Improving Pandemic Recovery Efforts in Education Agencies

Assistance Listing Number (ALN) 84.305X

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Product of the National Center for Education Research

Letter of Intent Due:	January 13, 2022	https://iesreview.ed.gov/LOI/LOISubmit
Application Package Available:	December 16, 2021	https://www.grants.gov
Application Deadline:	11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time March 10, 2022	https://www.grants.gov
Start Date:	September 1, 2022	

All applicants must also read the companion IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf) for information on how to prepare and submit applications electronically through Grants.gov.

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Part I: Overview and General Requirements

A. Purpose of the Improving Pandemic Recovery Efforts in Education Agencies Grant Program

Through its National Center for Education Research (NCER), the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) supports a sustained program of research to build knowledge and understanding of education practice and policy. IES was established by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA – P.L. 107-279) to improve academic achievement and access to educational opportunities for all learners (ESRA, § 111.b.1.B) with a focus on learners who might not achieve (ESRA, § 115.a.1) or who lack access to educational opportunities (ESRA, § 115.a.2.A). In carrying out this mission, IES takes steps to ensure that our work is carried out in a manner that is free of racial, cultural, gender, or regional bias (ESRA, § 111.b.2.B). NCER's program of research is intended to achieve four outcomes –

1. Improved access to a high-quality education for all learners from early childhood through adulthood, particularly learners least likely to have such access

2. Improved academic achievement for all learners from early childhood through adulthood, particularly those least likely to achieve academically

3. Reduced opportunity and achievement gaps between high-performing and low-performing learners

4. Improved access to, persistence in, progress through, and successful completion of postsecondary education

In this request for applications (RFA), NCER invites applications for research projects that will contribute to the Improving Pandemic Recovery Efforts in Education Agencies (Improving Pandemic Recovery) grant program (ALN 84.305X). Consistent with the authority provided in Sec. 2010 of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), the Improving Pandemic Recovery grant program will support research to counteract instructional and learning loss encountered by many learners during the COVID-19 pandemic; identify, explore, and evaluate state and local programs and policies designed to accelerate learning and recovery of those learners; and provide evidence to state and local agencies to improve learner engagement, reengagement and achievement through recovery activities. NCER is particularly interested in applications that address learning acceleration and recovery for underrepresented student subgroups that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19[1]. The specific research questions posed should be determined by the education agencies partnering in the application.

Under the Improving Pandemic Recovery grants program, IES intends to establish two research networks with one examining recovery activities in prekindergarten through grade 12 and the other examining recovery activities in community colleges. Each network will consist of one project that coordinates and leads the network (Network Lead) and several projects that carry out research on recovery (Research Teams). Each Research Team will include at least one education agency (defined as state and local agencies involved in PreK-12 education and community college systems), and its research will focus on learners being served by that agency(ies) and the recovery activities in which the learners are engaged. The Network Leads will provide national leadership on learning acceleration and recovery from pandemic-induced learning loss, sharing findings from the network with education agencies across the US.

The Improving Pandemic Recovery grant program is intended to address research questions such as:

- How have the disruptions in education due to COVID-19 been associated with changes in learners'

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[1] The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 identifies the following subgroups for IES to carry out research related to addressing learning loss caused by the coronavirus: students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and student subgroups described in section 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which includes major racial and ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged students, and children with disabilities, English proficiency status, gender, and migrant status.

achievement and opportunities to learn during the disruptions? How have achievement and opportunities to learn changed during the recovery from the disruptions?

- Are recovery activities being implemented as planned and are they reaching the intended learners?

- Which recovery activities (e.g., practices, programs and services, and policies) are reengaging learners in their education and help meet their current social, emotional, and mental health needs?

- Which recovery activities increase student learning in academic subjects, support progress through the education system, and offset learning loss that occurred due to the disruptions?

- Which recovery activities support educator practice and well-being thereby supporting student reengagement and learning?

To encourage rigorous education research that is transparent, actionable, and focused on meaningful outcomes, all applications to the FY 2022 Improving Pandemic Recovery grant program are expected to incorporate the principles outlined in the IES-wide Standards for Excellence in Education Research (SEER; https://ies.ed.gov/seer/), as applicable. These principles include -

- Pre-registering studies

- Making research findings, methods, and data available to others

- Identifying core intervention components

- Documenting intervention implementation and contrast to inform use in other settings

- Analyzing costs

- Focusing on outcomes meaningful to learners' success (learning outcomes, opportunities in education, or success from education)

- Facilitating generalization of study findings

- Conducting research in a way that informs the future scaling of interventions

IES-funded research should yield outcomes and products that are meaningful, inform stakeholders about the cost and practical benefits and effects of interventions (programs, policies, practices) on relevant outcomes for learners, and contribute to scientific knowledge and theory of teaching, learning, and organizing education systems (ESRA, § 112.1). NCER expects researchers receiving funding through this program to disseminate evidence in a way that is useful to and accessible by educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public (ESRA, § 112.2). NCER also expects findings to address the teaching and learning needs of the diverse population of the United States and seeks to support researchers that reflect this diversity. IES encourages principal investigators and key personnel from all demographic backgrounds (https://ies.ed.gov/aboutus/diversity.asp) and encourages applications from minority-serving institutions.

IES will consider only applications that are responsive and compliant to the requirements described in this Request for Applications (RFA) and submitted on time electronically via Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov).

All awards will be made as cooperative agreements to support IES's involvement in the planning and implementation of network activities. As part of the cooperative agreements with IES, each network team, including the Network Leads, will commit to collaborative participation with the network. See Part IV.B.1.b Network Commitments for the specific agreements for members of each network.

B. General Requirements

Applications to the Improving Pandemic Recovery grant program **must meet these requirements** to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

1. Eligible Applicants

Institutions that have the ability and capacity to conduct rigorous research are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, non-profit and for-profit organizations and public and private agencies and institutions, such as colleges and universities. One or more education agencies **must** be included as the primary applicant or a subaward on any Research Team application. Eligible education agencies include state and local agencies (including U.S. Territory and tribal agencies) that oversee prekindergarten, elementary, and/or secondary education, and state and city community college systems that provide postsecondary and/or adult education. To be eligible, the education agency **must** be implementing the recovery program or policy being proposed for study. When an education agency applies with another organization, such as a research institution, IES does not have preference for whether the applicant is the education agency or the research institution but recommends that the applicant has the grant management expertise to fulfill the administrative, financial, and reporting requirements of the grant.

IES is committed to broadening institutional participation in its research grant programs[2]. IES encourages applications from minority-serving institutions (MSIs) that meet the eligibility criteria for this RFA. MSIs include Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Predominantly Black Institutions, and Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions.

The principal investigator (PI) is the individual who has the authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the research, including the appropriate use of federal funds and the submission of required scientific progress reports. If an education agency is the applicant, the PI **must** be from that agency. If the education agency is a co-applicant, then the PI will be from the applicant institution and a co-principal investigator (co-PI) **must** be included from the education agency. If multiple education agencies are taking part in the project, a co-PI from each must be included. Other personnel sharing the authority and responsibility for leading and directing the research project intellectually and logistically should be designated as co-PIs.

2. Eligible Study Population

You **must** study learners in prekindergarten through grade 12 or in community colleges (postsecondary or adult learners) and examine at least one underrepresented student subgroup disproportionately affected by COVID-19. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 identifies the following subgroups for IES to carry out research related to addressing learning loss caused by the coronavirus: students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and subgroups identified in section 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which includes major racial and ethnic groups, economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English proficiency status, gender, and migrant status.

3. Education Outcomes

(a) Academic Outcomes

Research proposed **must** measure academic outcomes of learners. IES supports research on a diverse set of academic outcomes that reflect **learning and achievement** in academic content areas and learners' **successful progression** through education systems. IES is interested in the following academic outcomes:

- For **prekindergarten**, school readiness outcomes, including pre-reading, language, vocabulary, early-STEM (science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics) knowledge, English language

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[2] Section 114 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 charges IES with undertaking "initiatives and programs to increase the participation of researchers and institutions that have been historically underutilized in Federal education research activities of the Institute, including historically Black colleges or universities or other institutions of higher education with large numbers of minority students."

proficiency, digital literacy[3], and social and behavioral competencies (including self-regulation and executive function) that prepare young children for school

- For **kindergarten through Grade 12,** learning, achievement, and higher order thinking in the academic content areas of literacy (including digital literacy), STEM, social studies[4]; English language proficiency; career and technical education (CTE) attainment[5]; and progression through education systems as indicated by course and grade completion, retention, high school graduation, and dropout

- For **postsecondary**, learning, achievement, and higher order thinking in postsecondary courses; and access to, persistence in, progress through, and completion of postsecondary education, which includes developmental education courses and bridge programs as well as programs that lead to occupational certificates, associate's, or bachelor's degrees

- For **adult education**[6] achievement in literacy, English language proficiency, and numeracy, as well as access to, persistence in, progress through, and completion of adult education courses and programs

(b) Other Recommended Outcomes

Given the pandemic's potential to reduce learners' feelings of well-being, safety, and connectedness while increasing their disengagement from school, IES strongly recommends that applicants include learner social, behavioral, emotional, and mental health outcomes.

Other relevant outcomes may include learner reengagement in their education (such as student interest, motivation, and participation) or labor market outcomes (such as employment or earnings). In addition, if the recovery activities being examined are expected to influence educators, applicants should also include **educator outcomes** (such as measures of educator knowledge, skills, beliefs, behaviors, and/or practices) in addition to learner outcomes.

4. Education Settings

Proposed research must address recovery activities in U.S. prekindergarten, elementary, and/or secondary education systems implemented by state and local agencies (including U.S. Territory and tribal agencies), or in U.S. postsecondary and/or adult education programs implemented by state and city community college systems. Contact an IES program officer if you have questions about the setting you have identified for your proposed research.

5. Network Topic and Role

You **must** indicate which of the two network topics you are applying to:
- PreK through Grade 12

- Community College

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[3] For the purposes of this competition, we are adopting the American Library Association definition of the term *digital literacy*: "the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills."

[4] *Social studies* outcomes are defined as a learner's understanding of government structures and processes and how to be an engaged and knowledgeable citizen through skills and knowledge in civics, citizenship, geography, history, and economics.

[5] *CTE attainment* is defined as an indicator of mastery of CTE content or skills such as CTE course grades or credits earned, technical skills, assessment scores, industry certification, or employment outcomes in a field related to the CTE training.

[6] *Adult education* refers to the system that serves learners at least 16-years old and outside the K-12 system who are preparing for, transitioning into, or currently enrolled in adult education, as defined in Title II of the 2015 Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), such as Adult Basic Education, adult English language programs, and preparation programs for high school equivalency exams.

You **must** also indicate which network role you are applying to:
- Network Lead

- Research Team

6. *Award Limits*

All applicants should align their budgets with proposed project activities and provide justification for the amount requested in the budget narrative.

Network Role	Maximum Number of Awards per Network	Maximum Grant Duration	Maximum Grant Award
Research Team	5	3 years	$3,000,000 per team
Network Lead	1	3 years	$3,000,000

C. Getting Started

1. *Technical Assistance for Applicants*

IES provides technical assistance to applicants that addresses the appropriateness of project ideas for this competition and methodological and other substantive issues concerning research in education settings. IES program officers work with applicants though 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/) and virtual office hours that include advice on choosing the correct competition, grant writing, and submitting your application.

