

Virtual Office Hours: CTE Research Teams

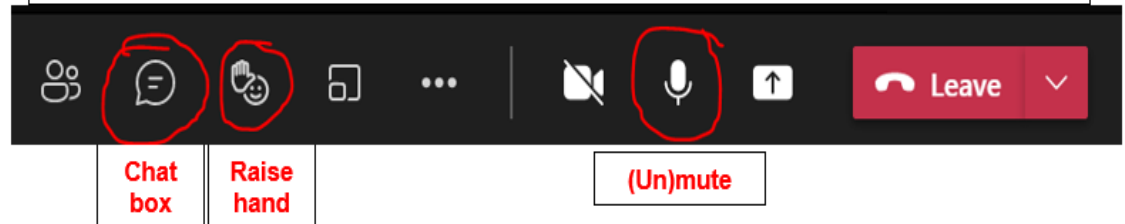
WELCOME!

- You can come/go as you like – you don't have to stay past your question but can!
- Feel free to speak, raise your virtual hand, or use the chat box.
- Let me know if you have questions about:
 - Request for Applications (RFA)
 - Eligible Applicants and Settings
 - Project Narrative
 - Requirements vs. Recommendations
 - Budget
 - Peer review process
 - <https://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/>
 - Letters of intent (LOIs)
 - IES program officer assistance
 - Other

Host:

Corinne Alfeld, Ph.D.
(corinne.alfeld@ed.gov)
Program Officer

You may see these icons, depending on your Team's interface



Career and Technical Education (CTE) Research Teams to join the CTE Research Network

Virtual Technical Assistance

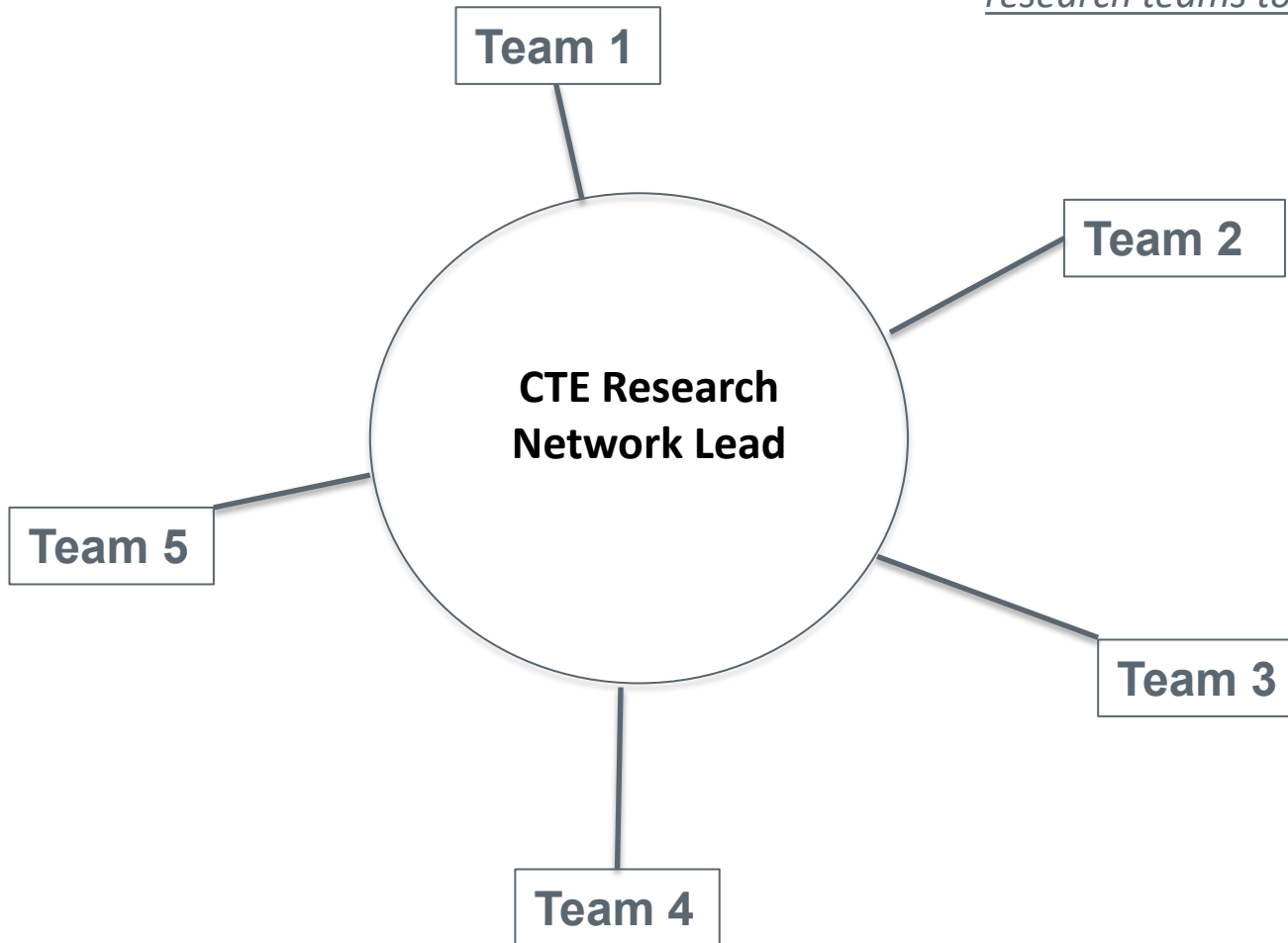
Corinne Alfeld
Program Officer, IES-NCER

