

FY2021 Application Submission Process

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Transcript

Transcription is provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 1)

Welcome to the IES Application Submission Process Webinar. My name is Emily Doolittle and I'm a program officer and the National Center for Education Research. I'm joined by my colleague, Sarah Brasiel, who is a program officer in the National Center for Special Education Research. In the webinar today, we will provide an overview of how to submit a grant application to IES for the current Fiscal Year 2021, funding opportunities.

(Slide 2)

Today, you will learn how to apply for an IES grant, with a focus on how to find the materials you need, how to use Grants.gov to complete and submit your application, and some general information about what to include in your application, and how to format important components of your application. You'll also learn about general requirements that apply to all IES grant programs.

(Slide 3)

IES has two research centers, each of which offers funding opportunities. The research centers grant competitions are identified using a CFDA number, which stands for the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

All National Center for Education Research (also known as NCER) competitions are identified with the CFDA number 84.305, and all National Center for Special Education Research (also known as NCSER) competitions are identified with the CFDA number 84.324.

Individual grant programs within each center are identified using an alpha character (A, B, C, and so on). More on that later.

(Slide 4)

So, what are the research centers competing in FY2021? Each center runs one or more competitions each fiscal year. Some are competed regularly, while others are not.

(Slide 5)

NCER is accepting applications to six grant programs in FY2021. The Education Research Grants program is the main grants program for NCER, designated with CFDA number 84.305A.

NCER is also accepting applications to its Research Training in the Education Sciences program, 84.305B, in three areas, Pathways to the Education Sciences, Postdoctoral Research Training, and Methods Training for Education Research.

The Education Research and Development Centers program (84.305C) is competed infrequently, for FY21, NCER is accepting applications for one R&D Center, Improving Teaching and Learning in Postsecondary Institutions.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 6)

NCER is also accepting applications to its Statistical and Research Methodology in Education program (84.305D also known as Stats and Methods) for both the regular and early career topics, and to its Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication (84.305R).

Finally, NCER is accepting applications to a new competition, Using Longitudinal Data to Support State Education Policymaking (84.305S).

(Slide 7)

Now let's look more closely at the main NCER grants program, Education Research. Under this program, we accept applications to multiple topic areas. There are 11 standing topics this year. There are no special topics this year.

If you are applying to this grants program, you will need to identify the topic area on your application cover sheet to help make sure your application is assigned appropriately for peer review. I'll return to this later.

(Slide 8)

NCSER is accepting applications to four grant programs in FY2021. The Special Education Research Grants program is the main grants program from NCSER designated with CFDA number 84.324A. NCSER is accepting applications to the Research Training Programs in Special Education (84.324B) under two topic areas, Early Career Development and Mentoring, and Methods Training for Special Education Research, and to its Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication (84.324R).

Finally, NCSER has a new competition for Research Grants Focused on NAEP Process Data for Learners with Disabilities (84.324P).

(Slide 9)

Like the Education Research Grants program in NCER, the Special Education Research grants program is the primary grants program for NCSER.

NCSER's Special Education Research grant program includes nine topics. Those who are familiar with the Special Education Research Grants program will notice that NCSER is handling topics a bit differently this year, in that they have streamlined the number of topics, and do not have additional descriptive information beyond the topic title to allow for and encourage a broad range of research under these general topics.

You may select both a primary and secondary topic to reflect research that has more than one research focus. See the RFA for the 84.324A competition for more information about this change.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 10)

Pay attention to due dates for FY2021. The research centers are accepting applications on two different due dates. Know the due date for your competition. IES does not accept late applications. More on that later.

Two competitions are accepting applications on or before July 30, 2020 – Statistical and Research Methodology in Education and Using Longitudinal Data to Support State Education Policymaking.

Eight competitions are accepting applications on or before August 20, 2020 – Education Research, Special Education Research, Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences, Research Training Programs in Special Education, the NCER and NCSER Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication, Education R&D Centers, and Research Grants Focused on NAEP Process Data for Learners with Disabilities.