The program officers for the two network topics in this RFA are –

- Prekindergarten through Grade 12 Recovery Research Network

  Dr. Corinne Alfeld   Dr. Allen Ruby
  (202) 245-8203   (202) 245-8145
  Corinne.Alfeld@ed.gov   Allen.Ruby@ed.gov

- Community College Recovery Research Network

  Dr. James Benson
  (202) 245-8333
  James.Benson@ed.gov

2. *RFA Organization and the IES Application Submission Guide*

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. Part I sets out the general requirements for a grant application. Part II provides further detail on the requirements by network topic and network role. Part III provides information about general formatting and other narrative content for the application, including required appendices. Part IV provides general information on competition regulations and the review process.

Part V provides a checklist that you can use to ensure you have included all required application elements to advance to scientific peer review. Part VI provides the topic and network role codes that you must enter in Item 4b of the SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance form.

2. *The IES Application Submission Guide* (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 on time without errors through Grants.gov.

We strongly recommend that both the principal investigator (PI) and the authorized organization representative (AOR) read both documents, whether submitting a new or revised application.

3. Ensuring Your Application is Forwarded for Scientific Peer Review

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.

(a) On-time submission

See the IES Application Submission Guide (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 March 10, 2022.

(b) Compliance

- Includes the **required project narrative** (see Part II)

- Adheres to all formatting requirements (see Part III)

- Adheres to all page limit maximums for the project narratives and appendices. IES will remove any pages above the maximum before forwarding an application for peer review

- Includes all **required appendices** (see Part III)
  - Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan (Research Teams only)
  - Appendix D: Letters of Agreement
  - Appendix E: Data Management Plan (Research Teams only)

(c) Responsiveness
- Meets **requirements** for all applications (see Parts I, II and III)
- Meets **requirements** by network topic and network role (see Part II)

Part II: Research Networks

A. PreK through Grade 12 Recovery Research Network

1. Purpose

Education agencies are engaged in activities to address the disruptions to engagement and learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for underrepresented student subgroups that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

The PreK through Grade 12 Recovery Research Network will carry out two types of activities to assess state and local education agencies' recovery efforts and develop knowledge on how to identify learners who are struggling and how to prepare them for on-grade work.

First, Research Teams will work directly with state and local education agencies on their recovery efforts with the goal of providing evidence to help direct, improve, and select among potential recovery activities. Research Teams can address recovery activities broadly across prekindergarten to Grade 12 or focus more narrowly on recovery activities for a specific sample of grades or learners. These Research Team projects should examine short-term student academic and other outcomes, as well as longer-term ones, so that findings can be released quickly enough to inform agencies' ongoing decisions on recovery activities.

Second, the Network Lead will facilitate collaboration within the network and will coordinate with state and local education agencies, including those not participating on Research Teams, to identify other ongoing recovery activities, identify additional research needs and opportunities, and disseminate findings from the Research Teams. The Network Lead will provide national leadership to ensure that the public benefits from the findings regarding learners' recovery needs and the activities that can support recovery identified both from the Research Teams and from research conducted outside the Network.

The Research Teams and Network Lead are expected to collaborate with one another to identify common measures, discuss research plans, offer cross-site training and/or mentoring of early career researchers (including agency personnel) from the Research Teams and Network Lead, share emerging findings, and give and receive constructive feedback.

Upon completion of the network, members will have produced research findings that identify and improve activities that support recovery, worked with state and local education agencies to improve their recovery activities, trained early career researchers, and disseminated information to multiple stakeholders across the nation to help increase learner engagement and achievement.

2. Research Team Requirements and Recommendations

(a) Overview
Research Team projects include state and local education agencies and address the recovery activities these agencies are implementing with their learners (overall and with subgroups). Research Teams may propose research that will help the agencies identify learners for whom recovery activities are needed to help them reengage and achieve in education and/or better understand and improve the recovery activities provided to these learners.

(b) Research Team Project Narrative Requirements
Each Research Team project narrative **must** adhere to the formatting guidelines (see Part III.B) and be no more than 22 pages. If the narrative exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 22nd page of the narrative. The project narrative for a Research Team application **must** include four sections: Significance, Research Plan, Personnel, and Resources.

(1) Significance
The purpose of this section is to describe the type of work you propose, the learner population you intend to address, your work's potential contribution to improving the recovery activities being implemented by the state and/or local education agency(ies) involved in the project for these learners, and its contribution to our understanding of how to increase learner reengagement and achievement.

You **must describe**
- The state and/or local education agency(ies) participating in the project

- The student population (including grade range and subgroups) the project will focus on

- The recovery activities that the agency(ies) is or will be implementing

- How the research will identify and improve activities that support recovery

- Your study's research questions

(2) Research Plan
The purpose of this section is to describe your research design, methods, and analysis plan and demonstrate how these will address the research questions. IES encourages the use of methods that combine both quantitative and qualitative analysis as relevant and appropriate. IES expects all research it funds to adhere to SEER principles to the extent possible.

You **must** describe the
- Characteristics of your sample or data source, which **must** include learners in prekindergarten through grade 12, or a subset of these grades, who are engaged in or would benefit from recovery activities

- Research design and methods for your study or studies

- Learner outcomes you will be examining

- Data analysis plan for your study or studies

- Cost analysis plan and the cost-effectiveness plan (as appropriate) for any recovery activity you will be evaluating

(3) Personnel
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that your team possesses the appropriate background and experience for the proposed research and dissemination activities and will commit enough time to the project.

You **must describe** your project team and identify a PI or co-PI from every state or local agency taking part in the project.

(4) Resources
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how you have the organizational capacity and access to resources (including any districts, schools, and learners) needed to execute a project of this size and complexity and appropriately disseminate the findings and products.

You **must describe** your resources to conduct the project.

(c) Award Limits

(1) Duration Maximum
The maximum duration for a Research Team award is **3 years**.

(2) Cost Maximum
The maximum cost for a Research Team award is **$3,000,000** (total cost = direct + indirect costs).

Applicants should **request funds commensurate with the work they propose**, which may not require the maximum amount. Applicants should use part of their requested funds to ensure that the research team is able to meet the Network Commitments (Part IV.B.1.b) for participation in the Network.

(3) Maximum Number of Awards
IES intends to make no more than five Research Team awards under the Prekindergarten through Grade 12 Recovery Research Network topic. However, should funding be available, IES may consider making additional awards to high-quality applications that remain unfunded after five awards have been made.

(d) Data Management Plan Requirement
All Research Team applications **must include** Appendix E: Data Management Plan (DMP).

IES program officers will be responsible for reviewing the completeness of the proposed DMP. Appendix E is not considered in the review of scientific merit of your application. If your application is being considered for funding based on the scores received during the scientific peer-review process, but your DMP is determined incomplete, you will be required to provide additional detail regarding your DMP.

(e) Dissemination History and Plan
All Research Team applications **must include** Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan.

IES is committed to making the results of IES-funded research available to a wide range of audiences (see IES Policy Regarding Public Access to Research; https://ies.ed.gov/funding/researchaccess.asp). To ensure that findings from the Education Research Grants program are available to all interested audiences, IES **requires all Research Team applicants** to –
- present a plan to disseminate project findings and resources so that they make meaningful contributions to education policy and practice

- describe their dissemination history to demonstrate their ability and capacity to disseminate research findings to a range of audiences, including state and local agencies, educators, policymakers, learners, parents, and the public.

For Research Team applications, peer reviewers will score Dissemination as a separate criterion in the review process. **Research Team applications that do not contain a Dissemination History and Plan in Appendix A will not be peer reviewed.**

(f) Recommendations for a Strong Application

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

(1) Significance
Discuss the recovery issues facing the state and/or local education agencies involved in the project.

- Note what student (overall and by subgroup) and school populations the agency has identified as needing recovery activities, how this identification was done, and whether additional research is necessary to complete this identification work.

- Describe the agency's plans for addressing the recovery issues it is facing including specific recovery activities (both those currently underway and those in the planning stage). If possible, provide a theory of change showing what recovery activities the agency intends to provide to students (overall and by subgroup), any intended intermediate outcomes, and the intended learner outcomes of those activities (i.e., show the agency's goals for its recovery activities and how it intends to achieve them).

Describe the information the agency needs to increase learner reengagement and achievement through its recovery activities.

Describe how this project's research will provide the needed information. Note if the project will focus on providing this information for a specific population (grade range or subgroups) or a specific set of recovery activities within the agency's overall recovery plans. Justify the importance of this focus for the agency's recovery goals.

Describe the research questions the project will address. Explain how the answers to these questions can be used by the agency to better develop, direct, modify, and implement its recovery activities to increase learner reengagement and achievement.

Note how this research is likely to be of use to other education agencies and how it will contribute to our understanding of how recovery activities can be used to prepare learners for on-grade work.

(2) Research Plan
Discuss the population you intend to study and how your sample and sampling procedures will allow you to draw inferences about this population.

Describe the research designs you will use to address your research questions. You may propose descriptive, correlational, predictive and/or causal analyses. Link the analyses to the research questions and the decisions the state agency needs to make that you discussed in the Significance section. For example, an agency may use a descriptive or predictive study to determine which learners require specific types of recovery activities. An implementation study (often based on mixed methods) could be used to determine if a program is being implemented well or is reaching a specific subpopulation, and it might be paired with a correlational study to determine whether implementation is associated with learner outcomes. A continuous improvement design could be used to adapt a set of activities to support recovery for a specific student group and it could include causal studies to check if adaptations are improving learner outcomes. An agency might implement a causal impact design to determine whether a specific type of recovery activity (or combination of them) is reengaging learners or preparing them for on-grade work. Causal impact studies should be accompanied by an implementation study and cost analysis. Any of these types of analyses, alone or in combination, is appropriate for this competition.

Please refer to the Recommendations for Strong Applications for project types in the Request for Applications for the Education Research Grants Program (ALS 84.305A) for additional recommendations regarding these different types of designs (see https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2022_84305A.pdf). *Each proposed analysis should be shown to address a specific research question and support the recovery decisions the education agency needs to make.*

Describe the outcome measures you will be examining and how they fit with your research questions and the decisions the education agency needs to make.

- Include required learner academic outcome measures as well as relevant reengagement measures, social and behavioral competencies, and employment and earnings outcomes that are of interest to the agency. These measures should align with the theory of change for the recovery activities.

- If recovery activities are designed to directly change the teaching and learning environment and, in doing so, indirectly affect learner outcomes, provide measures of the intermediate outcomes (e.g., teacher or leader behaviors), as well as measures of learner education outcomes.

For your data analyses:

- Describe and justify the statistical models to be used, including how they address the multilevel nature of education data and how well they control for selection bias, if necessary.

- Discuss how you will address exclusion from any data set and missing data. Describe sensitivity tests to assess the influence of key procedural or analytic decisions on the results.

- Provide separate descriptions for all analysis of factors that influence the relationship between a recovery activity and learner outcomes (mediators and moderators).

- Describe any subgroup analyses (including subgroups identified in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) that will be conducted to examine learners from diverse backgrounds and experiences within your sample.

(3) Personnel
Identify and describe expertise and qualifications of the project team at the primary applicant institution and at any subaward institutions. Be sure to include a PI or co-PI from every state or local agency taking part.