What Are IES Research Networks?

- The IES “Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice” program focuses resources and attention on education problems or issues that are a high priority for the nation and creates both a structure and process for researchers who are working on these issues to share ideas, build new knowledge, and strengthen their research and dissemination capacity.
- Networks are comprised of multiple teams who have their own individual projects that share a focus on a particular education issue and a Network Lead.
- The goals of a Network are to advance the field’s understanding of a problem or issue beyond what an individual research project or team can do on its own and to assist policymakers and practitioners in using this information to strengthen education policies and programs and improve learners’ education outcomes.
- Networks support IES’s mission to fund rigorous research that helps solve significant education problems that are relevant to the teaching and learning needs of the diverse population of the United States.

Network Structure

NOTE: The CTE Network Lead was funded earlier this year. We are now looking for 5 research teams to join the network.



CTE Research Teams Grant Competition

IES awarded a grant for a CTE Network Lead in early 2023:

<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/details.asp?ID=5904>

The current competition is for up to 5 *Research Teams* to join the Network.

<https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/program.asp?ProgID=2114> (←RFA is posted here)

Applicants will propose to carry out both an exploratory study and an impact study. Your application should include a detailed plan for the Year 1 research activities, which includes an exploratory study and a plan for the conduct of an impact evaluation of a career development opportunity.

Coordinated by the Network Lead, the research teams will collaborate as well as disseminate findings about secondary (middle and high school) career development opportunities in the U.S.

Maximum Duration: 4 years

Maximum Cost: \$3,200,000 (direct + indirect costs)

Structure of the grants

Each research team will conduct a two-part project:

Part I: Exploratory (Year 1):

- Determine which and how many career development opportunities are available and used in the district setting selected by the research team, characteristics of the setting and of the learners who have access to and use them, and which opportunities are associated with better learner outcomes.
- Prepare a detailed research plan for an impact evaluation of one career development opportunity (in the same or in a different setting as the exploratory study). *Plan must be submitted to and approved by the Network Lead and IES by the end of Year 1.*

Part II: Impact (Years 2-4):

- Conduct a causal impact study to determine whether the selected career development opportunity is beneficial to learners' career-related outcomes and examine heterogeneity in learner outcomes.
- Include information about implementation and cost.

NOTE: You do not need to have selected the focus or setting for the impact study at this time! In your application, you only need to describe how you will do so during Year 1.

What are “Career Development Opportunities?”

Career development opportunities may include, but need not be limited to:

- CTE coursework and programs of study
- Work-based learning
- Career technical competency assessments
 - such as CTE end-of-course exams, certifications, microcredentials
- Career advising
- Tracking tools
 - such as digital credential wallets, digital transcripts, dashboards

Why this focus?

There is no systematic documentation or research about how districts are supporting the career development of secondary (middle and high) school learners.

Information is needed to better understand the accessibility and impact of career development approaches and tools used in the secondary school grades.

Requirements

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.

