources – that is described for each training program (see [Part II: Training Program Descriptions and Requirements](#)) is followed by several appendices. Some of these appendices are required, and some are optional. When you submit your application through Grants.gov, you will create a single PDF file that *contains the Training Program Narrative and all required and optional appendices* and include it as an attachment in the application package. Include appendices in alphabetical order and simply skip an appendix if it is not required for your application or if you choose not to include the optional appendices. See the IES Application Submission Guide (<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf>) for more information about preparing and submitting your application using the required application package for this competition through Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov/>).

1. Appendix A: Dissemination Plan (Methods Training Program Only)

You **must** include Appendix A after the Project Narrative.

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

In Appendix A, describe your plan to disseminate resources from the proposed training. Your dissemination plans should reflect the audiences that will benefit from the content and focus of your proposed training.

- Identify the audiences that you expect will most likely benefit from your training such as institutional researchers, state or local education agency staff, junior or senior academic researchers.
- Discuss the different ways in which you intend to reach these audiences through the materials, presentations, and products you expect to produce.
- Discuss how the public will access your resources, whether the resources will be static or updated, and if updated, how frequently.

2. Appendix B: Response to Reviewers (Required for Resubmissions)

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

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. We recommend that Appendix B be no more than three pages. Use Appendix B to describe how the revised application is responsive to prior reviewer comments.

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.

If you currently have an IES-funded Predoctoral Training Program grant and are submitting an application to renew your training program, then Appendix B is not required.

3. Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects (Required)

We recommend that Appendix C be no more than 15 pages.

Each training program has specific guidelines for the information to be included Appendix C. See below for the guidelines for each program. These are the only materials that should be included in Appendix C.

Predoctoral Training Program

- A summary table of ongoing research projects of the core faculty, including PI, project title, funder, and start/end dates. In the table, include the following for each project:
 - PI and other key personnel;
 - brief description, including program addressed and methods used.
 - brief explanation of where the project would fit within the IES research programs;
 - funding source;
 - duration;
 - possible roles for predoctoral fellows;
 - specific competencies fellows could potentially gain through working on the project; and
 - outcomes and products.
- If the PI or any key personnel on this application have had or currently have an IES-funded Predoctoral Training Program grant, a summary table of each training program that contains the following information:
 - title and award number of the grant;
 - core faculty who are also key personnel on the current application;
 - number of fellows admitted to the program;
 - percent of fellows who successfully completed the program;
 - research projects that fellows completed or are currently conducting;
 - research methods used or learned by fellows;
 - publications by fellows (both peer reviewed and other types);
 - titles of research grants received by fellows; and
 - current positions of former fellows.

Postdoctoral Training Program

- A summary table of the ongoing education research projects for which researcher mentors serve as PIs or Co-PIs and fellows may work on. In the table, include the following for each project:
 - Principal Investigator and other key researchers involved in the project.
 - Brief description (we recommend no more than three sentences) of the research project, including topic addressed and methods used.
 - Brief explanation of where the project would fit within the Institute's research programs and project types as described in the Institute's Education Research Grants program (84.305A), Statistical and Research Methodology in Education grants program (84.305D), or Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replications in Special Education (84.305R). The Request for Applications for these grant programs are available at <https://ies.ed.gov/funding>.
 - Funding source.
 - Duration of the project.
 - Possible roles postdoctoral fellows could have on the project.
 - Specific competencies fellows could potentially gain through working on the project.
 - Outcomes and products of the project.
- If the PI or any key personnel on this application have had or currently have an Institute-funded Postdoctoral Training Program grant, a summary table of the training program(s) that contains the following information:

- Title of the training program grant.
- Researcher mentors who are also key personnel on the current application.
- Number of fellows admitted to the program.
- Percent of fellows who successfully completed the program.
- Research projects that postdoctoral fellows completed or are currently conducting.
- Research methods used or learned by fellows.
- Publications by fellows (both peer reviewed and other types).
- Titles of research grants received by fellows.
- Current positions of former postdoctoral fellows.

Methods Training Program

- A summary table of the ongoing (and recently completed) research projects of the PI and/or Co-PIs that are related to the training to be provided. In the table, include the following for each project:
 - Principal Investigator and other key personnel involved in the project.
 - Brief description of the research project.
 - Funding source.
 - Duration of the project.
 - Outcomes and products of the project.
- If the PI or any key personnel on this application have had or currently have an Institute-funded Methods Training Program grant, a summary table of the training program(s) that contains the following information:
 - Title of the training program grant.
 - Number of participants admitted to the training program.
 - Research methods learned by participants.
 - Participant rating of the training program.
 - Results from follow-up with participants on their use of the material taught.