Describe how the background and experience of the project team supports the successful conduct of the proposed work. For each key personnel, include the following:

- Roles and responsibilities on the project

- Expertise and training for the responsibilities they will hold

- Proportion of time personnel will devote to the project, expressed as percent effort over a 12- month calendar year

- Experience working with populations of learners from student subgroups that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Describe which members of the project team will carry out your plans to disseminate results as described in the required Dissemination Plan in Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan.

Identify training and mentoring opportunities that your Research Team can offer to early career researchers (including agency staff) from your project team and the other teams in the Network.

Provide a plan for how key personnel will maintain their objectivity in conducting the proposed research and dissemination activities.

Identify the management structure and procedures that will be used to keep the project on track and ensure the quality of its work.

Discuss who will help coordinate with the other members of the Network and ensure that the research team is engaged with and meeting the expectations and needs of the network.

(4) Resources
Describe your organization's capacity to manage a grant of this size.

Describe your access to resources available at the primary organization and any subaward organizations.

Describe your plan for acquiring resources that are not currently accessible, will require significant expenditures, and are necessary for the successful completion of the project, such as equipment, test materials, curriculum, or training materials.

If your application includes a collaboration between education agencies and research institutions (or any other organizations), describe how the collaboration will be structured and managed.

Describe your access to the settings in which the research will take place. Include letters of agreement in Appendix D documenting their participation and cooperation. Convincing letters convey that the organizations understand what their participation in the study will involve, such as annual surveys, assessments, or classroom observations. Include information about incentives for participation, if applicable.

Describe your access to any necessary datasets. Include letters of agreement, data licenses, or existing memoranda of understanding in Appendix D to document that you will be able to access those data for your proposed use.

Describe your resources to carry out your plans to disseminate results as described in the required Dissemination Plan in Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan.
- Describe any offices or organizations expected to take part in your dissemination plans.

- Describe resources to support dissemination through electronic means such as a website, social media account(s), electronic newsletter, listserv, or other electronic dissemination approach.

- Give examples of how you will contribute to and participate in a network-wide dissemination plan.

3. Network Lead Requirements and Recommendations

(a) Overview
The Network Lead has responsibilities both within and external to the network. The Network Lead is responsible for coordinating network activities, organizing working groups on specific recovery issues composed of key personnel from the research teams, promoting and organizing cross-site training and/or mentoring of early career researchers in the Network, and ensuring communication among network members and IES. The Network Lead is responsible for providing national leadership and dissemination that includes carrying out a broader scan of recovery needs and activities across the U.S. , especially for students from subgroups disproportionately affected by the pandemic; connecting the network to other stakeholders involved in recovery; establishing a forum composed of practitioners, policymakers, and researchers for identifying ongoing recovery research needs; and synthesizing and disseminating what is being learned about PreK-12 recovery needs and activities by the network and through meetings with state and local agencies.

Network members are also expected to develop activities that will strengthen their collective work, including but not limited to providing leadership for the field and cross-site training and/or mentoring of early career individuals involved with the network's research activities. The Network Lead will coordinate cross-team training and mentorship activities (e.g., setting up webinars, exchanges, other cross-team training opportunities for the early career researchers in the network).

To ensure coordination of network activities and communication among network members, the Network Lead will plan and facilitate regular meetings with all network members. The Network Lead will host a minimum of one annual in-person meeting for all network teams. The Network Lead and the Research Teams will establish working groups composed of key personnel to discuss recovery issues shared across teams and consider how to address them in their work. The Network Lead will organize virtual meetings of these working groups approximately quarterly. The Network Lead will also establish informal regular communication with network members, such as through a newsletter, to keep all network members informed of the work being accomplished and new recovery issues that may affect their work. With assistance from the Research Teams, the Network Lead will prepare and implement a network-wide dissemination plan and data management plan.

The Network Lead will carry out an ongoing nationwide scan of the recovery needs of student subgroups that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the recovery activities states and districts are implementing to support these students. The Network Lead's scan will help ensure that any subgroup needs and relevant recovery activities not occurring in the states and districts involved with the Research Teams can be identified. The scan will be an ongoing process in that findings will be provided online, as well as through written dissemination channels, and updated as new information is obtained so that other education agencies and researchers can more quickly access the findings and consider whether they offer further research and practice opportunities. The scan may draw upon analyses of secondary data from national data collections and surveys and from state agencies, analyses of primary data collected from state agencies interested in taking part, available literature, website reviews, interviews and surveys, and other sources.

The Network Lead will connect the network to other organizations and stakeholders involved in the implementation and review of recovery activities and offer them an opportunity to provide their research interests to the Network. As part of this work, the Network Lead will establish a forum composed of practitioners, policymakers, and researchers for identifying ongoing recovery research needs. This forum will meet at least twice annually to discuss the latest findings on the impact of COVID-19 disruptions on education and on recovery activities, discuss ways of disseminating the findings to education agencies, and identify additional short and medium-term research that would be useful for state and districts. The forum may be a new body or may be created in combination with an already existing body doing similar work.

Through national leadership and dissemination activities, the Network Lead will ensure that those interested in PreK-12 recovery activities learn about the network's activities. Within the first year, the Network Lead will establish a website and social media presence to share information about network activities and research

findings. The Network Lead will also conduct engagement activities that (a) facilitate interactions among those interested in PreK-12 recovery (such as learners, practitioners, researchers, or policymakers) and researchers and (b) summarize or curate existing information or tools relevant to PreK-12 recovery. Examples of interactive activities include webinars, online professional development series, workshops, and conferences. Examples of the summarizing or curating activities include working papers and briefs, databases and dashboards, and podcasts and videos. In addition, the Network Lead will meet with state and local agencies to describe the findings and discuss their relevance for the agencies' recovery efforts. The Network Lead will develop a network-wide dissemination plan, in addition to each Research Team's dissemination plan, that includes synthesizing the network's findings and disseminating syntheses to multiple stakeholders by tailoring dissemination products to each stakeholder group (the description of this is to be included under Network Lead Activities in the project narrative. If additional space is needed, Appendix A can also be used).

(b) Network Lead Project Narrative Requirements
Each Network Lead project narrative **must** adhere to the formatting guidelines (see Part III.B) and be **no more than 15 pages**. If the narrative exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 15th page of the narrative. The project narrative for a Network Lead application **must** include four sections: Significance, Network Lead Activities, Personnel, and Management and Organizational Resources.

(1) Significance
The purpose of this section is to describe your vision for the Network and how your proposed work will contribute to IES' goal of providing evidence to state and local agencies to improve learner engagement and achievement through recovery activities intended for subgroups of students that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

You **must describe** your vision for Network and how you expect your activities as the Network Lead will contribute to IES's goals for the network.

(2) Network Lead Activities
The purpose of this section is to describe the Network Lead's activities in network coordination management and national leadership and dissemination.

You **must describe** your plans for
- Coordinating network activities, holding network meetings, and promoting training of early career researchers across all teams
- Organizing network working groups on specific recovery issues
- Carrying out an ongoing scan of the recovery needs of student subgroups that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the recovery activities states and districts are implementing to support these students
- Connecting the network to other stakeholders involved in recovery activities
- Establishing a forum for identifying recovery research needs
- National leadership and dissemination (include a website and social media presence, engagement activities, synthesizing the network's finding and disseminating syntheses in multiple formats for multiple audiences, and meeting with state and local agencies to discuss the findings).

(3) Personnel
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that your team possesses appropriate experience for the proposed activities and will commit enough time to the project.

You **must describe** your project team.

(4) Management and Organizational Resources
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that you have the organizational structure, and capacity to

access to the resources needed to carry out and effectively manage the project.

You **must describe** the
- Plans and procedures for the overall management of the Network
- Resources to conduct the work of the Network

(c) Award Limits

Awards made under the Network Lead topic **must** conform to the following limits on duration and cost.

(1) Duration Maximum
The maximum duration of the Network Lead award is **3 years**.

(2) Cost Maximum
The maximum cost for the Network Lead award is **$3,000,000** (total cost = direct costs + indirect costs).

(3) Maximum Number of Awards
IES intends to make **one** Network Lead award under the Prekindergarten through Grade 12 Recovery Research Network topic.

(d) 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.

(1) Significance
Describe your vision for research on PreK-12 recovery needs and activities for learners overall and for subgroups of students that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Discuss how the research network as a whole and the Network Lead specifically could help improve education agencies' decision making to better support student reengagement and achievement.

Describe your understanding of how state and local education agencies are making decisions regarding recovery activities for learners overall and for student subgroups, and the role of research in these decisions. Based on this understanding, describe the underlying approach the Network Lead will take in its actions to provide evidence and information on recovery to support agency decision making. Provide a theory of change describing or illustrating how the Network and the Network Lead could support and improve the recovery decisions made by education agencies leading to better learner outcomes for all learners and for student subgroups.

Provide an appraisal of how much support the Network Lead can provide to education agencies and how helpful it can expect to be in supporting agency recovery decision making. Discuss whether you have a strategy of how to identify agencies more likely to need and use Network findings and, if so, whether you intend to use different approaches with different agencies. Offer possible measures that could be used to examine the usefulness of the Network Lead's work for agencies' decision making and identify any existing data or instruments that could be used to provide these measures.

Identify what you see as some of the key decisions the Network Lead may or will need to make, sometimes in conjunction with the Research Teams, and how you might go about making them. For example, if a student subgroup is not addressed by any of the Research Team projects, should the Network Lead try to fill that gap and, if so, how? Similarly, if the Network reports an important finding regarding a subgroup, should there be dedicated efforts to provide that finding to agencies serving the largest proportions of that subgroup?

(2) Network Lead Activities
Discuss your plans for the required activities.

- Coordinate network activities, hold network meetings, and promote training of early career researchers. Include details such as:
  - Descriptions of the goals for the network meetings, how you will facilitate the exchange of information and ideas - you might include a proposed agenda for the first meeting in Appendix B.
  - Descriptions of training and/or mentoring opportunities for early career researchers that the Lead can provide or coordinate for the Research Teams.
- Organize network working groups on specific recovery issues.
  - Describe how the network will identify key recovery issues that cross the Research Teams, identify key personnel from all projects to form working groups on these issues, organize meetings of these workgroups that are intended to influence the work of the Research Teams and advance knowledge of and practice for these issues.
- Implement an ongoing scan of student subgroup recovery needs and recovery activities addressing them. Include the following details:
  - List the subgroups disproportionately affected by COVID-19 to be included in the scan.
  - Describe the sources of information (both primary and secondary) that the Network Lead will use to identify their recovery needs and the recovery activities being implemented to address those needs.
  - Describe how the scan will be an ongoing process over the life of the network.
  - Describe how the findings will be made available to researchers who may build upon them and education agencies who may act upon them.
  - Describe how the findings will be considered by network members as they carry out their own research.
- Connect the network to other stakeholders involved in recovery activities. Describe the following:
  - What stakeholders in recovery you see as key to engaging with in order to meet the goals of the network.
  - How you will connect with them (outside of the forum).
  - The purposes for engaging with them and how these will be accomplished.
- Establish a forum for identifying recovery research needs.
  - Describe what groups will be represented on the forum, how often the forum will meet, how the meetings will be structured, what kinds of information are to be gleaned from the forum, and how this information is to be disseminated throughout and used by the network.
- Provide national leadership and dissemination. Provide details of your plan, including the following:
  - How you will establish the website and social media presence including the audiences you intend to reach and the type of information you intend to provide.
  - Other engagement activities you will use to obtain both input on research and dissemination approaches for the network and dissemination of the network's finding.
  - How you will summarize or curate existing information or tools relevant to PreK-12 recovery, the review process you will use to choose materials, and how you will determine if the summaries you provide are useful for researchers and education agencies.
  - How you will synthesize the findings from the Research Teams and the Network Lead's work. Describe how you will put the synthesis of the network's findings into multiple formats for multiple audiences.
  - How you disseminate the network's findings in ways that best support the decision making of state and local agencies. Include your plan for meeting with state and local agencies to discuss the findings and how they may apply to the agencies' recovery efforts.

