

Funding Opportunities for Minority Serving Institutions
FY2022

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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.

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Welcome to the Funding Opportunities for Minority Serving Institutions webinar. I am Katina Stapleton, a program officer in the National Center for Education Research.

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As you can tell from the title, this webinar focuses on funding opportunities for minority-serving institutions. The primary purpose of the webinar is to increase awareness of IES funding opportunities within our research and research training grant programs. The second purpose is to discuss in more detail the new Early Career Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority Serving Institutions.

As you may have noticed when you started playing this on-demand webinar, there's also a series of webinars available for applicants. We believe that our grant writing and application process webinars are very complementary to this. So, if, at the end of this webinar, you do decide that applying to IES is something that you want to do, we strongly suggest that you also view on-demand our basic overview, grant writing, and application process webinars.

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The primary audience 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.

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Before we go any further, I want to answer a common question: "Does IES have funding opportunities for MSIs?" The answer is yes.

IES encourages applicants from MSIs to apply to all of our research and research training competitions. Each RFA has specific requirements. Any institution that meets those requirements is eligible to apply. We encourage you to review the requirements for each competition and take advantage of all the webinars that are available, as well as IES Office Hours.

We encourage you to take advantage of a unique feature here at IES, which is our ability for Program Officers to give technical assistance. Once you identify which research or training grant program you'd like to apply for, you should contact the IES Program Officer whose name is associated with that program.

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

Currently, IES has two funding opportunities to help meet this goal:

- The Pathways to the Education Sciences Research Training Program was established by IES to develop a pipeline of talented education researchers who bring fresh ideas, approaches, and perspectives to addressing the issues and challenges faced by the nation's diverse students and schools. Pathways Training Program grants are awarded to minority serving institutions (MSIs) and their partners that create education research training programs that prepare undergraduate, post-baccalaureate and masters-level fellows for doctoral study. IES just made six awards in this program, five to renew existing programs and one to create a new program in the data sciences.
- The new Early Career Mentoring Program provides support to faculty employed by minority serving institutions who are developing education research careers. This program is being competed in FY 2022, and we will talk about this more in-depth in a few minutes.

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Let's get started with an introduction to IES.

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IES is the independent research arm of the U.S. Department of Education authorized by the Education Sciences Reform Act in 2002. We are non-partisan and charged with providing rigorous evidence to inform educational 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 the education opportunities, and evaluate the effectiveness of federal and other education programs.

This graphic represents the organizational structure of IES. We are led by a director who is advised by the National Board for Education Sciences. Our Office of Science oversees the scientific peer review processes for IES grant applications and IES reports. IES has four centers.

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The National Center for Education Statistics is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education.

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.

The National Center for Education Research, NCER, and the National Center for Special Education Research, NCSER, award research grants.

The grant programs we are discussing today are managed by NCER and NCSER.

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The objectives of our grant programs are to:

Develop or identify education interventions that enhance education outcomes and can be widely deployed

Identify what does not work and thereby encourage innovation and further research

Understand the processes that underlie the effectiveness of education interventions and the variation in their effectiveness

Develop measures of academic achievement and progress

Support research and national leadership on core issues

Another way of thinking about the objectives for the research grants programs is to provide answers to three questions.

What works to improve student education outcomes?

What doesn't work?

How do interventions improve education outcomes – including for whom do they work and under what conditions?

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The objectives of our training grant programs are to:

Prepare individuals to conduct rigorous and relevant education research that advances knowledge within the field and addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners.

Train and mentor students and researchers from diverse backgrounds in order to encourage their entry into and success within education research careers.

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Improve the quality of education research and encourage new ideas, approaches, and perspectives.

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Collectively, IES-funded research should yield outcomes and products that are meaningful, inform stakeholders about the costs and practical benefits and effects of interventions (programs, policies, practices) on relevant outcomes for learners, and contribute to scientific knowledge and theory of teaching, learning, and organizing education systems. Researchers receiving funding through this program are to disseminate evidence in a way that is useful to and accessible by educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public.

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Why would you apply to IES?

You would apply to IES if...

You are interested in working in education settings.

You are interested in improving student education outcomes.

You are committed to sharing your research findings with education practitioners.

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What makes us different from other funding programs within the Department of Education?