(Slide 11)

Before you go to the IES website to learn more about these programs and the requirements for an application, I recommend that you sign up for the IES NewsFlash, an email alert system that can help you stay up to date with the latest news and information from IES, including upcoming research grant competitions.

To sign up for the IES NewsFlash, hover your mouse over the news and events tab on the main IES webpage, and choose NewsFlash from the list.

(Slide 12)

Here you can sign up to receive email alerts from one or more of the IES centers. To receive information about funding opportunities, sign up for both the NCER and NCSER NewsFlashes.

(Slide 13)

Now let's review how to find the materials you'll need to submit an application to one of these research grant competitions at IES.

(Slide 14)

You need three things to apply. First, you need the Request for Applications (RFA) which contains information for writing your Project Narrative, including requirements that must be met to advance to peer review, and recommendations for a strong application. The RFAs are located on the IES website.

Second, you'll need the Application Submission Guide, which contains information about submitting your application using Grants.gov. You also need to find the correct application

Application Submission Process

package, which contains the forms that you will need to complete – that is located on the Grants.gov website.

(Slide 15)

You can find all RFAs for current fiscal year competitions on the IES website on the Funding Opportunities Page.

(Slide 16)

To get to the Funding Opportunities Page, go to the main IES page, then click “Menu” (marked by a red arrow), from the dropdown, select “Funding Opportunities” (circled in red).

(Slide 17)

On the left-hand side of the page, you will see a list of steps to follow to submit a research grant application to IES. The link to the RFAs is circled in red. On the right-hand side, you see the competitions that are accepting applications in FY2021.

(Slide 18)

You can download RFAs as PDF documents.

(Slide 19)

Now let's turn to Grants.gov, where you will find the application package for your competition.

(Slide 20)

I recommend that you start on the For Applicants page on Grants.gov. Here you will find links to get registered and apply for grants, both circled in red.

Start with registration to ensure your organization is registered in time to submit your application, well in advance of the deadline date. More on that later.

(Slide 21)

Before you can register your organization on Grants.gov, you need a DUNS number and an active System for Award Management or SAM registration. Each organization only needs one Grants.gov account. Within each account, you can have multiple User Profiles to allow more than one person to work on a single grant application.

(Slide 22)

Registration (and annual renewal) on Grants.gov involves multiple steps that can take several weeks, depending on a variety of factors.

Application Submission Process

Your Organization Registration in Grants.gov must be active in order to submit an application to IES. Make sure your organization registration is complete in plenty of time to meet the application deadline for your competition.

(Slide 23)

Once you've attended to your organization's registration status in Grants.gov, you'll need to find the application package for your competition.

Go to Apply for Grants and select “Apply for a Grant Opportunity Today”. If you're not familiar with Workspace, you can read an overview of how to apply using Workspace here as well, (circled in red).

(Slide 24)

Workspace is the standard way for organizations to apply for federal grants in Grants.gov.

(Slide 25)

Now let's go to “Apply for a Grant Opportunity Today”, and I'll show you how to find the application materials for your competition.

(Slide 26)

The easiest way to find the application package for your competition is to use the search function in Grants.gov (circled in red).

(Slide 27)

Search by CFDA number for the competition you wish to apply to without the alpha character. As a reminder, all grant competitions offered by NCER use 84.305 as the CFDA number, and all those offered by NCSER use 84.324.

(Slide 28)

Search by CFDA using the numbers only. Here I've entered 84.305 in the search field (circled in red).

(Slide 29)

When you searched by CFDA number without the alpha character, you will get a list of all the competitions offered. Make sure you select the Opportunity Title and CFDA number for your competition to get the correct package.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 30)

Here's the result of a search by CFDA 84.305. This list (circled in red) shows the six NCER grant competitions that are accepting applications for FY2021 funding. Click on the Opportunity Number to get to the application forms for each competition.

(Slide 31)

Here's the list of NCER's four funding opportunities when I searched by CFDA 84.324. Again, click on the Opportunity Number to get to the application forms for your competition.