Identify other activities that you intend to implement to meet the goals of the Network Lead and the network. Include them in your theory of change in the Significance section. Describe how they will be implemented and why they will be useful.

Provide a timeline that shows when major activities will take place and a description of how those activities will inform one another and how they build from or feed into the Network's activities. This may be included in [Appendix B: Supplemental Charts, Tables, and Figures](#).

(3) Personnel
Identify and describe expertise and qualifications of the Network Lead team at the primary applicant organization and at any subaward organizations.

Describe how the background and experience of the project team supports the successful conduct of the proposed work. For each of the key personnel, include the following:
- Roles and responsibilities on the project

- Expertise and training for the responsibilities they will hold

- Proportion of time personnel will devote to the project, expressed as percent effort over a 12- month calendar year

- Experience working with populations of learners from student subgroups that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19

- Experience executing a dissemination strategy consistent with the IES mission to promote scientifically valid research findings that can provide the basis for improving academic instruction and lifelong learning

Include a plan for how key personnel will maintain their objectivity with regard to the summarizing or curating activities.

Discuss who will manage the communications across the network and with the public. Strong applications will have a dedicated communications manager or communications team.

(4) Management and Organizational Resources
Describe your plans and procedures for the overall management of the Network and its activities.

Describe your vision for how the Network Lead will approach the internal workings of the network including support of (1) the Research Teams completing their own research, (2) the Research Teams contributing to the workings and purpose of the Network, and (3) the Network Lead completing its work.

Identify the management structure and procedures that you will use to ensure that the Network is responsive to the concerns and needs of IES and how the Network Lead would address potential conflicts among teams.

Include an organization chart that shows how the major functions or activities of the Network Lead and the Network itself will be organized and how key personnel will relate to one another (may be included in [Appendix B](#)).

Document the availability and cooperation of the settings or experts required to carry out your plan via letters of agreement in [Appendix D](#) of your application.

B. Community College Recovery Research Network

1. Purpose

The disruptions caused by COVID-19 have led to significant reductions in overall enrollments for learners at community colleges, and these reductions have been particularly acute for learners from low-income and historically underrepresented groups. The disruptions have stressed the existing support systems that community colleges use for meeting learners' academic and non-academic needs, delivering quality academic programming, and facilitating learners' success. The pandemic has highlighted existing disparities between community colleges and four-year institutions such as higher student-to-advisor ratios, fewer supports for mental health and well-being, less capacity for delivering high-quality instruction virtually, and fewer programs for reaching out to marginalized student groups. As a result, community colleges may not be as well positioned to increase learner engagement and persistence during recovery.

Approaches to engaging learners in postsecondary education may need to differ by learners' plans and need for postsecondary education. For instance, some learners are intending to but postponing attending community college right after high school, some were attending college but stopped during the pandemic, and others are workers who lost their jobs due to COVID-19 who would benefit from retraining for a new job.

Beyond engagement, community colleges will need to provide additional services to support student persistence and completion. Learners will need to be strategic in meeting the requirements for credentials/degree given possible reductions in resources and difficulties planning for the future, and community colleges can provide support services and better structure their programs to meet this need. To support learners' efficient completion of a credential or degree, community colleges will also have to address learners' need for non-academic services, such as mental health and basic needs support.

The need for such supports may be greater for student subgroups that have disproportionately been affected by COVID-19 including low-income students, racial/ethnic minority students, students experiencing homelessness, students with disabilities, migrant students, and students with low English proficiency.

The Community College Recovery Research Network will carry out two types of activities to assist community college systems in their recovery efforts as well as contribute to our understanding of how to reengage and support learners to complete their sub-baccalaureate credentials (both for and not-for credit) or degrees.

First, Research Teams will work directly with community college systems on their recovery efforts with the goal of providing evidence to help direct, improve, and select among potential recovery activities. These Research Team projects should examine short-term student academic and other outcomes, as well as longer-term ones, so that findings can be released quickly enough for systems to use them in their ongoing decisions on recovery activities.

Second, the Network Lead will facilitate collaboration within the network, coordinate with community college systems not participating as Research Teams in the network to identify other ongoing recovery activities, identify research needs and opportunities, and disseminate findings from the Research Teams, and examine national secondary data. The Network Lead will provide national leadership to ensure that the public benefits from the findings regarding learner recovery needs and improving recovery activities identified both from the Research Teams and from research conducted outside the network.

The Research Teams and Network Lead are expected to collaborate with one another to identify common measures, discuss research plans, offer cross-site training and/or mentoring of early career researchers (including community college personnel) from the Research Teams and Network Lead, share emerging findings, and give and receive constructive feedback.

By the completion of the Community College Recovery Research Network, network members will have produced research findings to identify recovery activities, worked with community college systems to

improve their recovery activities, and disseminated information to multiple stakeholders across the nation to help increase learner engagement, achievement, and completion.

2. Research Team Requirements and Recommendations

(a) Overview
Research Team projects **must** include one or more community college system(s). State offices of higher education that oversee such systems may also be included. The work of the Research Teams is to support and improve the recovery activities these systems are implementing with their students (overall and subgroups). Research Teams should propose research that will help the systems identify learners for whom recovery activities are needed to help them reengage and complete their education and/or better understand and improve the recovery activities provided to these learners.

(b) Research Team Project Narrative Requirements
Each Research Team project narrative **must** adhere to the formatting guidelines (see Part III.B) and be no more than 22 pages. If the narrative exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 22nd page of the narrative. The project narrative for a Research Team application **must** include four sections: Significance, Research Plan, Personnel, and Resources.

(1) Significance
The purpose of this section is to describe the type of work you propose, the student population you intend to address, your work's potential contribution to improving the recovery activities being implemented by the community college system(s) involved in the project for these learners, and its contribution to our understanding of how to increase learner reengagement, achievement, and completion.

You **must describe**
- The community college system(s) participating in the project

- The student population (including subgroups) the project will focus on

- The recovery activities that the system(s) are or will be implementing

- How the research could improve recovery activities

- Your study's research questions

(2) Research Plan
The purpose of this section is to describe your research design, methods, and analysis plan and demonstrate how these will address the research questions. IES encourages the use of methods that combine both quantitative and qualitative analysis as relevant and appropriate. IES expects all research it funds to adhere to SEER principles to the extent possible.

You **must describe** the
- Characteristics of your sample or data source, which **must** include learners who may attend or are already in community college who are engaged in or would benefit from recovery activities

- Research design and methods for your study or studies

- Learner outcomes you will be examining

- Data analysis plan for your study or studies

- Cost analysis plan and the cost-effectiveness plan (as appropriate) for any recovery activity you will be evaluating

(3) Personnel
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that your team possesses the appropriate experience for the proposed research and dissemination activities and will commit enough time to the project.

You **must describe** your project team and identify a PI or co-PI from every community college system taking part.

(4) Resources
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate your organizational capacity and access to resources (including any districts or colleges) needed to execute a project of this size and complexity and appropriately disseminate the findings and products.

You **must describe** your resources to conduct the project.

(c) Award Limits

a. Duration Maximum
The maximum duration of a Research Team award is **3 years**.

b. Cost Maximum
The maximum cost of a Research Team award is **$3,000,000** (total cost = direct + indirect costs).

Applicants should **request funds commensurate with the work they propose**, which may not require the maximum amount. Applicants should use part of their requested funds to ensure that the research team is able to meet the [Network Commitments (Part IV.B.1.b)](#) for participation in the Network.

c. Maximum Number of Awards
IES intends to make no more than five Research Team awards under the Community College Recovery Network topic. However, should funding be available, IES may consider making additional awards to high-quality applications that remain unfunded after five awards have been made.

(d) Data Management Plan Requirement
All Research Team applications **must include** [Appendix E: Data Management Plan](#) (DMP).

IES program officers will be responsible for reviewing the completeness of the proposed DMP. Appendix E is not considered in the review of scientific merit of your application. If your application is being considered for funding based on the scores received during the scientific peer-review process, but your DMP is determined incomplete, you will be required to provide additional detail regarding your DMP.

(e) Dissemination History and Plan
All Research Team applications **must include** [Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan.](#)

IES is committed to making the results of IES-funded research available to a wide range of audiences (see IES Policy Regarding Public Access to Research; https://ies.ed.gov/funding/researchaccess.asp). To ensure that findings from the Education Research Grants program are available to all interested audiences, IES **requires all Research Team applicants** to –
- present a plan to disseminate project findings and resources so that they make meaningful contributions to education policy and practice

- describe their dissemination history to demonstrate their ability and capacity to disseminate research findings to a range of audiences, including community college systems, educators, policymakers, learners, parents, and the public.

For Research Team applications, peer reviewers will score Dissemination as a separate criterion in the review process. **Research Team applications that do not contain a Dissemination History and Plan in Appendix A will not be peer reviewed.**

(f) Recommendations for a Strong Application
These recommendations are intended to improve the quality of your application. Peer reviewers are asked to consider these recommendations in their evaluation of your application.

(1) Significance

Discuss the recovery issues facing the community college systems involved in the project.
- Note what student (overall and by subgroup) and campus populations the system has identified as needing recovery activities, how this identification was done, and whether additional research is necessary to complete this identification work.

- Describe the system's plans for addressing the recovery issues it is facing including specific recovery activities (both those currently underway and those in the planning stage). If possible, provide a theory of change showing what recovery activities the system intends to provide to each learner and campus, any intended intermediate outcomes, and the intended learner outcomes of those activities (i.e., show the system's goals for its recovery activities and how it intends to achieve them).

Describe the information the system needs to better increase learner reengagement, achievement, and completion through its recovery activities.

Describe how this project's research will help provide the needed information. Note if the project will focus on providing this information for a specific population or a specific set of recovery activities within the system's overall recovery plans. Justify the importance of this focus for the system's recovery goals.

Set out the research questions the project will address. Show how the answers to these questions can be used by the system to better develop, modify, and implement its recovery activities to increase learner reengagement, achievement, and completion.

Note whether this research is likely to be of use to other community college systems and how it will contribute to our understanding of how recovery activities can be used to improve learners' postsecondary outcomes, including persistence, retention, completion as well as labor market success.

(2) Research Plan
Discuss the population you intend to study and how your sample and sampling procedures will allow you to draw inferences for this population.