Our grant funds are used to cover research, not program support or service provision. So, if you want to implement a new math program in your school, we will not give you funds simply to get the math program up and running. You need to have a research study to develop or examine the impact of the intervention.

A good application is a good application - we don't have priorities or competitive preferences that result in extra points for any applicants.

Reviewers have flexibility to assign points based upon overall scientific merit. For example, other programs may assign a maximum number of points that you can obtain for your Significance section. We allow reviewers flexibility to weigh each section as they see fit on determining the overall scientific merit of your application.

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How does IES compare to other agencies? Similar to other federal funding agencies, IES supports rigorous research at all stages, including basic research, iterative research to inform research and development of new interventions or refine existing interventions, pilot studies, and larger rigorous studies to determine efficacy or effectiveness of interventions, programs, policies, or practices.

This chart lists the three major federal funders of education research - IES, the National Science Foundation, and the National Institutes of Health. IES and NIH are similar in that we have independent scientific review offices that are separate from the program offices. Because of this, we are allowed to provide technical assistance to applicants. At NSF, the program officers manage the review process. So, this limits the amount of technical assistance they can give applicants since they are directly involved in the review process.

IES is considered as competitive or even more competitive than other federal funding agencies.

In terms of the types of things we fund, there are some overlap, and certainly, complementary research happening among agencies, but there are key differences. For example, NSF is more STEM-focused than IES, though we both fund science, technology, engineering, and math grants. NIH, specifically the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute of Mental Health supports more foundational research (such as brain-related research and genetics research) that we don't fund at IES. Results from this work however, could certainly inform the work we do at IES, and could guide researchers in developing a grant to IES.

So, that was a quick overview of IES, and now we'll turn to talking about our current funding opportunities.

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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 Fiscal Year 2022.

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To identify open funding opportunities, we have a suggested set of steps to follow.

If you aren't already signed up, you should sign up for the IES Newsflash (<https://ies.ed.gov/newsflash/#ies>). The Newsflash is an email-based alert

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service designed to inform you about all new content posted to the IES website, including new funding opportunities when they become available.

All of our funding opportunities are announced in "The Federal Register." "The Federal Register" is the official journal of the federal government of the United States that contains government agency rules, proposed rules, and public notices, including agency funding announcements.

IES maintains a funding opportunities page on the IES website ies.ed.gov/funding.

Once you are on the IES funding page, navigate to the Request for Applications page and review current Requests for Applications, which is our notice that grant funding is available.

Most importantly of all, but only after you have read the relevant RFAs, contact the relevant Program Officer(s) for the topic(s) of interest in the relevant Center. You can also sign up for Virtual Office Hours.

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

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IES is holding six separate research and research training competitions in FY 2022. Be sure to read the full Request for Applications for a more detailed description of each competition.

It is important to note here that due to limited funds available for new FY 2022 awards, NCSER will not be able to compete our regular grant competitions, including our primary grant program, Special Education Research Grants (84.324A), as well as our other grant competitions, Research Training Programs in Special Education (84.324B), Research using NAEP Process Data for Learners with Disabilities (84.324P), and Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication in Special Education (84.324R).

NCSER released the new Research to Accelerate Pandemic Recovery in Special Education (84.324X), grants program, which is funded with money provided to us in the American Rescue Plan.

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So, why should you read the RFAs carefully?

First, the RFA is your guide to preparing high-quality applications. We provide a great amount of detail in our RFAs about the requirements you must meet, as well as recommendations for how to write a high-quality application.

Second, reviewers use RFAs to evaluate your application for its scientific merit.

RFAs have sections to walk you through what you need to know and include in your application. The sections include (and may vary depending on the RFA):

- Overview and general requirements, which include a summary of changes to the RFA from the previous competition
- Topics
- Project Type Requirements and Recommendations
- Appendices and other narrative content
- Competition Regulations and Review Criteria
- Compliance and Responsiveness Checklist

IES has developed a separate submission guide, which contains important information about submission procedures and IES-specific guidance and recommendations to help you ensure your application is complete and received on time without errors through Grants.Gov.

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Applying to the Early Career Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority Serving Institutions.

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The purpose of the Early Career Mentoring Program is to prepare researchers to conduct the type of research that IES funds and to submit competitive proposals that address relevant education research topics, and that meet the methodological requirements specified for IES research grants competitions. This program provides support for an integrated research and career plan, which I'll talk more about shortly, and it's specifically for investigators in the early stages of their academic careers. These grants are intended to jumpstart young investigators to an independent research career.

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This new program is also part of IES's larger effort to develop a pipeline of talented education researchers who bring fresh ideas, approaches, and perspectives to addressing the issues and challenges faced by the nation's diverse students in schools. By awarding these grants to faculty at MSIs, IES seeks to provide greater diversity in the types of institutions that provide IES-funded research training. We hope that this grant program will also provide MSI personnel with expertise in grant management in order to prepare them for applying for and managing other IES grants.

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In terms of award parameters, Early Career projects have a maximum duration of four years, and a maximum award amount of \$700,000, and this includes direct and indirect costs. You need to adhere to these maximums in your application. And also, I want to note that for training awards there is an indirect cost rate cap of 8%. So make sure you adhere to that as well.

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Before I move on, I want to note here that throughout the webinar I'll talk about requirements and recommendations. Requirements are the components that you have to include to be sent forward for scientific peer review, whereas recommendations are not required, but they'll strengthen your proposal and make it more competitive.

When applying to IES competitions there are general requirements and program-specific requirements. One of the most program-specific requirements for this Early Career Mentoring Program is that you have to be from an MSI to apply.

Applications are made by institutions. And in this case, the institution must be a minority serving institution located in the territorial United States that confers bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in academic fields relevant to education. That includes the 50 states, District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

If you meet all the other requirements, but are not employed by an eligible MSI, your application will not be eligible for review or funding.

If you are an early career scholar at an MSI, you should work with your sponsored programs office to submit your application. MSIs can submit multiple applications, so it does not matter if there are multiple applications, as long as the PIs are different.

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To qualify as an MSI for the purpose of the Early Career Mentoring Program, the institution must be on one or more of the following lists:

- The Office of Postsecondary Education's FY21 or FY20 lists of Title III and Title V eligible institutions
- Official list of HBCUs found on Electronic Code of Federal Regulations.

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The Office of Postsecondary Education's list of MSIs are found in the Eligibility Matrix. Let's look more closely at using the Eligibility Matrix to determine if your institution is an MSI. First, you will go to the Office of Postsecondary Education's webpage called "Eligibility Designations and Application for Waiver of Eligibility Requirements." The website address is in the RFA and in this presentation. Once you are on the website, jump or scroll down until you see the FY20 or FY21 Eligibility Matrix. At the time this presentation was prepared, only the FY20 matrix was available. Then download the Eligibility Matrix, which is an Excel file.

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How does this Eligibility Matrix work? Each year, the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) certifies whether institutions qualify for its numerous MSI-related grant programs funded through Title III and Title IV. Any institution that has been certified as an MSI as part of this process will qualify as an MSI for this IES-funded Early Career Grant Program. To determine your institution's eligibility:

Open the Eligibility Matrix Excel file.

Click on the tab called "Just Program Eligibility."

Locate your university using the "find" search function or by scrolling down.

Once you've located your university, scroll across to see if your university is coded as 5, eligible to apply for a grant for this program, or 6, current grantee of this program. So, if your university is coded as 5 or 6 in any column except SIP, sometimes pronounced SIP, then your institution has been certified by OPE as an MSI and is eligible to apply for this IES-funded Early Career Mentoring Program. Why is SIP excluded? Institutions eligible for the Department's Title III Part A Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) are not considered MSIs for the purpose of this competition unless they also meet the eligibility requirements for a specific MSI category.

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In this screenshot example, two universities immediately stand out as being coded as MSIs. Adelphi University is an AANAPISI and Adams State University is an HSI. However, when you're reading the spreadsheet, make sure you scroll all the way over. This screenshot only shows the first few columns in the spreadsheet. There are many more columns to the right. For example, Aaniiih Nakoda College is a TCCU which is shown in the farthest right column in the full spreadsheet.

If you have any questions about eligibility, email me, katina.stapleton@ed.gov for clarification.

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HBCU applicants can also check eligibility using the e-CFR HBCU list. The link is in the RFA and this presentation. The list is presented in alphabetical order by state. All institutions on this list, including Howard University in the District of Columbia, are eligible for this IES-funded Early Career Grant program.

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Now that you've confirmed that your institution is an eligible MSI, there are two main eligibility requirements for PIs. The first is that, at the time of applying, you have to be within three years of receiving your doctoral degree or completing a post-doctoral program.

And the second is that you must hold a tenure-track position or a research scientist position (not a visiting faculty or adjunct position) at the applying MSI or must have accepted an offer for such a position to begin before the start of the award.

If you've accepted a position at the time that you're applying but haven't started, then you need to include a Letter of Support in Appendix E, which I'll talk a little bit more about later. This Letter of Support will be from your future home institution and will indicate that an offer has been made and accepted. And it will also specify an agreed-upon start date that is set to begin before the award begins. Also, the PI's position must be a salaried position paid by the university without a focus on training. So, it can't be a post-doctoral position.

And there are also two additional parameters related to eligibility that are not part of the initial screening process, but do need to be met if the Early Career application is recommended for funding - those are that the PI must be a citizen or a permanent resident of the U.S. and they must not have previously served as a PI or co-PI on a research grant from IES. For example, if you apply for an Early Career grant in addition to an Education Research grant (as a PI or Co-PI)

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and both applications are recommended for funding, you cannot do both. You would need to withdraw your application for one of these programs.

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Okay, so, now turning to the requirements and recommendations for the mentors. The research training and career plans will be conducted under the guidance of a mentor, or mentors, and you must designate at least one to guide your research and career development. You can have more than one mentor, but if you do, you should specify who the primary mentor is and you must include a mentor at your home institution - this can be either the primary mentor or a co-mentor. You also need to select, as mentors, only individuals who are not your primary graduate school, or dissertation advisor, or your post-doctoral supervisor. In order to meet this requirement you need to include the names of these individuals in your application. Faculty members who served on your dissertation committee, but weren't your direct advisor are fine to serve as mentors. And the mentors can be from academic or non-academic institutions, as long as these institutions conduct education research.

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Here are some tips for selecting your mentors. IES recommends that you do the following to demonstrate the appropriateness of your mentor selection. If you propose multiple mentors, include mentors with a variety of areas of expertise. For example, one mentor may have expertise in the relevant content area and the other may have more expertise in another aspect of your proposed research training plan; for example, the methods or statistical analyses or some other aspect of the content. You should also select mentors with appropriate expertise in the specific content area of interest that you've identified. And then, another thing to consider is that when you're selecting a mentor at your home institution you should choose somebody who can guide your career development there. For example, someone who can help you navigate the institution's procedures for grant submissions, or for obtaining tenure, as well as provide additional content and/or methodological expertise. You may also benefit from having mentors with experience in disseminating research results academically and/or to practitioners and policymakers.

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Here are some other things to consider in choosing mentors. Are potential mentors committed to training? In other words, do they have experience training doctoral, post-doctoral, or other early career researchers? Do they have the time to devote to mentoring? Are they going to expand your perspective and make a unique contribution over and above the other mentors? Can they

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help you with your writing and dissemination skills? Do they have IES funding? It can be useful to have mentors who have federal grant funding, and can provide feedback on this Early Career proposal as well as future grant submissions to IES.

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Okay. So, now I'm going to talk about the Training Program Narrative - this is the majority of the content of your application. Early career applications must include a narrative that has these five sections - Significance, Research Training Plan, Career Plan, Personnel and Resources. And, I'll talk about each of these specifically. This narrative is limited to 20 pages.

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Your significance section should lay the foundation for your proposed research in career development. Somewhere in this section, you must indicate your institution's MSI status and should also discuss how this award will contribute to your professional growth at this institution. The significance section must also explain why additional training is needed or what you need to add to the training that you've already received. This is especially important if you've already received post-doctoral training. For example, it could be that you need additional training in a specific methodology that you didn't receive training on or received very little training on during graduate school or your postdoc. We recommend that you describe your current levels of knowledge and skills, the proposed mentoring and training activities, and how these activities will lead to the specific knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish the proposed research activities.

In terms of your research, you also need to describe the education problem you plan to address, how you plan to address it, and the empirical and theoretical rationale for your proposed research project. We recommend that you describe typical practice and its shortcomings and how the results of your work will inform the next steps in the research process, such as the future development of an intervention or an assessment or evaluation of an intervention. You'll also need to justify and describe your planned program of research, which means describing the progression from your prior research to the currently proposed research, and then also connecting that to your future research. And then we also recommend that you address the Significance of the Career Plan. For example, you should describe what trainings you'll pursue and how the mentoring and training activity supports your research activities. Your Career Plan really needs to be integrated with your Research Training Plan so that the training supports the research and vice versa. And then finally, you'll need to

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address how your research and career development activities will enhance your knowledge and skills.

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The purpose of the Research Training Plan section is to describe the aims and methodology for the proposed research.

Your Research Training Plan must describe the research questions, research design, sample, key outcome measures, and data analysis procedures.

In addition, your research must be conducted in or include data from a U.S. education setting. Education in the U.S. is delivered in a wide range of formal settings, such as center-based prekindergarten, public and private K-12 schools, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. In addition, there are also formal programs under the control of education agencies that take place out of school including after-school, distance learning, online, and adult literacy programs run through community-based organizations and in homeless shelters. Please make sure that you check to see if your research proposed research meets this requirement. IES does not support research that is relevant only in informal contexts outside of education systems.

Your research also must measure one or more of the academic outcomes described in the RFA that reflect learning and achievement in content domains, as well as learners' successful progression through education systems. These academic outcomes vary by grade levels, pre-k, K-12, postsecondary, and adult education. Please check to make sure that your proposed research addresses one of the required outcomes. If it does not, your application will be ineligible.

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When you're developing the research training plan, the RFA for the Education Research Grants program (84. 305A) may be a helpful guide for identifying appropriate research activities. Keep in mind though that your research training plan should be feasible, A common pitfall for prior applicants to a similar IES-funded Early Career Mentoring Program, is that applicants proposed something overly ambitious and does not seem feasible to accomplish with the amount of time and money, and given the training needs and activities. So, we encourage you to work with your mentors on the development of this plan. Even though the research training plan must be included in the proposal, certain aspects, for instance the research design or the data analysis plan, on which you propose to receive additional training may be described in less detail. We anticipate that there will be further development of these plans based on your training experiences and guidance from your mentors. That being said, the level of detail that you provide here should align with your expertise and the proposed

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training activities. For example, if you have expertise conducting single-case experimental designs, then IES would expect a detailed description of the design requirements. On the other hand, if your career plan includes training in single-case design, then IES would not expect a detailed description of the design requirements. However, you should describe the type of single-case design you propose to conduct and how it's an appropriate design to address your research question. So, bottom line is the reviewers need enough detail to be able to judge the feasibility and appropriateness of your research training plan.

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To encourage rigorous education research that is transparent, actionable, and focused on meaningful outcomes, as applicable, all applications are expected to incorporate the principles outlined in the IES-wide Standards for Excellence in Education Research, referred to as SEER. These standards include pre-registering studies; making findings, methods, and data open; identifying interventions' core components; documenting treatment implementation and contrast; analyzing costs, focusing on meaningful outcomes, facilitating generalization of study findings; and supporting the scaling of promising results.

Your Research Training Plan should describe how you will follow the principles outlined in SEER.

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Okay, so now I'm going to move on to the career plan. There are two components of this development plan, the mentoring process and then the additional training opportunities. Both of these components must be integrated with, and support, the research training plan. In your career plan you'll describe your training goals and how the proposed activities will help you reach those goals, as well as the roles that your mentor, or mentors, will play in helping you achieve those goals. For each mentor you want to describe their expertise and how it's relevant to your particular area of research, specify how the mentors will guide you through the process of refining and implementing your research training plan, as well as helping you progress toward independent research. You should also describe how your mentors will assist you in acquiring new expertise and guide your development as a scholar. So, mentoring activities can include regular meetings, review of your career plan, and any additional guidance that would be useful for you in your development as a scientist. For instance, reviewing manuscripts for publication, developing grant applications, or helping you with your dissemination plan. Be specific about what the mentoring activities will entail and how often you will meet. You should also

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describe a plan for coordinating mentoring activities if you have multiple mentors. For the career plan, it's really helpful to include a timeline of the mentoring and training activities as well as the research activities to show how these are integrated, and how the training you receive will be able to inform the research training plan.

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Here are some examples of other training or educational opportunities that you could incorporate in your career plan. You could include the IES Methods Trainings; or advanced statistical workshops, or course work that's related to either a content area or statistical technique. Methods trainings can be quantitative, qualitative, and/or mixed methods. Just be sure to describe how these educational opportunities will help you reach your concrete training goals and how they'll support the proposed research. IES also encourages you to consider communications training, including workshops on grant writing and training on how to communicate your findings to the public.

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Okay, the personnel section is the next component that's required for your training program narrative. The focus of this section is mainly on you, as the PI, as well as on your mentors. However, you should also include other personnel, such as consultants, if you have them on your project. As the early career researcher, you may want to spend a little bit more time documenting your skills and your past experience than a more experienced researcher might. In this section you should include how your research expertise, and your mentors' expertise, reflect the focus of IES, in terms of both content and methodology. You want to describe your mentors' prior experiences with mentoring early career researchers and also describe the education research projects conducted by your mentors. Also, in this section, you should make the time commitments of your mentors very clear in terms of the percent of effort in the calendar year. This is really important and I would suggest highlighting this in multiple places in your application; for example, in the personnel section as well as your Letters of Support from your mentors, which I'll talk more about in a minute. You should also discuss your time commitment and you and your mentors' experience disseminating research findings to a range of audiences, including practitioners, policymakers, and researchers.

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In addition, you must specify the date on which you were granted your doctoral degree, and if applicable, the date that you completed your post-doc. You also

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need to specify the names of your dissertation advisor or primary graduate school advisor, and if relevant, your post-doctoral supervisor.

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The last component of the narrative is the resources section. In this section you want to demonstrate that your institution has the capacity to support you in conducting the project that you're proposing. Here you should not use the university boiler-plate language. Instead you want to make sure that this section specifically addresses the needs of this particular project, including both the research and the training components. So, you should describe the institutional training support. For instance, do they offer workshops? Maybe they offer sessions related to grant writing. There may also be research groups at the university that you can join that are related to your area of research or to a specific analytic skill. And then you'll also want to describe any startup packages that are provided by your institution. For example, if, as a new faculty member, the institution gives you extra money or reduces your course load, then you can include that as a resource as an example of how the institution is supporting you. And then we also recommend that you describe the resources to carry out your plans to disseminate the results of your early career project. This dissemination plan should be detailed in Appendix A, which I'll talk about in a minute. But in terms of the resources, this should include a description of the resources to carry out your plans to disseminate your results in terms of any offices or organizations that are expected to take part in the dissemination plan, like a communications office that can assist with dissemination as well as resources to disseminate through electronic means such as a website, social media account(s), electronic newsletter, listserv, or other electronic dissemination approaches.

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Okay, so, this slide shows the required and optional appendices for the Early Career Mentoring Program. As I mentioned, Appendix A is required for all applications to the Early Career Mentoring Program and it should include your plans to disseminate the findings from the project. The dissemination plan should be tailored to the audiences that will be most likely to benefit and discuss the different ways in which you intend to reach these audiences. Appendix B and D are not applicable. Appendix C is required for all applications and is where you include a summary table of you and your mentors' ongoing and recently completed education research projects. Appendix E is also required and should include Letters of Agreement from all of your mentors, and these letters should include enough information to make it clear that your mentors understand the nature of the commitment, the resources,

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and the mentoring activities required if the application is funded. So, this is another place to make it really clear the percentage of time the mentor will be devoting to the project. In addition, you should include Letters of Agreement from your institution as well as from your school partners, data sources, and consultants, if applicable. The Letter of Agreement from your institution should also include enough information to make it clear that they understand the nature of the commitment, time, space, and the resources that will be required if the project is funded. And if you haven't started your position by the time that you submit the application, this letter should include your start date, as well as details of the offer, and of the acceptance. As far as the Letters of Agreement from your school partners, these will be from the education settings that you intend to partner with. And here again, you just need to make sure there's enough information so that it's clear that your partners really understand what they'll be asked to do if the application is funded. And if you're proposing to do secondary data analysis, then you'll also want to include Letters of Agreement from the data sources; for example, state agencies that hold the administrative data you're proposing to use. And, if you have any consultants on your project, then you will need to include Letters of Agreement from each consultant in Appendix E.

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And then lastly, Appendix F is optional. You can use this space to provide examples of research and training materials and tables and charts that support the Training Program Narrative. For instance, you can include your project timeline, a table of the research and career development activities. You could also include examples of the materials that will be used in the intervention or assessment that's the focus of your project, as well as any figures, charts, and tables that supplement the project narrative. You can also include examples of measures to be used in the project.

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The RFA includes specific information about the budget for early career grants, but I'll just highlight a couple of things here. So, you can budget up to 50 percent of your salary and it can be used for protected time or buying out classes so that you can concentrate on the research.

You can also provide honoraria for mentors. The maximum for per mentor each year is \$3,000. The maximum total amount for mentors each year is \$10,000. So, if you have one mentor, you can only request \$3,000 per year. If you have 3 mentors, you could request \$3,000 each for \$9,000 total. If you have 5 mentors, you could give them \$2,000 each for a total of \$10,000 annually. Your budget is expected to cover costs directly associated with the research project, as well

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as the career plan. So, it can include things like salary, staff, supplies, incentives, local travel for data collection, registration for workshops and training institutes, as well as travel, including travel for you and your mentors to meet, if you're not in the same institution, travel for conferences, and then definitely travel for the IES PI meeting, which happens annually and is required for all IES PIs.

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In addition, all applicants must adhere to the IES Public Access Requirements. All awardees will be required to submit their accepted peer reviewed manuscripts to ERIC, the Department of Education's online library, in order to ensure that the findings of the federally funded research are available to the public.

Please check the RFA to understand all the public access requirements for the Early Career Mentoring program competition.

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There is an IES application process webinar and in that webinar, IES staff will go into more detail about the application process. You need three things to apply. First, you need the RFA, which contains information for writing your project narrative. Second, you need the IES Application Submission Guide, which describes information related to submitting your application and provides an overview of the funding process. Lastly, you need the application package, which can be found on Grants.Gov. In terms of registration for Grants.Gov, the first tip, and perhaps the most important, is to start this process early. Initial registration can take more than five business days and even if you're already registered, the annual update that you have to complete could take more than three days. It's your institution that needs to register. If you are planning to apply for this competition, contact your institution's sponsored program office right away so that they can make sure your institution is registered in Grants.Gov.

All applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.Gov. Applications received by Grants.Gov are date and time stamped to the second. So, your application must be fully uploaded and submitted by the date and time specified in the RFA. IES will not accept late applications.

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All applications must be submitted electronically through the Grants.Gov website. Grants.Gov requires applicants to use the Workspace interface.

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Grants.Gov marks alerts in red, and these should be attended to, as failure to follow the Grants.Gov requirements will result in an unsuccessful application.

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Now, let's talk about what happens once you've successfully submitted an application.

Applications are first reviewed for compliance and responsiveness to the requirements set out in the Request for Applications.

Applications that are compliant and responsive are then assigned to a review panel.

Two or three panel members conduct a primary review of each application.

The most competitive applications are then reviewed by the full panel.

As a result, applicants whose applications were triaged, that means which are not reviewed by the review panel, receive the review comments from the primary reviewers, but no scores.

Applicants whose applications go to the full panel receive the review comments from the primary reviewers, the full panel's review scores, and a summary of the panel's discussion of the application.

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So, how are funding decisions made? The following will be considered in making award decisions for responsive and compliant applications:

Scientific merit as determined by scientific peer review

Performance and use of funds under a previous federal award

Contribution to the overall program of research described in this request for applications

Ability to carry out the proposed research within the maximum award and duration requirements

Availability of funds

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Office of Science staff identify and recruit highly qualified reviewers, primarily on the basis of the quality of the research they've conducted and published in

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scientific peer-reviewed journals, and the degree to which they are in-depth experts in the relevant research methods and subject matter.

Applications are assigned to panel according to the match between the overall expertise of reviewers on each panel and the content and methodological approach proposed in each application.

More detailed information about the peer review process can be found on our website.

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The Applicant Notification System or ANS is housed at iesreview.ed.gov.

After you receive an email notification, you may sign into the ANS to view the reviews of your application and your award status, and, if your application went to full panel, the review scores and panel discussion summary will also be available.

We encourage you to discuss your reviews with the program officer and consider reapplying if your application is not funded.

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Along with the resources just described, program officers are another resource you should use. So please do contact us. Email your initial research ideas to a program officer. As you develop your application, program officers can comment on your content and framing of the research.

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For additional information, please refer to the RFAs and reach out to the program officers listed in the relevant RFA.

You can please feel free to reach out to me as well. Good luck.