4. Appendix D: Examples of Letters of Agreement for Fellows (Required for Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Training Programs)

We recommend Appendix D be no more than two pages.

Include an example of the Letter of Agreement that the PI and each fellow will sign prior to the fellow's acceptance of the position. This letter should outline the conditions of the fellowship and contain the expectation that fellows will respond to IES research training surveys. The example letter is the only material that should be included in Appendix D.

5. Appendix E: Letters of Agreement (Required for Predoctoral and Methods Training Programs)

Include in Appendix E the Letters of Agreement from any institutional partners who will take part in the training program. Letters of Agreement should include enough information to make it clear that the author of the letter understands the nature of the commitment of time, space, and resources to the training program that will be required if the application is funded. Applicants for the Methods Training topic may also include data licenses and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in Appendix E.

Predoectoral Training Program

- Letters of Agreement from any involved departments showing their agreement to be part of the training program.

- Letters of Agreement from outside partners providing research or policy/practice apprenticeship opportunities for fellows.
- A Letter of Agreement from your university in support of establishing the Education Sciences Certificate.

Postdoctoral Training Program

- if your program includes trainers from multiple departments, institutions, or organizations, letters of Agreement from personnel providing training.
- If relevant, Letters of Agreement from any other involved departments showing their agreement to be part of the training program.
- If relevant, Letters of Agreement from outside partners providing research opportunities for fellows.

Methods Training

- Letters of Agreement from all key training personnel.
- Letters of Agreement from all institutions that will take part in the training.
- Letters of Agreement, data licenses, or existing Memorandum of Understanding in documenting access to any data sets to be used in the training.

6. Appendix F: Examples of Training and Assessment Materials (Optional)

We recommend that Appendix F be no more than 10 pages.

Include in Appendix F examples of training materials and tables/charts that support the Research Training Narrative (for example, a project timeline, syllabi, course descriptions, mentoring activities, seminars).

These materials may include self-assessments used to identify fellows' or participants' strengths, weaknesses, or interests; program or fellow/participant evaluation forms; training materials; and other such materials. These are the only materials that should be included in Appendix F.

B. Other Narrative Content

In addition to the Training Program Narrative (see [Part II: Training Program Descriptions and Requirements](#)) and required and optional Appendices (see above), you will also prepare a Project Summary/Abstract and a Bibliography and References Cited to include as file attachments in your application. See the IES Application Submission Guide (<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf>) for more information about preparing and submitting your application using the required application package for this competition on Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov/>).

1. Project Summary/Abstract

You must submit the Project Summary/Abstract as a separate PDF attachment. We recommend that the Project Summary/Abstract be one-page long and include the following information:

- **Title:** Distinct, descriptive title for the training program.
- **Topic:** Identify the RFA (Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences) and the program to which you are applying (Predoctoral Training Program, Postdoctoral Training Program, or Methods Training Program).
- **Description of the training:** Include
 - a brief description of the proposed training and its purpose;

- the expected number of fellows or researchers to be recruited and length of their training; and
- for the Postdoctoral Training Program, a brief description of education research currently conducted by the proposed key personnel, opportunities for fellows to be involved in education research projects, and opportunities for fellows to collaborate with practitioners and policymakers

Please see [online summary/abstracts](#) of previous and current training grants for examples of the content to be included in your summary/abstract.

2. Bibliography and References Cited

You must submit the Bibliography and References Cited as a separate PDF attachment in the application package. We do not recommend a page length for the Bibliography and References Cited. You should include complete citations, including the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), titles of relevant elements such as the article/journal and chapter/book, page numbers, and year of publication for literature cited in the Project Narrative.

Part IV: Competition Regulations and Review Criteria

A. Funding Mechanisms and Restrictions

1. Mechanism of Support

IES intends to award cooperative agreements pursuant to this Request for Applications. Through the terms of the cooperative agreements, grantees will work with IES to plan and implement their activities.

2. Funding Available

Although IES intends to support the programs 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. IES makes its awards to the highest quality applications as determined through scientific peer review, regardless of program.

The size of the award depends on the program and scope of the training program. Please attend to the duration and budget maximums set for each training program in [Part II: Training Program Requirements](#). IES will not make an award exceeding the relevant maximum grant duration and/or award amount as set out below.

IES intends to make no more than five Predoctoral Training awards for FY 2020. However, should funding be available, IES may consider making additional awards to high-quality applications that remain unfunded after five awards have been made. There is no limit on the number of Postdoctoral Training or Methods Training awards.

3. Special Considerations for Budget Expenses

Indirect Cost Rate

U.S. Department of Education policy (34 CFR 75.562 (c)(2)) limits indirect cost reimbursement on a training grant to the recipient's actual indirect costs, as determined by its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For the purposes of this competition, a modified total direct cost base is defined as total direct costs less stipends, tuition and related fees (including fellows' benefits), and capital expenditures of \$5,000 or more. Questions about indirect cost rates should be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Indirect Cost Group <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icqindex.html>.