Describe the research designs you will use to address your research questions. You may propose descriptive, correlational, predictive and/or causal analyses. Link the analyses to the research questions and the decisions the state agency needs to make that you discussed in the Significance section. For example, a system may use a descriptive or predictive study to determine which learners require specific types of recovery activities. An implementation study (often based on mixed methods) could be used to determine if a program is being implemented well or is reaching a specific subpopulation, and it might be paired with a correlational study to determine whether implementation is associated with learner outcomes. A continuous improvement design could be used to adapt a set of activities to support recovery for a specific student group and it could include causal studies to check if adaptations are improving learner outcomes. A community college system might implement a causal design to determine whether a specific type of recovery activity (or combination of them) is reengaging learners or improving their achievement, persistence, and/or completion. Such evaluation studies should be accompanied by an implementation study and cost analysis. Any of these types of analyses, alone or in combination, is appropriate for this competition. Please refer to the Recommendations for Strong Applications for project types in the Request for Applications for the Education Research Grants Program (ALS 84.305A) for additional recommendations regarding these different types of designs (see https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2022_84305A.pdf). Each proposed analysis should be shown to address a specific research question and support the decisions the system needs to make.

Describe the outcome measures you will be examining and note how they fit with your research questions and the decisions the system needs to make.
- Include required learner academic outcome measures as well as relevant reengagement measures, social and behavioral competencies and employment and earnings outcomes that are of interest to the system. These measures should align with the theory of change for the recovery activities.

- If recovery activities are designed to directly change the teaching and learning environment and, in doing so, indirectly affect learner outcomes, provide measures of the intermediate outcomes (e.g., campus staff, instructor, or leader behaviors), as well as measures of learner education outcomes.

For your data analyses:
- Describe and justify the statistical models to be used, including how they address the multilevel nature of education data and how well they control for selection bias, if necessary.

- Discuss how you will address exclusion from any data set and missing data. Describe sensitivity tests to assess the influence of key procedural or analytic decisions on the results.

- Provide separate descriptions for all analysis of factors that influence the relationship between the recovery activity and learner outcomes (mediators and moderators).

- Describe any subgroup analyses (including subgroups identified in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021) that will be conducted to examine learners from diverse backgrounds and experiences within your sample.

(3) Personnel
Identify and describe expertise and qualifications of the project team at the primary applicant institution and at any subaward institutions. Be sure to include a PI or co-PI from every community college system taking part.

Describe how the background and experience of the project team supports the successful conduct of the proposed work. For each key personnel, include the following:
- Roles and responsibilities on the project

- Expertise and training for the responsibilities they will hold

- Proportion of time personnel will devote to the project, expressed as percent effort over a 12- month calendar year

- Experience working with populations of learners from student subgroups that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Describe which members of the project team will carry out your plans to disseminate results as described in the required Dissemination Plan in Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan.

Identify training and mentoring opportunities that your Research Team can offer to early career researchers (including community college staff) from your project team and the other teams in the Network.

Provide a plan for how key personnel will maintain their objectivity in conducting the proposed research and dissemination activities.

Identify the management structure and procedures that will be used to keep the project on track and ensure the quality of its work.

Discuss who will help coordinate with the other members of the Network and ensure that the research team is engaged with and meeting the expectations and needs of the network.

(4) Resources
Describe your organization's capacity to manage a grant of this size.

Describe your access to resources available at the primary organization and any subaward organizations.

Describe your plan for acquiring resources that are not currently accessible, will require significant expenditures, and are necessary for the successful completion of the project, such as equipment, test

materials, curriculum, or training materials.

If your application includes a collaboration between community college systems and research institutions (or any other organizations), describe how the collaboration will be structured and maintained.

Describe your access to the settings in which the research will take place. Include letters of agreement in Appendix D documenting their participation and cooperation. Convincing letters convey that the organizations understand what their participation in the study will involve, such as annual surveys, assessments, or classroom observations. Include information about incentives for participation, if applicable.

Describe your access to any necessary datasets. Include letters of agreement, data licenses, or existing memoranda of understanding in Appendix D to document that you will be able to access those data for your proposed use.

Describe your resources to carry out your plans to disseminate results as described in the required Dissemination Plan in Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan.
- Describe any offices or organizations expected to take part in your dissemination plans.

- Describe resources to support dissemination through electronic means such as a website, social media account(s), electronic newsletter, listserv, or other electronic dissemination approach.

- Give examples of how you will contribute to and implement a network-wide dissemination plan.

3. Network Lead Requirements and Recommendations

(a) Overview
The Network Lead has responsibilities both within and external to the network. The Network Lead is responsible for coordinating network activities, organizing working groups on specific recovery issues composed of key personnel from the research teams, promoting and organizing cross-site training and/or mentoring of early career researchers in the Network, and ensuring communication among network members and IES. The Network Lead is responsible for providing national leadership and dissemination that includes carrying out a broader scan of recovery needs and activities across the U.S., especially for students from subgroups disproportionately affected by the pandemic; connecting the network to other stakeholders involved in recovery; establishing a forum composed of community college practitioners, policymakers, and researchers for identifying ongoing recovery research needs; and synthesizing and disseminating what is being learned about community college recovery needs and activities by the network and through meetings with community college systems.

To ensure coordination of network activities and communication among network members, the Network Lead will plan and facilitate regular meetings with all network members. The Network Lead will host a minimum of one annual in-person meeting for all network teams. The Network Lead and the Research Teams will establish working groups composed of key personnel to discuss recovery issues shared across teams and consider how to address them in their work. The Network Lead will organize virtual meetings of these working groups approximately quarterly. The Network Lead will also establish informal regular communication with network members, such as through a newsletter, to keep all network members informed of the work being accomplished and new recovery issues that may affect their work. With assistance from the Research Teams, the Network Lead will prepare and implement a network-wide dissemination plan and data management plan.

The Network Lead will carry out an ongoing nationwide scan of the recovery needs of student subgroups that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the recovery activities states and districts are implementing to support these subgroups. The scan may include analyses of secondary data from national data collections and surveys, and from community college systems, as well as analyses of primary data collected from community college systems interested in taking part. The Network Lead's scan will help ensure that any subgroup needs and relevant recovery activities not occurring in the community college

systems involved with the Research Teams can be identified. The scan will be an ongoing process in that findings will be provided online, as well as through written dissemination channels, and updated as new information is obtained so that other education agencies and researchers can more quickly access the findings and consider whether they offer further research and practice opportunities.

The Network Lead will connect the network to other organizations and stakeholders involved in the implementation and review of recovery activities and offer them an opportunity to provide their research interests to the network. The Network Lead could hold a national meeting, or regional meetings, of community college administrators, instructors and staff, and learners early on so that they can provide their input to the Network's work, describe what is occurring in their systems and colleges, and consider opportunities for taking part. As part of its work, the Network Lead will establish a forum composed of practitioners, policymakers, and researchers for identifying ongoing recovery research needs. This forum will meet at least twice annually to discuss the latest findings on the impact of COVID-19 disruptions on education and on recovery activities, discuss ways of disseminating the findings to community college systems, and identify additional short and medium-term research that would be useful for the systems. The forum may be a new body or may be created in combination with an already existing body doing similar work. In addition, the Network Lead should seek out opportunities to cooperate with other organizations involved in the support of recovery activities at community colleges.

Through national leadership and dissemination activities, the Network Lead will ensure that those interested in community college recovery activities learn about the network's activities. Within the first year, the Network Lead will establish a website and social media presence to share information about network activities and research findings. The Network Lead will also conduct engagement activities that (a) facilitate interactions among those interested in community college recovery (such as learners, practitioners, researchers, or policymakers) and researchers and (b) summarize or curate existing information or tools relevant to recovery. Examples of interactive activities include webinars, online professional development series, workshops, and conferences. Examples of the summarizing or curating activities include working papers and briefs, databases and dashboards, and podcasts and videos. In addition, the Network Lead will meet community college systems to describe the findings and discuss their relevance for the agencies' recovery efforts. The Network Lead will develop a network-wide dissemination plan, in addition to each Research Team's dissemination plan, that includes synthesizing the network's finding and disseminating syntheses in multiple formats for multiple audiences written specifically for each one (the description of this is to be included under Network Lead Activities in the project narrative. If additional space is needed, Appendix A can also be used).

(b) Network Lead Project Narrative Requirements
Each Network Lead project narrative **must** adhere to the formatting guidelines (see Part III.B) and be **no more than 15 pages**. If the narrative exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 15th page of the narrative. The project narrative for a Network Lead application **must** include four sections: Significance, Network Lead Activities, Personnel, and Management and Organizational Resources.

(1) Significance
The purpose of this section is to describe your vision for the Community College Recovery Network and how your proposed work will contribute to IES's ultimate goal of providing evidence to community college systems to improve learner engagement, achievement, and completion through their recovery activities especially for subgroups of learners that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

You **must describe** your vision for the Community College Recovery Network and how you expect your activities as the Network Lead will contribute to IES' goals for the network.

(2) Network Lead Activities
The purpose of this section is to describe the Network Lead's activities in network coordination management and national leadership and dissemination

You **must describe** your plans for

- Coordinating network activities, holding network meetings, and promoting training of early career researchers across all teams

- Organizing network working groups on specific recovery issues

- Carrying out an ongoing scan of the recovery needs of student subgroups that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the recovery activities community college systems are implementing to support these students

- Connecting the network to other stakeholders involved in recovery activities

- Establishing a forum for identifying recovery research needs

- National leadership and dissemination (include a website and social media presence, engagement activities, and synthesizing the network's finding and disseminating syntheses in multiple formats for multiple audiences including meeting with community college systems).

(3) Personnel
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that your team possesses appropriate experience for the proposed activities and will commit enough time to the project.

You **must describe** your project team.

(4) Management and Organizational Resources
The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that you have the organizational structure and capacity, to access to the resources needed to carry out and effectively manage the project.

You **must describe** the
- Plans and procedures for the overall management of the Community College Recovery Network

- Resources to conduct the work of the Community College Recovery Network

(c) Award Limits
Awards made under the Network Lead topic **must** conform to the following limits on duration and cost.

(1) Duration Maximum
The maximum duration of the Network Lead award is **3 years**.

(2) Cost Maximum
The maximum cost for the Network Lead award is **$3,000,000** (total cost = direct costs + indirect costs).

(3) Maximum Number of Awards
IES intends to make **one** Network Lead award under the Community College Recovery Network topic.

(d) 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.

(1) Significance
Describe your view of the purpose for research on community college recovery needs and activities for learners overall and for subgroups of learners that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19. Discuss how the research network as a whole and the Network Lead specifically could help improve community college systems' recovery decision making to better support learner reengagement, achievement, and completion.

Describe your understanding of how community college systems are making decisions regarding recovery

activities for learners overall and for learner subgroups, and the role of research in these decisions. Based on this understanding, describe the underlying approach the Network Lead will take in its actions to provide evidence and information on recovery to support system decision making. Provide a theory of change describing or illustrating how the Network and the Network Lead could support and improve the recovery decisions made by community college systems leading to better student outcomes for all learners and for student subgroups.

Provide an appraisal of how much support the Network Lead can provide to community college systems and how helpful it can be expected to be in supporting system recovery decision making. Describe your existing set of relationships and engagement with community college systems and colleges. Discuss whether you have a strategy of how to identify systems more likely to need and use Network findings and, if so, whether you intend to use different approaches with different agencies. Offer possible measures that could be used to examine the usefulness of the Network Lead's work for systems' decision making, and identify any existing data or instruments that could be used to provide these measures.

Identify what you see as some of the key decisions the Network Lead may or will need to make, sometimes in conjunction with the Research Teams, and how you might go about making them. For example, if a student subgroup is not addressed by any of the Research Team projects, should the Network Lead try to fill that gap and, if so, how? Similarly, if the Network makes an important finding regarding a subgroup, should there be specific efforts to provide that finding to systems serving the largest proportions of that subgroup.

(2) Network Lead Activities
Discuss your plans for the required activities.

- Coordinate network activities, hold network meetings, promote training of early career researchers. Include details such as:
  - Descriptions of the goals for these meetings, how you will facilitate the exchange of information and ideas - you might include a proposed agenda for the first meeting in Appendix B.

  - Descriptions of training and/or mentoring opportunities for early career researchers that the Lead can provide or coordinate for the Research Teams.

- Organize network working groups on specific recovery issues.
  - Describe how the network will identify key recovery issues that run across the Research Teams, identify key personnel from all projects to form working groups on these issues, organize meetings of these workgroups that are intended to influence the work of the Research Teams and advance knowledge of and practice for these issues.

  - Describe how you will ensure the active participation of system and college administrators within the network.

- Implement an ongoing scan of student subgroup recovery needs and recovery activities addressing them. Include the following details:
  - List the subgroups disproportionately affected by COVID-19 to be included in the scan.

  - Describe the sources of information (both primary and secondary) that the Network Lead will use to identify their recovery needs and the recovery activities being implemented to address those needs.

  - Describe how the scan will be an ongoing process with regular releases of findings over the life of the network.

  - Describe how the findings will be made available to researchers who may build upon them and education agencies who may act upon them.

  - Describe how the findings will be considered by network members in regards to their own research.

- Connect the network to other stakeholders involved in recovery activities. Describe the following:
  - Identify what stakeholders in recovery you see as key to engaging with to meet the goals of the

    network.
    - o Describe how you will connect with them.

    - o Describe the purposes for engaging with them and how these will be accomplished.

  - Establish a forum for identifying recovery research needs.
    - o Describe what groups will be represented on the forum, how often the forum will meet, how the meetings will be structured, what kinds of information are to be gleaned from the forum, and how this information is to be disseminated through and used by the network.

    - o Describe why participants will be willing to take part in forum including how its organization and purpose will make their participation worthwhile.

  - Provide national leadership and dissemination. Provide details of your plan, including the following:
    - o Describe how you will establish the website and social media presence including the audiences you intend to reach and the type of information you intend to provide.

    - o Describe other engagement activities you will use to obtain both input on research and dissemination approaches for the network and dissemination of the network's finding.

    - o Describe how you will summarize or curate existing information or tools relevant to community college recovery, the review process you will use to choose materials, and how you will determine if the summaries you provide are useful for researchers and education agencies.

    - o Describe the process you will use to synthesize the findings from the Research Teams and the Network Lead's work. Describe how you will put the synthesis of the network's findings into multiple formats for multiple audiences

    - o Describe how you will disseminate the network's findings in ways that best support the decision making of community college systems. Include your plan for meeting with community college systems to discuss the findings and how they may apply to the systems' recovery efforts

Identify other activities that you intend to implement to meet the goals of the Network Lead and the network. Include them in your theory of change in the Significance section. Describe how they will be implemented and why they will be useful.

Provide a timeline that shows when major activities will take place and a description of how those activities will inform one another and how they build from or feed into the Network's activities. This may be included in Appendix B: Supplemental Charts, Tables, and Figures.

(3) Personnel
Identify and describe expertise and qualifications of the Network Lead team at the primary applicant organization and at any subaward organizations.

Describe how the background and experience of the project team supports the successful conduct of the proposed work. For each key personnel, include the following:
  - Roles and responsibilities on the project

  - Expertise and training for the responsibilities they will hold

  - Proportion of time personnel will devote to the project, expressed as percent effort over a 12- month calendar year

  - Experience working with populations of learners from student subgroups that have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

  - Experience executing a dissemination strategy consistent with the IES mission to promote scientifically valid research findings that can provide the basis for improving academic instruction and lifelong learning.

Include a plan for how key personnel will maintain their objectivity with regard to the summarizing or curating activities.

Discuss who will manage the communications across the network and with the public. Strong applications will have a dedicated communications manager or communications team.

(4) Management and Organizational Resources
Describe your plans and procedures for the overall management of the Network and its activities.

Describe your vision for how the Network Lead should approach the internal workings of the network including support of (1) the Research Teams completing their own research, (2) the Research Teams contributing to the workings and purpose of the Network, and (3) the Network Lead completing its work.

Identify the management structure and procedures that you will use to ensure that the Network is responsive to the concerns and needs of IES and how the Network Lead would address potential conflicts among teams.

Include an organization chart that shows how the major functions or activities of the Network Lead and the Network itself will be organized and how key personnel will relate to one another (may be included in Appendix B).

Document the availability and cooperation of the settings or experts required to carry out your plan via letters of agreement in Appendix D of your application

Part III: Preparing Your Application

A. Overview

The application contents—individual forms and their PDF attachments—represent the body of an application to IES. IES encourages you to refer to the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf) for additional information about preparing to submit your application and ensuring your application is sufficient.

B. General Formatting

Readability and Fairness - To ensure that reviewers can read your application and that all applicants have similar expectations for length and space, IES specifies the following formatting conventions. Adherence to type size and line spacing requirements is necessary so that no applicant will have an unfair advantage by using small type or by providing more text in their applications. These requirements apply to the PDF file as submitted, unless otherwise specified. In order for an application to be compliant and sent forward for review, the applicant should ensure that each narrative section follows both the page limit maximums and the formatting guidelines below unless otherwise specified.

1. Page and Margin Specifications
For all IES grant applications, a "page" is 8.5 in. x 11 in. on one side only with 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

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

3. Spacing
Text must be single spaced.

4. Type Size (Font Size)
Type must conform to the following three requirements:
- The height of the letters must not be smaller than a type size of 12-point.

- Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch (cpi). For proportional spacing, the average for any representative section of text must not exceed 15 cpi.

- Type size must yield no more than 6 lines of type within a vertical inch.

You should check the type size using a standard device for measuring type size, rather than relying on the font selected for a particular word processing/printer combination. Small type size makes it difficult for reviewers to read the application; consequently, the use of small type will be grounds for IES to return the application without scientific peer review.

As a practical matter, if you use a 12-point Times New Roman font without compressing, kerning, condensing, or other alterations, the application will typically meet these requirements.

5. Graphs, Diagrams, and Tables
Text in figures, charts, and tables, including legends, may be in a type size smaller than 12- point but must be readily legible.

C. Required and Optional Appendices

The required project narrative ([Part II](#)) 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 project narrative and all 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 one of 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/).

The project narrative and appendices are critical parts of the IES application because they include the substantive content that will be reviewed for theoretical and practical significance and scientific merit.

1. Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan (Required for Research Teams)

Research Team applicants **must** include Appendix A after the project narrative. Network Lead applicants are not required to submit this appendix because dissemination will be addressed extensively in the project narrative but can use Appendix A to provide additional information.

Appendix A includes two sections: Dissemination History and Dissemination Plan. Appendix A **must** meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than three pages**. If Appendix A exceeds this three-page limit, IES will remove any pages after the third page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review.

(a) Dissemination History
The dissemination history is intended to demonstrate that the research you have conducted in the past has been disseminated in a way that is consistent with the IES mission to promote scientifically valid research findings that can provide the basis for improving academic instruction and lifelong learning. Applicants who have never had an IES grant should focus on describing the dissemination history of related, past projects. Reviewers will use this information to determine whether the project personnel have the experience necessary to carry out the proposed dissemination plan.

The dissemination history should include the following:
- A brief description of the outcomes of prior research, including products developed or tested and how the project's findings and products were disseminated

- For interventions or assessments that were developed through one or more projects and have evidence of impact on learner outcomes or of the validity and reliability of the assessment for intended purposes and learners, an explanation for how it has been made available to users, the number of active users of the product, the number of users of the product during its history, and funding agreements or outside investments for commercialization (if applicable)

- Other unique dissemination products or notable presentations of research findings, particularly those that were intended for education agencies or community college systems, practitioners, policymakers, parents, learners, and/or the general public.

(b) Dissemination Plan
Describe your plan to disseminate the findings from the proposed project. Dissemination plans should be tailored to the audiences that will benefit from the findings and reflect the unique purposes of the project.

Identify the audiences that you expect will most likely benefit from your research, such as federal and state policymakers, state and local school system administrators, community college system administrators, school administrators, educators, parents, learners, and other education researchers.

Discuss the different ways in which you intend to reach these audiences through the publications, presentations, and products you expect to produce.

IES-funded researchers are expected to publish and present in venues designed for policymakers and practitioners in a manner and style useful and usable to this audience. For example –

- Report findings to the education agencies, community college systems, and schools that provided the data and data- collection opportunities

- Give presentations and workshops at meetings of professional associations of teachers, school and system leaders, and education policymakers

- Publish in practitioner journals

- Give presentations at the IES STATS-DC conference and the SLDS Best Practices conference

- Engage in activities with relevant IES-funded Research and Development (R&D) Centers (https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/research/randdCenters.asp), other Research Networks (https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/research/researchNetworks.asp), or Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs; https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/)

IES-funded researchers who create products for use in research and practice as a result of their project (such as curricula, professional development programs, measures and assessments, guides, and toolkits) are expected to make these products available for research purposes or (after evaluation or validation) for general use. IES encourages researchers to consider how these products could be brought to market to increase their dissemination and use. IES-funded researchers are expected to publish their findings in scientific, peer-reviewed journals and present at conferences attended by other researchers.

The Dissemination History and Plan is the only information that may be included in Appendix A; all other materials will be removed prior to review of the application.

2. *Appendix B: Supplemental Charts, Tables, and Figures (Optional)*
Appendix B **must** meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than 15 pages**. If Appendix B exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 15th page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review. In Appendix B, you may include figures, charts, or tables with supplementary information like a timeline for your research project, a diagram of the management structure of your project, or examples of measures used to collect data for your project such as individual test items, tests, surveys, and observation and interview protocols.

These are the only materials that may be included in Appendix B; all other material will be removed prior to review of the application.

3. *Appendix C: Examples of Recovery Activities (Optional)*
Appendix C **must** meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than 10 pages**. If Appendix C exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 10th page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review. If you are proposing to explore, develop, evaluate, or validate an intervention or assessment used as a recovery activity you may include examples of curriculum materials, computer screen shots, assessment items, or other materials used.

These are the only materials that should be included in Appendix C; all other material will be removed prior to review of the application.

4. *Appendix D: Letters of Agreement (Required)*
There is **no recommended page length** for Appendix D. Use this appendix to provide copies of letters of agreement from schools, districts, state agencies, community college systems, individuals who will serve as consultants, and/or other settings or data sources that will be a part of or will provide data for the proposed research. For applications that include multiple institutions working together (such as a state education agency or community college system with a research institution), make sure that there are letters from all the institutions and that the letters give evidence of a strong commitment to the proposed work and the specific responsibilities of each institution. If a Network Lead applicant does not propose to work with other

organizations or individuals it should note this in Appendix D.

Ensure that the letters reproduce well so that reviewers can easily read them. Do not reduce the size of the letters. See the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf) for guidance regarding the size of file attachments.

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 research project that will be required if the application is funded. A common reason projects fail is loss of participating schools and districts. Letters of agreement regarding the provision of data should make it clear that the author of the letter will provide the data described in the application for use in the proposed research and in time to meet the proposed schedule.

These are the only materials that may be included in Appendix D; all other material will be removed prior to review of the application.

5. *Appendix E: Data Management Plan (Required for Research Teams)*
Appendix E must meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than five pages**. If Appendix E exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the fifth page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review.

The DMP should include the following:
- Identification of the data repository where you will pre-register your study within the first year of the project, following the Standards for Excellence in Education Research (SEER) Principles (https://ies.ed.gov/seer)

- Type of data to be shared

- Procedures for managing and for maintaining the confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information

- Roles and responsibilities of project or organizational staff in the management and retention of research data, including a discussion of any changes to the roles and responsibilities that will occur should the project director/principal investigator and/or co-project directors/co- principal investigators leave the project or their organization

- Expected schedule for data sharing, including how long the data will remain accessible (no later than publication of findings in a peer-reviewed publication and available for at least 10 years) and acknowledgement that the timeframe of data accessibility will be reviewed at the annual progress reviews and revised as necessary

- Format of the final dataset

- Dataset documentation to be provided, including any decisions made about the data that would be important in replicating the results

- Method of data sharing, such as through a data archive, and how those interested in using the data can locate and access them

- Whether or not users will need to sign a data use agreement and, if so, what conditions they must meet

- Any circumstances that prevent all or some of the data from being shared (This includes data that may fall under multiple statutes and, hence, must meet the confidentiality requirements for each applicable statute including data covered by Common Rule for Protection of Human Subjects, FERPA, and HIPAA)

The costs of the DMP can be covered by the grant and should be included in the budget and explained in the budget narrative. IES program officers will be responsible for reviewing the completeness of the proposed

DMP. If your application is being considered for funding based on the scores received during the scientific peer review process but your DMP is determined incomplete, you will be required to provide additional detail regarding your DMP.

When the PI and the AOR sign the cover page of the grant application, they will be assuring compliance with IES policy on data sharing as well as other policies and regulations governing research awards.

Once the DMP is approved by IES, the PI and the organization are required to carry it out and to report progress and problems through the regular reporting channels. Compliance with IES data sharing requirements is expected even though the final dataset may not be completed and prepared for data sharing until after the grant has been completed. In cases where the PI/grantee is non-compliant with the requirements of the data sharing policy or DMP, subsequent awards to individuals or organizations may be affected. By addressing the items identified above, your DMP describes how you will meet the requirements of the IES policy for data sharing.

This is the only material that should be included in Appendix E; all other material will be removed prior to review of the application.

D. Other Narrative Content

In addition to the project narrative (see Part II: Research Networks) and required and optional appendices (see above), you will also prepare a project summary/structured abstract, a bibliography and references cited, an exempt or non-exempt research on human subjects narrative, and biographical sketches for key personnel 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/Structured Abstract
You **must** submit the project summary/structured abstract as a separate PDF attachment in the application package. If your project is recommended for funding, IES will use this abstract as the basis for the online abstracts that we post when new awards are announced. We recommend that the project summary/structured abstract be two-pages long and follow the format used for IES online abstracts (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/).

(a) Title
- **Title:** Distinct, descriptive title of the project.

- **Topic and Network Role:** Identify the topic and network role to which you are applying (see Part II). This information should match the topic and network role codes entered for Item 4b: Agency Routing Number on the SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance form (see the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf) and the topic and network role codes in Part VI for more information).

(b) Project Summary
The purpose of the project summary is to provide a high-level overview that is accessible to a range of audiences, such as policymakers, practitioners, and the general public. This section should use short, active sentences to briefly describe the significance of the project, project activities, and the intended outcomes.

- **Purpose**: A brief description of the purpose of the project and its significance for improving education in the United States. This should include why the research is important, what this project will do to address the need, and the general expected outcomes of the project.

- **Project Activities**: An overview of the project activities.

- **Products**: A brief description of the expected products of the project, including the products to be developed and the information that will be learned and disseminated.

(c) Structured Abstract

The purpose of the structured abstract is to provide key details about the project activities. This section is most likely to be used by other researchers but should be written in a way that is accessible to anyone who wants more information about the project.

- **Program of Research** –For each major study, **Research Team applicants** should describe the following:
  - o Setting
  - o Population/Sample
  - o Innovation/Factors: a brief description of what will be developed or tested, or a brief description of the factors that will be examined in relation to learner outcomes
  - o Research Design and Methods: A brief description of the major features of the design and methodology.
  - o Control Condition (if applicable)
  - o Key Measures
  - o Data Analytic Strategy
  - o Cost Analysis (if applicable, include a brief description of the cost and/or cost effectiveness analyses planned)
- **Program of Activities** –For each major activity study, **Network Lead applicants** should describe the following:
  - o The setting for the activity (if relevant)
  - o The stakeholder or audience for the activity (if relevant)
  - o Activity structure and goals: a brief description of what the activity entails, its goals, and how its structure is likely to achieve those goals
  - o Timeline: a brief description of how long it may take to initiate and/or refine the activity and whether the activity intersects with or is contingent on other activities

2. Bibliography and References Cited
You **must** submit the bibliography and references cited as a separate PDF attachment in the application package. There is **no recommended page length** for the bibliography and references cited. Use the author-date style (versus numeric) citations for your references.

3. Human Subjects Narrative
You **must** submit an exempt or non-exempt human subjects narrative as a separate PDF attachment in the application package. We do not recommend a page length for the human subjects narrative. See *Information About the Protection of Human Subjects in Research Supported by the Department of Education* (https://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/humansub/overview.html) for a brief overview of the principles, regulations, and policies which affect research involving human subjects supported by the Department of Education.

Address how changes to exemption and continuing review procedures with the Revised Common Rule, including the use of a single IRB, will be addressed should your application be recommended for funding.

The U.S. Department of Education does not require certification of IRB approval at the time you submit your

application. However, if an application that involves non-exempt human subjects research is recommended for funding, the designated U.S. Department of Education official will request that you obtain and send the certification to the Department within 30 days of the formal request from the Department.

4. Biographical Sketches for Key Personnel

You **must** submit a biographical sketch (an abbreviated CV plus information about current and pending support) for each person named as key personnel in your application. You may also submit biographical sketches for consultants (optional). Each biographical sketch with current and pending support information **must be no more than five pages in length** and follow the general formatting guidelines. If a biographical sketch exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the fifth page before it is forwarded for scientific peer review.

Biographical sketches are submitted as separate PDF attachments in the application package. IES strongly encourages applicants to use SciENcv (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/) where you will find an IES biosketch form. IES will accept the SciENcv format for your biosketch even though it does not adhere exactly to our general formatting requirements. You may also develop your own biosketch format. If you use SciENcv, the information on current and pending support will be entered into the IES biosketch template. If you use your own format, you will need to provide this information in a separate table.

Be sure to include your ORCiD iD (Open Researcher and Contributor; https://orcid.org/) if you have one and consider establishing one if you have yet to do so.

The biosketch for the principal investigator, each co-principal investigator, and other key personnel should show how key personnel possess expertise commensurate with their specified duties on the proposed project, for example, by describing relevant publications, grants, and research experience.

Provide a list of current and pending grants for the principal investigator, each co-principal investigator, and other key personnel, along with the proportion of their time, expressed as **percent effort over a 12-month calendar year**, allocated to each project. Include the proposed IES grant as one of the pending grants in this list.

Part IV: Competition Regulations and Review Criteria

A. Funding Mechanisms and Restrictions

1. Mechanism of Support
IES intends to award cooperative agreement grants pursuant to this Request for Applications.

2. Funding Available
Although IES intends to support the topics and network roles 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.

The size of the award depends on the topic and network role as well as the scope of the project. Please attend to the duration and budget maximums set for each topic and network role in Part II: Research Networks.

In addition to the grant awards made for individual projects IES will also consider proposals from a network for supplemental recovery research activities (possibly identified through network meetings, network working groups, engagement with other stakeholders, and the forums set up by the Network Leads) that will aid the network in meeting its goals. A maximum of $100,000 can be provided for any additional study approved by IES with a limit of 3 studies per network. These additional studies are to be carried out by network members but can also include other persons and organizations who can contribute to the study. Do not include ideas for these supplemental studies in your application as they will only be considered once a network has been established.

3. Special Considerations for Budget Expenses

(a) Indirect Cost Rate
When calculating your expenses for research conducted in field settings, you should apply your organization's federally negotiated off-campus indirect cost rate. Please note that the Indirect Cost Group (ICG) in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of the Chief Financial Officer will not be available for assistance during the application preparation process. If your organization does not have an indirect cost rate and you receive a grant from IES, the ICG group can help with obtaining an indirect cost rate once the grant is awarded.

Most institutions that do not have a current negotiated rate may use a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (see 2 CFR §200.414 https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=se2.1.200_1414&rgn=div8 for more information). This de minimis rate may be used indefinitely and no documentation is required to justify its use.

Organizations, both primary grantees and subawardees, not located in the territorial United States may **not** charge indirect costs.

(b) 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 (https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=dcd3efbcf2b6092f84c3b1af32bdcc34&node=se2.1.200_1432&rgn=div8).

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 Uniform Guidance Cost Principles. Grantees are responsible for the proper use of their grant awards and may have to repay funds to the Department if they violate the rules for meeting- and conference-related expenses or other disallowed expenditures.

4. Program Authority
"American Rescue Plan Act" of 2021 (H.R. 1319) Sec. 2010, and 20 U.S.C. 9501 et seq., the "Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002," Title I of Public Law 107-279, November 5, 2002. This program is not subject to the intergovernmental review requirements of Executive Order 12372.

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

B. Additional Requirements

1. Pre-Award

(a) Clarification and Budget Questions
IES uses the scientific peer review process as the first step in making funding decisions. If your application is recommended for funding based on the outcome of the scientific peer review, an IES program officer will contact you to clarify any issues that were raised by the peer reviewers and to address whether the proposed budget adequately supports the scope of work and meets federal guidelines.

(b) Network Commitments
Below are the commitments that each team will need to agree to as part of its cooperative agreement, which is completed prior to award.

(1) Network Commitments
All members of each Network must agree to the following:
- Co-create and follow a network-wide SEER plan (pre-registration, data management plan, etc.), especially the use of common measures

- Guided by the Network Lead, co-create and implement a network-wide dissemination plan

- Ensure representation at virtual and in-person Network meetings. At a minimum, each project within the Network should budget for the PI and other key personnel to attend one in-person Network meeting a year. For budgeting purposes, assume the meetings will take place in Washington, D.C. and last two days.

The Research Teams of each network must also agree to the following:
- Collaborate with the other research teams and Network lead

- Share data and leverage common measures within the network

- Adopt shared coding conventions to the maximum extent possible

- Allow for embedded researchers (such as graduate, postdoctoral, or other researchers or policymakers, for hands-on exposure to research)

Each Network Lead must also commit to the following:
- Provide national leadership and outreach that incorporates the findings and activities of the full network

- Ensure the network-wide dissemination plan is enacted and updated as necessary

- Support and promote the work of other network members

- Facilitate opportunities for various stakeholders (education or training programs, researchers, developers, employers, etc.) to meet and collaborate with one another either virtually or in person

(c) Demonstrating Access to Data and Education Settings
Whenever possible, include letters of agreement in Appendix D from those who have responsibility for or access to the data or settings you wish to incorporate when you submit your application. Even in circumstances where you have included such letters with your application, **IES will require additional supporting evidence prior to the release of funds**. If you cannot provide such documentation, IES may not award the grant or may withhold funds.

You will need supporting evidence of partnership or access if you are doing any of the following:

(1) Conducting research in or with education settings
If your application is being considered for funding based on scientific merit scores from the scientific peer review panel and your research relies on access to education settings, you will need to provide documentation that you have access to the necessary settings in order to receive the grant. This means that if you do not have permission to conduct the proposed project in the necessary number of settings at the time of application, you will need to provide documentation to IES indicating that you have successfully recruited the necessary number of settings for the proposed research before the full first- year costs will be awarded. If you recruited sufficient numbers of settings prior to the application, IES will ask you to provide documentation that the settings originally recruited for the application are still willing to partner in the research.

(2) Using secondary datasets
If your application is being considered for funding based on scientific merit scores from the scientific peer review panel and your research relies on access to secondary datasets (such as federally collected datasets, state or district administrative data, or data collected by you or other researchers), you will need to provide documentation that you have access to the necessary datasets in order to receive the grant. This means that if you do not have permission to use the proposed datasets at the time of application, you must provide documentation to IES from the entity controlling the dataset(s) before the grant will be awarded. This documentation must indicate that you have permission to use the data for the proposed research for the time period discussed in the application. If you obtained permission to use a proposed dataset prior to submitting your application, IES will ask you to provide updated documentation indicating that you still have permission to use the dataset to conduct the proposed research during the project period.

(3) Building on existing studies
You may propose studies that piggyback onto an ongoing study, which will require access to those subjects and data. In such cases, the principal investigator of the existing study should be one of the members of the research team applying for the grant to conduct the new project.

In addition to obtaining evidence of access, IES strongly advises applicants to establish a written agreement, within 3 months of receipt of an award, among all key collaborators and their organizations (including principal and co-principal investigators) regarding roles, responsibilities, access to data, publication rights, and decision-making procedures.

(d) Assessment of Past Performance
IES considers the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous federal award as part of the criteria for making a funding decision. Performance on previous Department of Education awards is

considered as is additional information that may be requested from the applicant, including compliance to the IES Public Access Policy (applicable for all grants funded from 2012 to present; https://ies.ed.gov/funding/researchaccess.asp).

2. Post Award

(a) Compliance with IES Policy on Public Access to Data and Results

(1) Access to data
You must include a data management plan (DMP) in Appendix E. The scientific peer review process will not include the DMP in the scoring of the scientific merit of the application. Instead, IES program officers will be responsible for reviewing the completeness of the proposed DMP. The costs of the DMP can be covered by the grant and should be included in the budget and explained in the budget narrative.

(2) Access to results: Grantee submissions to ERIC
IES requires all grantees to submit the electronic version of peer-reviewed scholarly publications to ERIC (https://eric.ed.gov/), 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 (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/researchaccess.asp) 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. **As the designated representative for the grantee organization, IES holds the principal investigator responsible** for ensuring that authors of publications stemming from the grant comply with this requirement.

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 (https://eric.ed.gov/submit/), as well as a Frequently Asked Questions page (https://eric.ed.gov/?granteefaq). 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).

(b) Pre-Register Studies
Exploratory or causal impact studies must be registered on a suitable platform within the first year of receiving a new award. There are several options for preregistration including the Registry of Efficacy and Effectiveness Studies (REES; https://sreereg.icpsr.umich.edu/sreereg/), the Open Science Framework (OSF; https://osf.io/), ClinicalTrials.gov (https://clinicaltrials.gov/), The American Economic Association's Registry for Randomized Controlled Trials (AEA RCT Registry; https://www.socialscienceregistry.org), EGAP (https://egap.org/content/registration), Uri Simonsohn's As Predicted (https://aspredicted.org/), and trial registries in the World Health Organization (WHO) Registry Network (https://www.who.int/ictrp/network/en/).

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

(d) Attendance at the Annual IES Principal Investigators Meeting
The principal investigator (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. PIs who are not

able to attend the meeting may designate another person who is key personnel on the research team to attend.

C. Overview of Application and Scientific Peer Review Process

1. Submitting Your Letter of Intent

Letters of intent (LOIs) are submitted online at the IES Peer Review Information Management Online (PRIMO) system (https://iesreview.ed.gov/LOI/LOISubmit). **Select the Letter of Intent form for the competition 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. If you submit an LOI, a program officer will contact you regarding your proposed research. IES staff also use the information in the LOI to identify the expertise needed for the scientific peer review panels and to secure a sufficient number of reviewers to handle the anticipated number of applications.

Elements for the Letter of Intent:
- Descriptive title

- Topic and network role of your application

- Brief description of the proposed project

- Name, organizational affiliation, address, telephone number, and email address of the principal investigator and any co-principal investigators

- Name and organizational affiliation of any key collaborators and contractors

- Duration of the proposed project (attend to the Duration maximums for each topic and network role)

- Estimated total budget request (attend to the Budget maximums for each topic and network role)

2. Multiple Submissions

You may submit applications to more than one of the FY 2022 IES grant programs and to multiple topics or roles within the Education Research Networks Grants competition. In addition, within a particular grant program or topic, you may submit multiple applications. However, you may submit a given application only once for the FY 2022 grant competitions, meaning you may not submit the same application or similar applications to multiple grant programs, multiple topics, or multiple times within the same topic. If you submit the same or similar applications, 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 March 10, 2022 through the internet using the software provided on the Grants.gov (https://www.grants.gov/) website. 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/).

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 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 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 (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf) 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/application_review.asp) by a panel of experts who have substantive and methodological expertise appropriate to the program of research and Request for Applications.

Each compliant and responsive application is assigned to an IES review panel convened for this competition.

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 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

(a) The purpose of IES-supported research is to contribute to solving education problems and provide reliable information about the education practices that support learning and improve academic achievement and access to education for all learners. IES expects reviewers to assess the scientific rigor and practical significance of the research proposed in order to judge the likelihood that it will make a meaningful contribution to the larger IES mission. Information about each of these criteria is described in Part II.

(b) Review Criteria for Research Teams

(1) Significance
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Significance section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application?

(2) Research Plan
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Research Plan section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application?

(3) Personnel
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Personnel section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application? Do the principal investigator, project director, and other key personnel possess appropriate experience, and will they commit sufficient time to competently implement the proposed research?

(4) Resources
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Resources section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application? 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?

(5) Dissemination
Does the application address the recommendations described in Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan? Does the applicant present a dissemination plan that is tailored to the purpose of the project and designed to reach a wide range of audiences? Does the applicant describe a dissemination history that demonstrates past success in sharing results of education research widely and appropriately?

(c) Review Criteria for Network Lead

(1) Significance
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Significance section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application?

(2) Network Lead Activities
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Network Lead Activities section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application? Applicants may also include part of their response to discussing how they will address the recommendations for dissemination in Appendix A.

(3) Personnel
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Personnel section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application? Do the principal investigator, project director, and other key personnel possess appropriate experience, and will they commit sufficient time to competently implement the proposed research?

(4) Management and Organizational Resources
Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Management and Organizational Resources section for the topic under which the applicant submitted the application? Does the applicant describe the Management plan for the Network? 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 described in this request for applications
- Ability to carry out the proposed research within the maximum award and duration requirements
- Availability of funds

Part V: Compliance and Responsiveness Checklist

Only compliant and responsive applications will be forwarded for scientific peer review. 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.

See the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf) for an application checklist that describes the forms in the application package that must be completed and the PDF files that must be attached to the forms for a successful submission through Grants.gov.

Compliance	
	Have you included a Project Narrative?
	Do the project narrative and other narrative content adhere to all page maximums as described in the RFA? IES will remove any pages above the maximum before forwarding an application.
	Have you included Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan if you are applying to the Research Team role?
	Have you included Appendix D: Letters of Agreement?
	Have you included Appendix E: Data Management Plan if you are applying to the Research Team Role?
Responsiveness	
	Have you met all the Requirements for an application?
	• If you are applying to be a Research Team, are you or do you have an education agency (state and local agencies involved in prekindergarten through grade 12 education or community college systems) included on the application with a PI or a co-PI from each one?
	• Does your proposed research include a measure or measures of learners' academic outcomes?
	• Does your proposed research address recovery activities in U.S. prekindergarten, elementary, and/or secondary education systems implemented by state and local agencies (including U.S. Territory and tribal agencies), or in U.S. postsecondary and/or adult education programs implemented by state and city community college systems?
	Have you indicated a single topic for your application (PreK-12 or Community College)?
	Have you indicated a single network role for your application (Research Team or Network Lead)?
	Does your Project Narrative include the required sections and the associated requirements for the selected topic and network role? Did you describe the elements required for each section as listed below?

(Table continues on the following page)

Required Project Narrative Elements

Research Teams

Significance	Research Plan	Personnel	Resources
You **must describe** • The agency(ies) or community college system(s) participating in the project • The learner population (including subgroups) the project will focus on • The recovery activities that the agency(ies) or community college systems are implementing • How the research could contribute to the improvement of the recovery activities for those learners • Your study's research questions	You **must describe** the • Characteristics of your sample or data source, (learners in prekindergarten through grade 12 or learners in or eligible for community college) who are engaged in or would benefit from recovery activities • Research design and methods for your study or studies • Learner outcomes you will be examining • Cost analysis plan and the cost-effectiveness plan for any recovery activity you will be evaluating • Data analysis plan for your study or studies	You **must describe** your project team and identify a PI or co-PI from every agency or community college system taking part.	You **must describe** your resources to conduct the project.

Network Leads

Significance	Network Activities	Personnel	Management and Organizational Resources
You **must describe** your vision for the Network and how you expect your activities as the Network Lead will contribute to IES' goals for the network.	You **must describe** your plans for • Coordinating network activities, holding network meetings, and promoting training of early career researchers across all teams • Organizing network working groups on specific recovery issues • Carrying out an ongoing scan of the recovery needs of student subgroups that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and the recovery activities education agencies are implementing to support these students. • Connecting the network to other stakeholders involved in recovery activities • Establishing a forum for identifying recovery research needs • National leadership and dissemination (include a website and social media presence, engagement activities, and synthesizing the network's finding and disseminating syntheses in multiple formats for multiple audiences).	You **must describe** your project team.	You **must describe** • Plans and procedures for the overall management of the Network • Resources to conduct the work of the Network

Part VI: Topic and Network Role Codes

Applications to the **Improving Pandemic Recovery grant program (84.305X)** are submitted under a single topic and a single network role. You must enter the appropriate topic and network role code in Item 4b of the SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance form (see the IES Application Submission Guide, https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf, for more information about this form). For example, an application under the PreKindergarten to Grade 12 topic and the Network Lead role should have the code "NCER-PreK-12 Lead" entered in the field for Item 4b.

Topics	Codes
PreK to Grade 12	NCER-PreK-12
Community College	NCER-CC

Network Role	Codes
Network Lead	Lead
Research Team	Research