(Slide 32)

Here's the Grant Opportunity for Statistical and Research Methodology in Education (CFDA 84.305D). Click on the Package tab to view the application package and apply (circled in red).

(Slide 33)

Note the "Please Read Before Applying!" section. Read these instructions to ensure that you help the correct version of Adobe Reader to view and complete the application package.

Click the Preview link to access read-only forms and application instructions before you apply.

(Slide 34)

When you click Preview, you can see the mandatory and optional forms for this competition. If you click on any of these links, it will take you to a preview of that form.

If you click "Download Instructions", circled in red, you will open up a copy of the IES Application Submission Guide that is used for all IES grant competitions. As a reminder, the Application Submission Guide is also available on the IES website, on the Funding Opportunities page.

(Slide 35)

Back to the Package tab, where you can click "Apply" to apply.

(Slide 36)

Here you can access Grants.gov's Applicant FAQs, check the deadline, see closing date, and confirm you have found the correct application package (all circled in red). Here you can also find Agency Contact Information (an IES Program Officer) if you have any immediate questions for someone at IES, about the application materials for your competition.

Application Submission Process

When you're ready, click the apply button, upper right hand corner, to begin working on your application. You can work on the application before your Grants.gov registration is complete. However, your registration must be complete before you can submit your application.

(Slide 37)

Now we'll show you how to apply using Workspace.

(Slide 38)

Workspace is a shared online environment where you work on your grant application. Multiple people may simultaneously access and fill out the mandatory and optional forms within an application. This is an example Workspace from Grants.gov to show you what the environment looks like. Now I'll show you some features of the Workspace.

The Participants tab lists the members of a workspace who work as a team to complete the required forms for a federal grant.

(Slide 39)

Under Actions, bottom right of the screenshot, you have several options.

Click Webforms to fill out the forms online.

Click Download to complete PDF forms.

Click Upload to submit completed PDF forms.

Click Lock/Unlock forms to prevent other Workspace members from editing a form as needed.

Click Reuse if you want to use a form from another workspace.

(Slide 40)

Let's review some basic features of the webforms.

Complete the form in your web browser.

Navigate by clicking Sections (see left-hand side).

Use the "Tab" key to move through the form fields.

Required fields are marked by a red asterisk.

(Slide 41)

You'll enter information into the webform in a variety of ways, including entering your own text, using a drop-down menu, or using a pop-up calendar that allows you to choose dates, and selecting radio buttons for multiple choice fields.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 42)

If you need help all working on the webform, hover your mouse over the field, where you will see a popup message that explains what is needed.

(Slide 43)

Other features to note in webforms; they will autosave every five minutes. Also, you should complete the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance form first because it will pre-populate other forms in the application package.

(Slide 44)

At the bottom of each web form, there is a tab Check for Errors that will tell you if there are any errors in the form. For example, if you haven't filled in a field that's required, when you click the Check Package for Errors button, you'll get a message telling me what is needed.

(Slide 45)

If you don't want to use the webform option, you can download the forms and complete them using Adobe software. Once completed, you then upload them to Workspace. Note that the PDF forms also have a Check for Errors button.

(Slide 46)

If using PDF forms, you can move through the form using the Tab key. Note that required fields are flagged. As with the webforms, you can hover your mouse over form fields if you need help.

(Slide 47)

Whether using webforms or PDF forms, you always have the option of reusing a form. Grants.gov will keep your forms for three years.

(Slide 48)

When you're ready to submit your application, the Workspace Owner, the participant with that assigned role, must notify at the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) that it is ready to submit. The AOR is the Workspace participant with the authority to submit the application.

Also, please note that you need your Grants.gov password in order to submit the application.

(Slide 49)

Now we'll go over more features of Grants.gov to help you complete and submit your application successfully and on time.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 50)

As noted earlier, you need Adobe software to read and complete the application forms. In addition, you will attach documents to the application forms that contain the substance of your application. More on that later. IES recommends that you use PDF files. If you need help converting your files to PDF Grants.gov has resources to check the version you have and download the version you need if you don't have the correct version.

Note, if you can see the application package, you are able to complete and submit grant applications on Grants.gov.

(Slide 51)

Back on the For Applicants page, there's a section on Adobe Compatibility (circled in red) that you can use to ensure you held the right version of Adobe to submit your application.

(Slide 52)

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. You cannot email your application to the Program Officer. If you do that, your application will not be sent forward for peer review.

(Slide 53)

Applications received by Grants.gov are date and timestamped, and the time is stamped to the second. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted, and the date and timestamp must be no later than 11:59:59 PM Eastern time on the due date, in order for IES to review your application.

Late applications will not be reviewed.

(Slide 54)

IES will not accept your application in paper format, unless you qualify for one of the following exceptions.

If you do not have access to the Internet, or you do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system, then you can qualify for an exception to the online submission.

If you think you qualify for this exemption, contact the relevant IES program officer to explain your situation and learn more.

(Slide 55)

If you have any trouble completing the forms in the application package, or submitting your application through Grants.gov, your first step should be to contact Grants.gov.

Application Submission Process

You can call their 800 number or send an email. When you contact Grants.gov for help, they will give you a case number that you need to keep. Once you have your case number, contact your IES Program Officer and let them know about the problem, and the steps that you have already taken to remedy the problem.

(Slide 56)

On the Applicant FAQ page Grants.gov provides several resources that may help if you're experiencing any difficulties with your application.

(Slide 57)

IES does not accept late applications. If Grants.gov determines that there was a technical problem with the Grants.gov system, and that the problem with the system affected your ability to submit your application on time, we will accept your application. If that is the case, email the IES program officer with your Grants.gov Case Number.

Please note though, that the vast majority of the time there is not a technical problem with Grants.gov, instead it is a common error that leads to problems that slow you down, and that could make your application late.

IES will not accept an application that was late because the Grants.gov submission guidelines weren't followed.

(Slide 58)

You can track your application on Grants.gov using the Track My Application link to verify that your submission was on time and valid. You can track the application this way from the time you begin the upload process, until IES receives the application and assigns a unique identifier.

(Slide 59)

You access the Track My Application page from the For Applicants page where you can select Track Your Application.

(Slide 60)

Enter the Grants.gov tracking number for your submission to follow your application's progress through the Grants.gov system.

(Slide 61)

You will get confirmation of your submission from Grants.gov and IES in the form of four emails.

Application Submission Process

The first three emails come from Grants.gov, and the fourth email comes from IES, U.S. Department of Education.

(Slide 62)

The first email confirms that you have attempted to upload your application to Grants.gov. At this point, your application will be assigned a tracking number that starts with G-R-A-N-T, grant.

The second email you receive will indicate either that your application has been validated by Grants.gov, or that your application has been rejected due to errors. If it has been rejected, you will need to go back and fix the errors. This is yet another reason that you should submit your application early, because you want to make sure you have enough time to fix any problems if your application is rejected.

The third email you received from Grants.gov indicates that the Department of Education has retrieved your application.

(Slide 63)

This final email contains an identifier called a PR/Award number that is unique to your application. It will start with R, then 305 or 324, depending on which center you submitted your application to, and then the letter of the competition, and a series of digits.

Once you get this PR/Award number, use this R305 or R324 number to track your application on the IES Peer Review Website, which I will describe next. If your application was submitted late, this email will state that it was late and that it will not be given further consideration.

(Slide 64)

IES has a peer review website called PRIMO, Peer Review Information Management Online.

After submitting your application, you will be invited to set up your PRIMO applicant account to keep track of the status of your application as it is reviewed.

(Slide 65)

A few weeks after the application deadline, you will receive up to three emails about PRIMO's Applicant Notification System (ANS). From this point forward, all communication about the status of your grant application will come from this system.

The first email has the subject line "IES PRIMO Applicant Notification System (ANS) - Status of Application (Part 1 of 2)" and provides login information. The second email has the subject line "IES - PRIMO Applicant Notification System (ANS) - Status of Application (Part 2 of 2)" and provides a password.

Application Submission Process

The third email (or first email if you already have an ANS account) has the subject line “Fiscal Year Application Status Update - Institute of Education Sciences PRIMO ANS” and tells you to log in to PRIMO to see the status of your application.

If you do not receive these emails, please contact your IES program officer so we can help you get set up.

(Slide 66)

Hello. My name is Sarah Brasiel, and I'm a program officer at the National Center for Special Education Research. Let's turn our attention now to what's included in an application.

(Slide 67)

An application consists of forms. The SF-424 Research and Related, or R&R, form family, and PDF files with the substantive content of your application that are attached to the forms.

This substantive content includes a project abstract, Project Narrative, several appendices (some of which are required, some optional), a reference list, a human subjects narrative, and bio sketches for key personnel.

(Slide 68)

This is the SF-424 cover sheet. As mentioned earlier, you should fill this form out first because it will pre-populate the other forms in the application package.

Please note Item 4B, the Agency Routing Identifier. This is not a required field according to Grants.gov, but IES would like you to enter the information into this field to help us make sure your application is routed appropriately. Please see the request for applications for your competition to find the appropriate Agency Routing Number information.

Applications to the Special Education Research grants (CFDA 84.324A) program, are submitted under a single primary topic and a single project type. If the focus of your research spans more than one topic area, you may also enter a secondary topic area.

You must enter the appropriate primary topic and project type code in Item 4B of the SF-424 Application For Federal Assistance form. The topic and project type codes are provided in the 84.324A RFA, Part VII on page 65.

(Slide 69)

The Agency Routing Identifier, Item 4B, is used to screen applications for responsiveness, and to assign applications to the appropriate scientific peer review panel.

Application Submission Process

If your application doesn't include an agency routing identifier, or if it is incorrectly identified, your application may be rejected as non-responsive or assigned inaccurately for scientific review.

(Slide 70)

This is the Other Project Information form shown on this slide, which is where you will attach the substantive portion of your application, like your project abstract and narrative. All attachments must be PDF files.

(Slide 71)

The Department of Education will only accept an application that uses PDF files as attachments. The forms included in the application package provide the means for you to attach Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) files. You must attach read-only, non-modifiable, "flattened" PDF files. Any other file attachment will not be accepted by the Department.

Grants.gov has additional requirements for PDFs, including a unique name for each file, names that are no more than 50 characters, and that avoid special characters.

Finally, you must use individual files that are non-fillable and not password protected. See Grants.gov's Applicant FAQs for more information about PDF files.

(Slide 72)

Next, we will cover the substantive content of your application.

(Slide 73)

The Project Summary or Abstract should be no more than two pages, single spaced, and follow the IES online abstract format. Add this abstract as a PDF file attachment under number seven on the Other Project Information form. Make sure that you adhere to margin and formatting requirements, which we are going to go over later. You should include your research topic and project type in the Project Summary or Abstract if you are applying to 84.305A or 84.324A. This information should match the information provided in Item 4B of the SF-424 form.

For NCSE's Special Education Research Grant Program, 84.324A, you should list both your primary and secondary research topics if your research has more than one research focus.

(Slide 74)

Project Narratives have varying page limits, and it depends on the competition to which you are applying, so make sure you check the RFA to determine your page limit for your Project Narrative. The Project Narrative should be added as an attachment under item number eight on the Other Project Information form.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 75)

The Project Narrative has four or five sections depending on the competition to which you are applying, so you should read the relevant RFA. Most of the applications will have Project Narratives that include Significance, Research Plan, Personnel, and Resources sections. Information for each of these sections is detailed in the RFA.

(Slide 76)

See relevant RFA for information about appendices. Appendices and alpha codes A-F vary by competition. Some are required, some are not.

(Slide 77)

Most IES competitions require a Dissemination history and plan as an appendix to the project narrative. The history and plan should reflect the audiences that may benefit from the findings and the unique purposes of the project types.

This appendix must be included at the end of the Project Narrative and submitted as part of the same PDF file attachment. In other words, the same file as your Project Narrative must also include this appendix at the end. Make sure you adhere to margin, format, and font size requirements.

(Slide 78)

The response to reviewers must be no more than three pages, single spaced. This appendix is required for resubmission only. For resubmissions you must use up to three pages to describe how you revised your proposal in response to prior feedback from the reviewers. Make sure you indicate your prior application number in this three-page response.

(Slide 79)

For most competitions, you have the option to include an appendix containing materials that supplement the project narrative, such as tables or figures. This appendix has a page limit of 15 pages, single spaced. It must be included after the project narrative and submitted as part of the same PDF file attachment. Make sure you adhere to margin, format and font size requirements.

(Slide 80)

For most competitions, you have the option to include an appendix containing examples of the factors you will explore, or the intervention or assessment you propose to develop or evaluate. This appendix has a page limit of 10 pages, single spaced.

It must be included after the project narrative and submitted as part of the same PDF file attachment. Make sure you adhere to margin, format, and font size requirements.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 81)

IES encourages all applicants to submit letters of agreement with their application, as an appendix to the project narrative. This appendix is required for those applying to the Using Longitudinal Data to Support State Education Policymaking (84.305S) competition. This appendix has no page limit. It should be included at the end of the project narrative and submitted as part of the same PDF file attachment.

Again, make sure you adhere to margin, format, and font size requirements.

(Slide 82)

In this appendix, you should include letters of agreement from your research partners, that may be schools or districts, it may also be consultants who will work with you on your project. Do not reduce the size of the letters, make sure they are full-size. The letters should clearly indicate an understanding of the time, space, and resources that will be required of a partner if the application is funded.

If you include scanned documents as part of a PDF file, such as letters of agreement, you should scan them at the lowest resolution to minimize the size of the file and expedite the upload process. PDF files that contain graphics and/or scanned material can greatly increase the size of a file attachment and can result in difficulties opening the files.

The average discretionary grant application totals one to two megabytes. Therefore, check the size of your application package before you attempt to submit it. Very large application packages can take a long time to upload putting the application at risk of being received late, and therefore not accepted by IES.

IES encourages applicants to submit letters of agreement, but understands that due to school closing associated with COVID-19, you may have difficulty providing letters from the schools, districts, and other education sites that would participate in or provide data for the proposed research.

If you were unable to provide these letters in your application, include a description in this appendix as to why you were not able to obtain letters, and your plan for securing them if your application is recommended for funding. Reviewers will be instructed to not penalize applicants for failure to include letters of agreement due to the coronavirus pandemic.

(Slide 83)

An appendix including a Data Management Plan is required for specific types of applications and for specific competitions. See the RFA for your competition to determine if you must submit a DMP as part of your application. There is a page limit of five pages, single spaced. This appendix should follow the project narrative and be submitted as part of the same PDF attachment. Make sure you adhere to margin, format, and the font size requirements.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 84)

For your bibliography and references cited, there is no page length recommendation. However, we do recommend that you use APA style; that is the American Psychological Association style. You should add the references as a PDF file under number nine on the Other Project Information form. Make sure you adhere to margin, format, and font size requirements, and that your citations are complete.

(Slide 85)

The Human Subjects Narrative has no page limit. And again, it should be added as an attachment, a PDF file, on number 12 on the Other Project Information form. Note that Item 12 on that form says Other Attachments, it does not specifically say human subjects narrative, but that is where you want to upload your file. You need to submit an exempt human subjects narrative, or a non-exempt human subjects narrative.

(Slide 86)

You can learn more about exemptions on the Department's website. Provide enough detail to determine whether the exemption is appropriate or not.

(Slide 87)

If you are conducting non-exempt human subject work, your narrative should include the involvement and characteristics of the human subjects, the sources of materials and data, the recruitment and informed consent process, discussion of potential risks, and protection against those risks, the importance of the knowledge to be gained and collaborating sites.

(Slide 88)

Next, we are going to talk about the budget form.

(Slide 89)

Here I'll review some of the common mistakes that we see in budget forms.

(Slide 90)

Section E, Participant/Trainee Support Costs (circled in red) should only be used for training grant applications (305B or 324B).

(Slide 91)

The next common mistake we see is the Time Commitment of Senior and Key Personnel. Under the Senior Key Personnel Profile is where you enter the information for your key personnel, including the current and pending support as an attachment.

Application Submission Process

For the time commitment of each person on the SF-424 budget form, make sure you fill in the calendar months, or the academic months plus summer months that they will be devoting to the project.

(Slide 92)

You will see that months is circled in red.

(Slide 93)

IES sets budget maximums for grants. Budget maximums vary by RFAs, topics, and project types. Make sure that your budget does not exceed the maximum allowed.

(Slide 94)

For the budget you also need to include a Narrative Budget Justification.

The Narrative Budget Justification has no page limit and you should add it as an attachment, a PDF file, to the R&R budget form. Adhere to margin, format, and font size recommendations. This should be a single document with all the budget justification for all years of the entire project in one file. Attach this file at section K of the first budget period.

(Slide 95)

This is what the form looks like on the slide. And you can see that toward the bottom there in red, I have circled where you add the Narrative Budget Justification. Notice also the circle at the bottom right corner that says, "Add Period". That is how you add another period for multiple year projects.

(Slide 96)

Your Narrative Budget Justification should provide sufficient detail to allow reviewers and IES to judge whether your costs are reasonable. Make sure your Narrative Budget Justification, aligns with the budget. In other words, make sure that the numbers in your narrative match the numbers on your form.

We recommend that in order to allow for easy crosschecking, you organize either within year by category, or within category by year.

(Slide 97)

Sub-awards, if you have them, should not duplicate the costs in the main award. Include the time commitment and descriptions of responsibilities for the principal investigator and other key personnel. You need to clearly indicate cost shares in your Narrative Budget Justification, if you have them.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 98)

For the Indirect Cost Rate, you need to use your institution's negotiated federal indirect cost rate. You should use the off campus indirect cost rate when appropriate, following the terms of your institution's negotiated agreement.

Do not include as direct costs things that are really indirect costs. You need to check your negotiated agreement and make sure that you are only including indirect costs in this category. The Indirect Cost Rate agreement must be in place at the time of award in order for you to claim indirect costs.

(Slide 99)

Use the R&R Sub-award Budget Attachment forms if you have sub-awards. This is listed under Optional Documents. If you don't have any subawards, you don't need to complete this optional document, but if you do, then you need to complete this form. Separate budgets are required only for those subawardee and collaborating organizations that perform a substantial portion of the work.

(Slide 100)

Next, we are going to talk about the biographical sketches for key personnel. You should attach a single PDF file for each person. Each biographical sketch is limited to four pages. For example, many people submit an abbreviated curriculum vitae (CV). Each biographical sketch needs to adhere to margin, format, and font size recommendations.

It should be attached as a PDF at the Attach Biographical Sketch field of the Research and Related Senior Key/Personnel Profile. We encourage you to use the IES Biosketch available through SciENcv, or you may develop your own biosketch format.

(Slide 101)

You can find the IES Biosketch [here](#).

(Slide 102)

This is where, circled in red at the bottom, shown on the slide, you would attach the biographical sketch, and you need to do it separately for each key person.

(Slide 103)

There are a few other mandatory forms that you will need to fill out for your application.

(Slide 104)

You will need to fill out the Project Performance Site Location form, shown on the slide.

Application Submission Process

(Slide 105)

You also need to complete the Grants.gov Lobbying Form, formerly the ED Combined Assurance form shown on the slide.

(Slide 106)

IES is committed to monitoring its review and award processes to identify and address any inequities based on gender, race, ethnicity, or disability of key personnel. To help IES gather information for this important task, we encourage you to submit the requested information for the PI, and each identified co-PI and co-Investigator.

IES will separate this form from the application upon receipt, as it is not a part of the review process, and the data provided will be kept confidential. We encourage you to provide this information as it will help us in our efforts to ensure an equitable review and award process for all applicants. Providing the requested information is voluntary and is not a precondition of award.

If you do not want to provide some or all the information requested, you may select “Do Not Wish To Provide” by category (Gender, Race, Ethnicity, Disability Status, and Citizenship).

(Slide 107)

Our last topic will be application format requirements. 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 texts in their applications. These requirements apply to the PDF file as submitted, unless otherwise specified.

(Slide 108)

The same format requirements are used for the Abstract, the Project Narrative, the appendices, the bibliography, the Human Subject Narrative, Narrative Budget Justification, biographical sketches, and lists of current and pending support. In other words, everything that you need to create on your own, as opposed to just filling out a form.

A page is defined as eight and a half by eleven inches, and one side. The margins must be no smaller than one inch at the top, bottom, and both sides of the page.

(Slide 109)

The height of your letters must not be smaller than 12 points, and your type density, including both characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch. This means you must not have more than six lines of type within a vertical inch.

Application Submission Process

In general, if you are using a 12 point Times New Roman font and single spacing, you should be fine on all of these type, size, and font size requirements. By adhering to these guidelines, we help ensure that your text is legible for all of our reviewers, but also that everyone has the same amount of space for their project narrative and all the other components of the application.

(Slide 110)

If you have graphs, diagrams, and tables, which you are allowed to have, you should make sure that they reproduce well in black and white. So make sure, for instance, if you have some kind of pie chart or bar graph, that in black and white, you can tell the difference between the different sections of the pie or different bars. We recommend that your graphs, diagrams, tables, and charts conform to the same type size as the rest of the materials with your application.

Figures, charts, and table legends may be smaller in size, but should still be readily legible.

(Slide 111)

Now we will turn to general program information.

(Slide 112)

IES considers applicants eligible if they have the ability and capacity to conduct rigorous research. IES does not require cost sharing or matching as part of the grant award.

(Slide 113)

Awards depend on the availability of funds. Also, the number of awards will depend on the quality of the applications that we receive, and the size of the awards depends on the scope of the projects that are being proposed. The size of the award is also contingent on the budget maximum set for that particular competition, or topic, or project type within a competition.

(Slide 114)

Here are a couple final reminders.

(Slide 115)

Use the application checklist in the Request for Applications for the competition you are submitting to in order to determine that you have provided all of the required information for each form, that you have attached to the correct PDF files to the proper form, and that you have completed all of the certifications and assurances.

(Slide 116)

Each RFA includes a compliance and responsiveness checklist at the end to help you make sure you have included all the required application components. In other words, that you are

Application Submission Process

compliant, and that you've addressed all general and project narrative requirements for responsiveness. Only compliant and responsive applications are forwarded for scientific peer review.

(Slide 117)

You should use the Check Package for Errors button in the application package in order to make sure that you have completed all of the required forms. You need to upload your application and confirm that it is validated by Grants.gov before 11:59:59 PM Eastern time.

You can use the Track My Application function on Grants.gov to make sure that your application has been uploaded and validated. Pay attention to your emails, you'll get four in total. Look for the PR/Award number and the date/timestamp in the final email to verify that your application was received on time.

(Slide 118)

Remember to register for Grants.gov early. If you aren't sure if your institution is registered for Grants.gov, you should do it as soon as this webinar is over, just to make sure. Make sure that you download the application package designated for your competition and your deadline.

I recommend you submit your application early, if at all possible, at least three or four days in advance of the deadline so that you have enough time to correct any errors and try to submit again before the deadline.

(Slide 119)

Last but not least. I have said this before, but I will say it again, contact your Program Officer if you have any questions. They can help you with the substantive requirements for your proposal, and they can also help you with completing forms in the application package, so make sure to reach out to your Program Officer.

(Slide 120)

Here are the links for the IES funding page and the Grants.gov website.