Institutions, both primary grantees and sub-awardees, not located in the territorial U.S. cannot 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 the Office of Management and Budget's (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, such as working lunches; however, IES will determine whether these costs are allowable in keeping with the new OMB Uniform 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.

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, 85, 86 (part 86 applies only to institutions of higher education), 97, 98, and 99 and 2 CFR 3485. 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. Pre-Award Requirements and Funding

Applications that are being considered for funding following peer review may be required to provide further information on their proposed research training activities (see [Part II](#)) before a grant award is made. For example, you may be required to provide updated letters of agreement from any participating departments/schools or partners reaffirming commitment to participating in the training program and proposed cost-sharing (if applicable). You may be asked for additional detail regarding your recruitment plan or for your Predoctoral Training apprenticeships. In addition, you may be required to provide greater detail regarding your proposed training. If significant revisions to the project arise from these information requests they will have to be addressed under the original overall budget.

2. Attendance at the Annual IES Principal Investigators Meeting

The PI is required to attend one meeting each year (for up to 3 days) in Washington, DC with other IES grantees and IES staff. The project's budget should include this meeting. Should the PI not be able to attend the meeting, she or he may designate another person who is key personnel on the research training team to attend.

3. Public Availability of Results

All Principal Investigators and training fellows are required to submit the electronic version of their final manuscripts upon acceptance for publication in a peer-reviewed scholarly publication to [ERIC](#), a publicly accessible and searchable electronic database of education research that makes available full text documents to the public for free. This [public access requirement](#) applies to peer-reviewed, original scholarly publications that have been supported (in whole or in part) with direct funding from IES, although it does not apply to book chapters, editorials, reviews, or non-peer-reviewed conference proceedings. **Principal Investigators must submit any peer-reviewed scholarly publications to ERIC.**

The author's final manuscript is defined as the final version accepted for journal publication and includes all modifications from the peer review process. Submission of accepted manuscripts for public accessibility through ERIC is strongly encouraged as soon as possible **but must occur within 12 months of the publisher's official date of publication.** ERIC will not make the accepted manuscripts

available to the public prior to the end of the 12-month embargo period, unless specified by the publisher.

The ERIC website includes a homepage for the [Grantee and Online Submission System](#), as well as a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page. During the submission process, authors will submit bibliographic information from the publication, including title, authors, publication date, journal title, and associated IES award number(s).

4. Special Conditions on Grants

IES may impose special conditions on a grant 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.

Training grant recipients who have not successfully recruited the number of fellows/participants for whom they requested funding will have their continuation funding adjusted.

C. Overview of Application and Peer Review Process

1. Submitting a Letter of Intent

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

Elements of a Letter of Intent:

- Descriptive title;
- Research Training Program that you will address;
- Brief description of the proposed training program;
- Name, institutional affiliation, address, telephone number, and email address of the Principal Investigator and any co-Principal Investigators;
- Name and institutional affiliation of any key collaborators and contractors;
- Duration of the proposed project (attend to the Duration maximums for each Training Program); and
- Estimated total budget request (attend to the Budget maximums for each Training Program).

2. Resubmissions and Multiple Submissions

If you intend to revise and resubmit an application that was submitted to one of the IES's previous competitions but that was not funded, you must indicate on the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance Form in the Application Package (see [IES Application Submission Guide](#)) that the FY 2020 application is a resubmission (Item 8) and include the application number of the previous application (an 11-character alphanumeric identifier beginning "R305" 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: Response to Reviewers](#). Revised and resubmitted applications will be reviewed according to this FY 2020 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 (Item 8) that the FY 2020 application is a new application. In Appendix B, you must provide a rationale explaining why the FY 2020 application should be considered a new application rather than a revision. If

you do not provide such an explanation, then IES 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 IES FY 2020 Training Grant programs and to multiple topics within the Education Research Training Grants program, so long as you meet the requirements below.

- An institution may submit only one application to the Predoctoral Training Program.
- An institution may submit multiple applications to the Postdoctoral Training Program only if they are substantively different from one another and do not include key personnel that are also on another application to the Postdoctoral Training Program.
- An institution may submit multiple applications to the Methods Training Program if they are substantively different from one another.
- If you submit more than one application to the same program under the Research Training grants program or if you submit the same or similar applications, IES will determine whether and which applications will be accepted for review and/or will be eligible for funding.

3. Application Processing

Applications must be submitted electronically and received no later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on August 29, 2019 through the internet using the software provided on the Grants.gov website <https://www.grants.gov/>. You must follow the application procedures and submission requirements described in the IES Application Submission Guide (<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf>) and on Grants.gov <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>.

