IES FY 2019 Grant Competitions:

Funding Opportunities for Minority Serving Institutions

KATINA R. STAPLETON, Ph.D.

National Center for Education Research

AMY SUSSMAN, Ph.D.

National Center for Special Education Research

Transcript

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

(Slide 1)

Welcome to today's presentation: Funding Opportunities for Minority Serving Institutions. Today's presentation is by Katina Stapleton on the behalf of the National Center for Education Research, and on the behalf of Amy Sussman of the National Center for Special Education Research.

(Slide 2)

This webinar focuses on minority-serving institutions. The primary purpose of the webinar is to increase awareness of IES funding opportunities, both for our research programs and research training programs. The second purpose is to provide specific tips for MSI applicants. There is also a full series of webinars available for applicants. If at the end of this webinar you do decide to apply for funding, we strongly suggest that you also view our grant writing and application process webinars.

(Slide 3)

The primary audiences for this webinar are faculty, staff, and sponsored program officers from minority-serving institutions. For the purpose of this webinar, there are a wide range of institutions that we consider minority-serving institutions. Please note that if you're applying for other competitions within the Department of Education or other federal agencies, they may have different definitions of minority-serving institutions. Please also know that there are no restrictions on the type of academic institutions that apply for IES grant. MSIs can apply to all current funding opportunities.

(Slide 4)

IES is the independent research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, authorized by the Education Sciences Reform Act in 2002. We're nonpartisan. We are charged with providing rigorous evidence to inform education practice and policy and sharing this information with educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public. The overall mission of IES is to describe the condition and progress of education in the United States, identify education practices that improve academic achievement and access to education opportunities, and evaluate the effectiveness of Federal and other education programs.

(Slide 5)

This bridge graphic represents how we think about the infrastructure at IES to support our overall mission. We intend for our work to form a bridge from research to practice and back again, recognizing the critical linkage and interplay between research and practice. So how do we do this?

We provide data that describe how well the United States is educating its students. We conduct surveys and sponsor research projects to understand where education needs improvement and how these improvements might be made. We fund development and rigorous testing of new

approaches for improving education outcomes for all students. We conduct large scale evaluations of federal education programs and policies. We provide resources to increase use of data and research in education decision making. And we support advancement of statistics in research through specialized training and development of methods and measures.

(Slide 6)

This graphic represents the organizational structure of IES. We are led by a Director who receives advice and consultation from the National Board for Education Sciences. The Board consists of 15 voting members who are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Our Science Office oversees the scientific peer review processes for IES grant applications and IES reports. We also have four centers within IES.

The National Center for Education Statistics is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education. Within NCES, you may be familiar with the National Assessment of Educational Progress or NAEP assessment. Within NCES you will also find many large national longitudinal data sets, including for example, the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study.

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance conducts unbiased large scale evaluations of education programs supported by federal funds, provides technical assistance, and supports the development and use of research and evaluation throughout the United States. In NCEE, you will find the What Works Clearinghouse and the Regional Education Labs. The two centers that award grants are highlighted here in blue. The National Center for Education research, referred to as NCER, and the National Center for Special Education Research, or NCSER. The grant opportunities that we will be talking about today are managed by NCER and NCSER.

You will also notice here that the research centers are separate from the Science Office and Standards and Review staff, meaning that we, program officers, are not involved in the peer-review process. This allows us to work closely with you providing technical assistance to you on your applications. We will discuss more about that later in this webinar.

(Slide 7)

You would apply to IES if you are interested in working in authentic educational settings, you are interested in improving student education outcomes, or you are committed to sharing your research findings with education practitioners.

(Slide 8)

What makes us different from other funding programs within the Department of Education? IES grant funds are to cover research, not program support or service provision.

A good application is a good application. We don't have priorities or competitive preferences that result in extra points for applicants. In addition, reviewers have flexibility to assign points based

on overall scientific merit. We don't ask reviewers to use a rubric as they score. For example, other programs may assign a maximum number of points that you can obtain for your significance section. We allow our reviewers flexibility to weight each section as they see fit on determining the overall scientific merit of your application.

IES is unique because it supports rigorous research at all stages of a project, including basic and exploratory research, iterative research to inform research and development of interventions, research to develop and validate measures, and larger studies to determine efficacy of interventions.

(Slide 9)

There are two research Centers in IES. They are similar both in structure and purpose, which is to fund research that helps improve student outcomes. The major difference is in population. NCER focuses on students from early childhood to adults. While NCSER focuses on children with or at risk for disabilities from birth through high school or post-secondary education, for a limited number of topics.

Both NCER and NCSER have core research grant programs that share the following objectives. Develop or identify education interventions that enhance student achievement and can be widely deployed, identify what does not work and thereby encourage innovation and further research, and understand the processes that underlie the effectiveness of education interventions and variation in their effectiveness.

(Slide 10)

All of our research must address academic outcomes, though this covers a wide range of outcomes from birth to adult education. This ultimate focus on academic outcomes even applies to research on improving education systems such as school busing, or tiered systems of support, and applies to research on adults such as teachers or principals. Other viable outcomes include social and behavioral outcomes and employment and earning outcomes.

(Slide 11)

As mentioned earlier, one of IES' critical features is that we're independent and nonpartisan by law. Our awards are primarily driven by scientific merit as determined by peer review. One important thing to note is that the research Centers are separate from our Standards and Review Office. Meaning the staff and the research centers are not involved in the peer-review process. This allows Program Officers to work closely with you on your applications.

Program Officers are available as a resource throughout the process, from idea generation through application, and Program Officers are also available for consultation during the resubmission process. If you have a question, don't keep it to yourself. You can contact an IES Program Officer at any time during the application process for assistance. From simple questions about "Is this a good idea?" to "How do I respond to reviewer feedback?" to advice on anything that it in your application from significance to your resources and dissemination plan. Program

Officers primarily prefer to be contacted by email so please seek out the Program Officer related to your topic of interest if you have any questions.

(Slide 12)

At this point in the presentation you're probably asking yourself, "Does IES have funding opportunities for MSIs?" The answer is yes, but there is a caveat. For fiscal year (FY) 2020, we do not have any targeted funding opportunities for MSIs. What does that mean for MSI applicants? We absolutely still encourage you to apply, but we just want you to know that there are no targeted funding opportunities for MSIs this year in IES. Rather we encourage MSIs to apply for grants through our regular education research programs from the National Center for Education Research or NCER as well as our regular special education research programs from the National Center for Special Education Research, or NCSER. Both centers also have training grant programs this year that you may be eligible to apply for.

(Slide 13)

Now, we'd like to change gears. One of the things that we're trying to get across in this presentation is the idea that grant applications do not come fully formed out of thin air.

(Slide 14)

The actual process for successfully applying to and receiving a grant from IES is a long-term endeavor. It may take you weeks to several months to figure out what it is that you would like to do, identify the opportunity, write your application, and submit it to IES. Once you have submitted the application, the entire application process might take eight to nine months from the time you press submit until you're notified.

(Slide 15)

Now for the next couple of slides, I'm speaking directly to sponsored program officers. Sponsored program officers should be thinking about the areas of expertise they have on their campus, and then start scanning federal notices to see where there are funding opportunities that your faculty might want to apply for. All IES funding opportunities are initially posted in if the Federal Register. However, if you'd like to know more and do a deeper dive, you should start on our actual website. ies.ed.gov/funding which will give you a list of what's being competed in FY 20. Each of the items is hyperlinked to an overview of the particular competition as well as the full request for applications which gives you the details about what is required.

(Slide 16)

When spreading the word across your campus, make sure you tell your faculty and research staff the most important part of this presentation is that IES Program Officers are available to talk to them. They do not have to go into this application process blind. They should definitely contact the Program Officer in their area of interest to discuss their ideas further. You can also take more

of an active role by coordinating calls and even occasionally in-person meetings for faculty and staff at your location to talk to us en masse.

(Slide 17)

Another way you can support applications from your university is if you strengthen research partnerships. Many people come into the application process thinking that research is a solo endeavor, but it's not. Many of our most successful applicants come from research teams. Research teams could be formed on your campus within individual departments, across departments, and/or across disciplines. Partnerships also don't have to be limited to your campus. Your university might find it very beneficial to partner with other research organizations. Whether that's partnering with another university in your regional area or another university that shares your research interest or being part of some sort of research consortium or research network that's place based or formed around an idea.

Many of our researchers' partner with LEAs, SEAs, and regional labs. Many MSIs don't have to develop anything new because these research partnerships are already in place. In this case, make sure that researchers on your campus are fully aware of all the partnerships that exist and are available to them when applying for applications for funding from IES.

(Slide 18)

For the rest of this webinar, we're going to give you an overall view of IES's current funding opportunities. It is very similar in content to our general overview webinar. So it's not necessary for you to view both. But before we go on with this webinar, I wanted to pause and highlight some of the assumptions that we made as we put this presentation together.

So, first, we assumed that you as researchers probably have some similar goals with overlapping and divergent interests. And that also, you have varying levels of expertise with grant writing. So, what do we think you have in common? We think you all want to help improve education, that you would like to carve out your own research agenda, and that it would be very helpful to you if you could get federal funding to do so. We assumed that on this webinar listening there are people with a range of expertise and topic areas. We also think that there is going to be a wide range of methodological expertise. And then we also assumed that there is going to be varying levels of familiarity with grant writing. So during this presentation, I'm going to give you a general overview that we think will answer questions that people with these varying levels of expertise and writing experience might actually have.

(Slide 19)

So, let's move into the nuts and bolts of getting started with an IES application. First, you need to identify which competitions are open for FY 20.

(Slide 20)

How do you get started with putting together an application for IES? The most important step is identifying what your current research interests are. For example, you might say, “I'm interested in improving the education outcomes of students who are in preschool.” Then you would look at our current funding opportunities to see if we have any funding opportunities for people who are interested in doing work on preschool students.

How do you find that out? You start by reading our Request for Applications. What you'll see when you go to our website is that there are a fairly large number of Requests for Applications that cover a fairly wide range of topics. If you become confused, you can simply email a Program Officer saying, "Here's my idea, what's the closest funding opportunity?" And the Program Officer will be able to give you some guidance on whether or not there is a funding opportunity that aligns with your research interests and your strengths.

(Slide 21)

In our application process, the Request for Application is perhaps the most important document that you'll see. What's an RFA? An RFA is a solicitation or request for applications. As I mentioned, IES has several RFAs each year which you can find on our website ies.ed.gov/funding. How do you differentiate between RFAs? RFAs that start with the number 84.305 are for the National Center for Education Research. And RFAs that start with 84.324 are for the National Center for Special Education Research. Our RFAs tell you what IES expects your proposal to include and the criteria that reviewers will use to evaluate your proposal.

(Slide 22)

As you may imagine, our Requests for Applications are jam-packed with information. They include an overview and general requirements. They include topic and project type requirements. They also include our competition regulations and review criteria.

(Slide 23)

How are our RFAs different from other RFAs that you might see from other agencies or even from the rest of the Department of Education? First, we provide a great deal of detail in our RFAs. In each RFA there is a section that tells you the strict requirements that have to be fulfilled for your application to be reviewed as well as a set of recommendations that we think will help strengthen your application. We think that no matter what RFA you're applying to, you should probably still read the 84.305A or 84.324 RFAs just so that you can get a general idea of what IES funds, even if you ultimately decide not to apply to us under that particular competition. In addition, this year we have moved information about the submission process to a separate application submission guide.

(Slide 24)

To identify open funding opportunities, we have a suggested set of steps to follow. First, begin at the IES website. If you aren't already signed up, you should sign up for the IES news flash. As I mentioned earlier, all of our funding opportunities are announced in the federal register, but the

RFAs found on the IES funding page, ies.ed.gov/funding, are more detailed. Once you're on the funding page, navigate to the Request for Applications page, and review the current RFAs. And most important, after you've read the relevant RFAs, contact the relevant Program Officers for the topics of interest.

(Slide 25)

This is a screenshot of our funding page, ies.ed.gov/funding. You'll see towards the top left we have a list of steps that we think you should progress through while applying for the grant. Again, they start with identifying a funding opportunity and end with submitting your application to Grants.gov. To the right, you'll see a full list of our Requests for Applications. When you click on the hyperlinks, it will give you the details of that particular request as well as the full Request for Applications. In the center, you'll see our links to our webinars. You're watching one now, so we know that you know where that link is. And then you'll see a section where it discusses our Standards and Review Office. Including information about our scientific peer review process and our peer reviewers.

(Slide 26)

As you are reading through the RFAs make sure to review the current list of research topics and any methodological requirements. If you still need help narrowing your list of possible topics and/or RFAs, it can often help to review the abstracts of previously funded projects.

(Slide 27)

IES is holding eight separate research and research training competitions in FY 20. We're going to describe the focus of each competition at a high level in the remainder of this presentation.

(Slide 28)

Our primary grant programs are CFDA numbers 84.305A and 84.324A. We recommend that all applicants be familiar with either 305A or 324A even if you don't intend to apply under that competition. Within the "A" RFA, you will need to apply under one topic/project type combination.

(Slide 29)

The Education Research grants program and the Special Education Research program both have 11 standing topics. Some of which mirror each other. You must select one topic that identifies your field of research. In addition, NCSER is competing special topics in FY 2020. The special topics are intended to encourage research in understudied areas that appear promising for improving student education outcomes and that are of interest to policymakers and practitioners. NCSER is competing three special topics in FY 2020. Career and Technical Education for students with disabilities, English Learners with disabilities, and Systems Involved Students with Disabilities. Please note that certain topics may have special requirements. For instance, the

grade range varies by topic in a few instances. In addition, there are descriptions of needed research under each topic.

(Slide 30)

IES encourages focused research along a continuum of research, development, and evaluation activities necessary for building a scientific research enterprise. For all applications in addition to identifying one research topic, you must also identify your project type. The four project types being competed in FY 2020 are the same across the research centers. Exploration, Development and Innovation, Initial Efficacy and Follow-up, and Measurement. For those of you who are familiar with the IES project types, you will notice that IES is not accepting projects to carry out replication studies under the "A" RFAs. Rather applicants interested in carrying out a replication study should consult the Research Grants Focused on Systemic Replication program discussed later in this webinar. For funding for replication studies of IES identified reading and math interventions.

(Slide 31)

Exploration supports projects that identify relationships between individual, educator, school, and policy level characteristics and education outcomes and factors that may influence or guide those relationships. Findings from Exploration projects point out potentially fruitful areas for further attention from researchers, policymakers, and practitioners rather than providing strong evidence for adopting specific interventions or assessment tools. As this slide shows, a variety of methodological approaches may be used.

(Slide 32)

Development and Innovation supports the development and pilot testing of new or modified education interventions that are intended to produce beneficial impacts on learner outcomes. A Development and Innovation project will result in a fully developed intervention, evidence of the intervention's theory of change and data that speak to the invention's feasibility, fidelity of the implementation, costs, and promise for improving learner outcomes.

(Slide 33)

Initial Efficacy and Follow-Up supported initial efficacy studies of education interventions and longer-term follow-up studies of rigorously evaluated interventions. Initial Efficacy projects test interventions that have not been rigorously evaluated previously in order to examine the interventions beneficial impact on education outcomes, in comparison to an alternative practice program or policy. Follow-up projects test the longer-term impact of an invention that has been shown to have beneficial impacts on education outcomes in a previous or ongoing evaluation study. Initial Efficacy and Follow-Up projects should provide practical information about the benefits and costs of specific interventions to inform the intervention’s theory of change, it's implementation, its usefulness for education personnel, and future research.

(Slide 34)

Measurement supports the development and validation of new assessments or refinement and validation of existing assessments for specific purposes, context, and populations. A Measurement project will result in a valid assessment that can be used by education personnel or researchers to measure learner outcomes for specific populations and context. Measurement projects can also address purposes such as measuring educator knowledge, skills, and abilities, guiding instruction, improving educator practice, evaluating educator job performance, or assessing the effectiveness of schools or school systems.

(Slide 35)

Each year there are changes made to the RFA. Part one of the RFA will include a summary of those changes. We urge you to pay careful attention to these changes, particularly if you've applied to IES in the past and you may be resubmitting an application. The one change we do want to make sure you're aware of is that there is a separate IES Submission Guide that lays out the full submission process and provides information about how to apply via Grants.gov. Every applicant will need to review that document in addition to the Request for Applications under which they are applying.

(Slide 36)

Dissemination of federally funded research is important to IES. We want to emphasize dissemination as something to think about at the time of application, not after you have completed your study. To ensure that findings from research grants program are available to all interested audiences, IES requires all applicants to present a plan to disseminate project findings in Appendix A of the application. In addition, all applicants must adhere to the IES Public Access Requirements. All awardees will be required to submit their accepted peer review manuscripts to ERIC, the department's online library. In order to ensure that the findings of federally funded researchers are available to the public. And all applicants who are seeking funding to test the causal impact of an intervention under Initial Efficacy and Follow-Up must include a data management plan which specifies how the data collected with federal funds will be made available at the conclusion of the study to allow independent replication of findings and/or to explore other research questions.

(Slide 37)

The award parameters including the maximum duration and the maximum award vary across goals. Please be sure to refer to the RFA for other information about how the funds requested should be allocated.

(Slide 38)

This slide includes important dates for 84.305A and 84.324A. Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than August 29th, 2019 at 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Letters of intent were due on July 11th, 2019, and the application package was posted on Grants.gov on July 11th as well. The possible start dates for the award are between July 1st, 2020 and September 1st, 2020.

(Slide 39)

In FY 2020 IES will not accept Replication project applications under the primary grant programs. Instead, IES is initiating a more targeted strategy for supporting replication a research competition focused on systematic replications. Under this competition, IES will support replication of studies of IES identified reading and math interventions that have produced beneficial effects on education outcomes in one or more prior IES funded impact studies. Proposed replication studies will systematically vary at least one aspect of the prior impact study and also investigate factors that may lead to and sustain successful implementation. The goal is for these projects to provide information on what is likely to work, for whom, and under what conditions.

IES will support replication studies that involve the independent evaluation of an intervention when implemented under routine conditions. These are Effectiveness Replications. As well as replications that provide more support than is typically provided under routine conditions and may or may not include an independent evaluator. These are Efficacy Replications.

(Slide 40)

These are the award parameters for the Systematic Replication program. For Efficacy Replications, the maximum duration is five years and the maximum award is $3.5 million. For Effectiveness Replications, the maximum duration is five years and the maximum award is $4 million.

(Slide 41)

This slide includes important dates for 84.305R and 84.324R. Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than August 29th, 2019 at 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Letters of intent were due on July 11th, 2019 and the application package was posted on Grants.gov on July 11th as well. The possible start dates for the award are between July 1st, 2020 and September 1st, 2020.

(Slide 42)

NCER is offering three research training programs this year. The Predoctoral Training Program funds interdisciplinary programs at doctoral-granting institutions to train doctoral students to conduct rigorous and relevant education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education leaders and practitioners. These students are also expected to engage with education policy and practice by participating in an apprenticeship with the state or local education agency or an education-focused organization such as the professional Education Association or a Regional Education Laboratory.

The Post-Doctoral Training Program funds programs to prepare researchers with a doctoral degree to conduct high-quality education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education leaders and practitioners. These researchers are expected to learn how to conduct independent research, take on leadership

positions within research teams, work directly with practitioners and policymakers, and clearly communicate their findings to multiple audiences.

The Methods Training Programs funds programs to help current education researches maintain and upgrade their research and analysis skills in order to conduct rigorous and relevant education research. In addition, NCSER is offering three research training programs this year. The Post-doctoral Training program funds programs to prepare researchers with a doctoral degree to conduct high quality independent special education or early intervention research that advances knowledge within the field and addresses issues important to education leaders and practitioners.

The Early Career Program supports grants that prepare researchers to conduct rigorous and relevant early intervention in special education research. Early Career is defined as an investigator within three years of receiving their Ph.D. or completing a post-doctoral program at the time of applying. The Principal Investigator must hold a tenure track position e.g. Assistant Professor or a research scientist position e.g. not a visiting faculty or adjunct position at an institution of higher education or must have accepted an offer for such a position to begin before the start of the award.

The program requires you to have a mentoring plan and a research plan. The narrative should clearly demonstrate the integration of your research and career plans. Please note that the research and career plans may influence one another bidirectionally as the proposed research conducted may inform which skills need enhancement. Just as the training and mentoring will provide those needed skills to conduct successful research.

The Single Case Methods Training program funds the program to help current education researchers maintain and enhance their research and data analysis skills related to single case designs for the use in research focused on children with or at risk for disabilities.

(Slide 43)

These are the award parameters for the Research Training Programs, including the maximum durations and the maximum award amounts.

(Slide 44)

This slide includes important dates for the 84.305B and 84.324B. Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than August 29th, 2019 at 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Letters of intent were due on July 11th, 2019, and the application package was posted on Grants.gov on June 27th as well. The possible start dates for the award are between July 1st, 2020 and September 1st, 2020.

(Slide 45)

For FY 2020 the Institute is competing three new Research and Development Centers through the Education Research and Development Center program 84.305C. These centers are *Improving Opportunities and Achievement for English Learners in Secondary School Settings, Improving Teaching and Learning in Post-secondary Institutions, and Improving Access*

Instruction and Outcomes in Gifted Education.

(Slide 46)

These are the award parameters for the Research and Development Centers including the maximum duration of five years. Please note that the maximum award amounts differ by Center.

(Slide 47)

This slide includes important dates for 84.305C. Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than September 26th, 2019 at 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Letters of intent were due on July 11th, 2019 and the application package was posted on Grants.gov on July 11th as well. The possible start dates for the award are between July 1st, 2020 and September 1st, 2020.

(Slide 48)

The goal of this research program is to provide a wide range of methodological and statistical products that will better enable applied education scientists to conduct rigorous education research. The Institute defines products to include new or improved methods guidelines or other methodological resources and software. The Institute is interested in the development of practical statistical and methodological products that can be used by most education researchers to improve the designs of their studies, and analyses of their data, and interpretations of their findings. Some current identified methodological needs include understanding variability in effects, ascertaining methods and procedures to increase the generalizability of findings, improving methods used to support single-case designs, analyzing big data, improving ways to reduce selection bias effects in quasi-experimental designs, tools to help policymakers and practitioners to interpret impacts reported from evaluation studies, and increasing our ability to address sources of missing data, especially to the degree that the data is not missing at random.

(Slide 49)

These are the award parameters for the Statistical and Research Methodology in Education Grants. For Regular grants, there is a maximum duration of three years and the maximum award amount $900,000. For Early-Career grants, there is a maximum duration of two years and a maximum award of $225,000. Applicants of the Early Career grants topic must have received their doctorate on or after April 1st, 2015.

(Slide 50)

This slide includes important dates for 84.305D. Applications must be received at Grants.gov no later than August 29th, 2019 at 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Letters of intent were due on July 11th, 2019 and the application package was posted on Grants.gov on July 11th as well. The possible start dates for the award are between July 1st, 2020 and September 1st, 2020.

(Slide 51)

Now, we will discuss the Peer Review Process.

(Slide 52)

As part of the peer-review process, applications are reviewed for *compliance and responsiveness* to the RFA. Applications that are compliant and responsive are then assigned to a review panel. After this, a triage process will be used and the most competitive applications are reviewed by a full panel.

(Slide 53)

You can find out more about our peer reviewers by going to the IES website. The Standards and Review Office page includes a list of prior peer reviewers.

(Slide 54)

Now, we will discuss your next steps.

(Slide 55)

The first step is for you to put together a strong research team. Your research plan is only going to be as strong as the people implementing it. We cannot stress this too much: to receive a grant, you really need a strong research team. That is actually one of the review criteria that you're going to be judged on. And, as you recall from our earlier conversation in this presentation, for the most part, research proposals are not solo endeavors. It is very unusual to see an application that only has one researcher in it. So, when you're putting your application together, you want to think about: “What are the roles of different researchers and the source of task and responsibilities that are embedded in our work?” And then, make sure you have a qualified person attached to each and every one of those roles and responsibilities.

(Slide 56)

What does that mean practically? When you're being evaluated on your personnel, you're going to be evaluated on whether or not the personnel have the skills and expertise to implement the proposed work. So, if you look around your campus and you discover that all the expertise you need to conduct the research is not available on your campus, you should consider partnering with another institution.

You should also make sure that you're able to demonstrate your productivity. It's not sufficient to have an interest in an area. You have to show that you have expertise in that area as evident by having other grants, having peer-review publications, et cetera, et cetera. You want to make sure that your team, hopefully, includes at least one senior researcher with a strong grant record. though they don't necessarily have to be the principal investigator. And, again, we can't stress this enough. You need to show that every aspect of your project from the quantitative research to the qualitative research has someone assigned with expertise to carry out that part of the

research. And you should make sure that they have allocated enough time to complete the work with high quality.

(Slide 57)

There are several strategies for figuring out who should be the PI. We have applications that come in with senior researchers as the PI, and we have applications that have junior researchers as the PI. And all sorts of combinations of co-PIs and co-Is. The general theory is the same. You have to show that you have the expertise to do the work and have enough time committed.

However, if senior researchers are on the proposal the reviewers will be looking to see if the senior researchers actually have adequate time on the project. If the senior researcher is going to be a PI and not a co-I or just be on the grant, then the PI has to have enough time allocated to show that he or she is committed to the project. The other thing is just because your field may agree that you're awesome and that you're the most senior researcher in this area, everyone who reads the application may not be familiar with your work. So, you want to make sure that your credentials are as clear as day in the application. Not just in the CV that you attach to the back, but in the actual description of the personnel.

For junior researchers, you have a similar issue, but you have more to prove in terms of you having adequate expertise to do the work. In addition to scientific expertise, you will also need to show that you have the management skills to oversee a major research grant. You might find that reviewers might be more comfortable with your application if you have senior personnel on the grant as co-PIs, co-Is, contractors, advisory boards, et cetera. For all applicants, reviewers may be more comfortable if your project also has an experienced project manager.

(Slide 58)

You should also be thinking about how you will show that your institution has the capacity to handle a grant of this size, and the capacity to handle the particular type of research that your planning to conduct. What you don't want to use is the university boilerplate. “This is University X and we have this really cool library with this number of books.” That's not what the research reviewers want to know. They want to know that you have the resources available for this particular research project.

They're looking for a track record at the institutional level. For example, if your research is about education policy, do you have large research centers that conduct education policy research involved in this application? If you're research involves working with large data sets, do you have a place on your campus where those data can be stored?

You should also show that every organization that's involved in the project understands their role and agrees to it. You can show this both in the narrative and in your letters.

(Slide 59)

As you can imagine, data are important to research grants, and so reviewers are going to be looking at your resource sections in terms of your data. For example, do you have access and permission to use the data proposed in your application? If you have multiple data sets that need merging, do you have the capacity to do that on your campus?

Please note that you're also going to have to show both at the time of application and then again before the award is made that you actually have access to that data and the schools described in your proposal.

(Slide 60)

We strongly suggest that all applicants including researchers and their sponsored program offices view the application process webinar. This webinar walks you through the application process from beginning to end. There are several trouble spots you should look out for. As a reminder, your institution must be registered in SAM and Grants.gov before you can submit an application to IES.

Submitting your application on time is crucial. We suggest submitting it early as possible to give you a buffer in case something goes wrong.

(Slide 61)

All applicants will receive an email notification that the following information is available via the Applicant Notification System or ANS. The status of the award, and reviewer summary statements. If you're not granted an award the first time, plan on resubmitting and talk to your Program Officer for feedback.

(Slide 62)

Program Officers really are your best resource, so please contact us. We want to hear from you. It's always a great idea to discuss your research with a Program Officer. Here are several ways we can help.

(Slide 63)

This brings us to the end of our presentation. As I've stated throughout, you can contact any IES Program Officer to ask questions that you have. If you have questions about a specific competition or topic within a competition, you can start directly with a Program Officer that's assigned to that topic. That information is in multiple places including the RFA and on our website. But if you have more general questions, or you're just not sure where to start, please feel free to email Katina Stapleton or Amy Sussman and we will reply to you as soon as possible. You can follow us on Twitter @IES Research or learn more about our work on Facebook. You can always find information about us on our website which is IES.ed.gov or on our blog. This concludes the MSI Webinar.