Populations: Research and data collection must focus on learners enrolled in secondary (middle and/or high school) education but can include these learners' postsecondary and employment outcomes.

Setting: Large or midsize city or large or midsize suburb (according to [NCES definitions](#)) with career development opportunities available to their secondary students. Employment settings where work-based learning (WBL) takes place, including youth apprenticeship, are eligible as the research setting if the WBL is explicitly part of a secondary CTE program.

- *You must include a letter of support from the district in which your exploratory research will take place.*
- *Your impact study does NOT need to be conducted in the same district or geographic setting as the exploratory study, and you do not need a letter of support from the impact study setting at this time.*

Learner Outcomes:

- Learning and achievement in career and technical education (CTE) and other relevant courses, such as grades, test scores, or course credits; high school graduation; technical certifications;
- Postsecondary enrollment; course credits; completion of for-credit and non-credit programs that lead to occupational credentials and certificates; associate degrees; bachelor's degrees;
- Employment; wages.

Project Narrative and Appendices

Required Sections of the Application Project Narrative:

- Significance
- Research Plan
- Personnel
- Resources

Required Appendices:

- Appendix A: Dissemination History and Plan
- Appendix E: Letters of Support
- Appendix F: Data Sharing and Management Plan

Be sure to read the full RFA for details on required sections of the application!

The RFA also includes recommendations for developing a competitive application. The recommendations are intended to improve the quality of your application, and the peer reviewers are asked to consider them in their evaluation of your application.

(<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/program.asp?ID=2114>)

Important Dates

Letter of Intent Due: November 14, 2023

<https://iesreview.ed.gov/LOI/LOISubmit>

(optional, but encouraged)

Application Package Available:

October 26, 2023

<https://www.grants.gov/>

11:59:59 p.m. Eastern

Application Deadline: Time on January 11, 2024

<https://www.grants.gov/>

Possible Start Date: September 1, 2024

All applicants must also read the companion IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/FY2024_submission_guide.pdf) for information on how to prepare and submit applications electronically through Grants.gov.

Steps to Submitting an Application

- Read the Request for Applications (RFA) carefully! <https://ies.ed.gov/funding>
- Download the Application package <https://www.grants.gov/> (Search for ALN 84.305) and then the *Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice* program (Education Research Networks; ALN 84.305N)
- Submit a Letter of Intent (optional but strongly encouraged. You will be contacted with feedback if you submit a LOI. <https://iesreview.ed.gov/LOI/LOISubmit>
- Read the Submission Guide carefully!
<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/submissionguide.pdf>
Including the instructions on how to:
 - Register with the System for Award Management (SAM; <https://www.sam.gov/>)
Note: This can take 2 weeks or more!
 - Make sure your organization or institution is registered in Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html>)
 - Create and use a Grants.gov Workspace (<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>)

Important Tips

- Start Early! The process will take longer than you think
- Identify your team and assign roles (everyone on the team should read the RFA)
- Attend to both Requirements and Recommendations in the RFA
- Consider submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI) to IES (optional but encouraged; *you will receive feedback on your idea if you submit a LOI*)
- Develop an early draft and get feedback from colleagues (the IES program officer can also provide feedback on your draft)
- Attend additional virtual office hours to ask questions or email the program officer
- Revise (remember to use a single “voice” and proofread carefully)
- Pay attention to formatting guidelines and page maximum
- Stay within the maximum duration and budget for the Research Team role
- Ask the program officer for feedback on a near-final draft well before the due date
- Use the checklist at the back of the RFA to make sure you have done everything
- Submit early (no late submissions accepted!)

Virtual Office Hours

To receive an email with details, look for “CTE Research Teams” on this page:
<https://ies.ed.gov/funding/technicalassistance.asp>

Nov 2 (Thu)
1:00 – 2:00 pm ET

Nov 7 (Tues)
2:00 – 3:00 pm ET

Nov 20 (Mon)
1:00 – 2:00 pm ET

Feel free to attend all 3 if you'd like!

Program Officer Contact Info

Please contact me to discuss your ideas and questions!

Corinne Alfeld, Ph.D.
Research Analyst/Program Officer
Corinne.Alfeld@ed.gov

National Center for Education Research (NCER)
Institute of Education Sciences (IES)
U.S. Department of Education