After applications are fully uploaded and validated at Grants.gov, the U.S. Department of Education receives the applications for processing and transfer to the IES Peer Review Information Management Online (PRIMO) system (<https://iesreview.ed.gov/>). PRIMO allows applicants to track the progress of their application via the Applicant Notification System (ANS).

Approximately 1 to 2 weeks after the application deadline, invitation emails are sent to applicants who have never applied to IES before to create their individual PRIMO ANS accounts. Both the PD/PI and the AOR will receive invitation emails. Approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the application deadline, all applicants (new and existing ANS users) will begin to receive a series of emails about the status of their application. See the [IES Application Submission Guide](#) for additional information about ANS and PRIMO.

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

4. Scientific Peer Review Process

IES 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 IES website, https://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 IES scientific review panels https://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/peer_review/reviewers.asp. Applications are assigned to panel according to the match between the overall expertise of reviewers on each panel and the content and methodological approach proposed in each application.

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, IES calculates an average overall score for each application and prepares a preliminary rank order of applications before the full scientific 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 IES-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 specific purpose of IES-supported training programs is to support this contribution by furthering the training of education researchers and policymakers. In doing so, IES aims to increase the quality, accessibility, use, and relevance of education research. IES expects reviewers for all applications to assess the following aspects of an application in order to judge the likelihood that the proposed training program will have a substantial impact on that purpose. Information pertinent to each of these criteria is described in [Part II: Training Program Requirements](#).

Significance

Does the applicant provide a compelling rationale for the significance of the training program as defined in the Significance section for the program under which the applicant is submitting the application? Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Significance section for the training program under which the applicant is submitting the application?

Research Training Plan

Does the applicant address the recommendations for the training plans described in the Research Training Plan section for the program under which the applicant is submitting the application?

Personnel

Does the description of the personnel make it apparent that the Principal Investigator and other key personnel possess appropriate training and experience and will commit sufficient time to competently implement the proposed training?

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?

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 training described in this Request for Applications;
- ability to carry out the proposed research training within the maximum award and duration requirements; and
- availability of funds.

Part VI: Compliance and Responsiveness Checklist

Only compliant and responsive applications will be peer reviewed. Use this checklist to better ensure you have included all required components for compliance and that you have addressed all general and project narrative requirements for responsiveness.

Compliance			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you included a Training Program Narrative? 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Predoctoral Training Program applications, have you included the following Required Appendices? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you are resubmitting an application, Appendix B: Response to Reviewers ○ Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects ○ Appendix D: Example Letter of Agreement for Fellows ○ Appendix E: Letters of Agreement from Training Partners 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Postdoctoral Training Program applications, have you included the following required Appendices? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you are resubmitting an application, Appendix B: Response to Reviewers ○ Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects ○ Appendix D: Example Letter of Agreement for Fellows 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Methods Training Program applications, have you included the following Required Appendices? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appendix A: Dissemination Plan ○ If you are resubmitting an application, Appendix B: Response to Reviewers ○ Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects ○ Appendix E: Letters of Agreement from Training Partners 		
Responsiveness			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you identified a single Training Program for your application? 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Predoctoral Training Program applications, did you meet the Program Requirements under (1) Training Program Focus, (2) Eligible Applicants, and (3) Key Personnel? 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Postdoctoral Training Program applications, did you meet the Program Requirements under (1) Training Program Focus, (2) Eligible Applicants, and (3) Key Personnel? 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Methods Training Program applications, did you meet the Program Requirements under (1) Eligible Applicants? 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does your Training Program Narrative include the required sections? Did you describe the elements required for each section? 		
Required Training Program Narrative Elements			
	<u>Predoctoral Training Program</u>	<u>Postdoctoral Training Program</u>	<u>Methods Training Program</u>
Significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • content area and methodological focuses of your training program selected from the list in Part II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • content area and methodological focuses of your training program selected from the list in Part II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific methodologies that will be the focus of your training program • intended participants
Research Training Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment plan • research training activities • financial support to be provided to individual fellows and to the overall training program • plan for tracking fellows' progress • plan for awarding the Education Sciences Certificate • plan for determining the success of the training program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment plan • research training activities • the financial support to be provided to individual fellows and to the overall training program • plan for tracking fellows' progress and determining the success of the training program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruitment plan • the training content, format, and activities • plan for tracking participants' progress and determining the success of the training program
Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all key personnel on the project team including the PI, any Co-PIs, and the other core faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all key personnel on the project team including the PI, any Co-PIs, and the other mentors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all key personnel on the project team, including the PI, any Co-PIs, and other trainers.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions