

## Basic Overview 2015

Jackie Buckley:

Welcome. Thank you for joining us for our basic overview of funding opportunities at the Institute of Education Sciences. My name is Jackie Buckley, and I'm a program officer in the National Center for Special Education Research, and I'm joined today by Erin Higgins, a program officer in the National Center for Education Research. This is going to be a basic overview of the funding opportunities that we have at IES. We'll try and give you a broad view of opportunities this year, so we won't go into great depth of any one opportunity. But certainly, feel free to ask questions. You have that option to use the question feature, and we'll try to answer questions as we go through, or we will answer questions at the end, if it's something that can wait until the end of the presentation.

So, to start, if you're not familiar with IES, we wanted to give you a basic overview of who we are.. So, first IES's legislative mission. This is what Congress has authorized IES to do. First is to describe the condition and progress of education in the United States. So, what do we know about how well education is working, and how kids are doing in school today? Second, our mission is to identify education practices that improve academic achievement and access to education opportunities. And then, we want to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, including federal programs, and other educational programs. And the way IES is organized, we have four centers within IES, and you see those across the bottom of your screen. The National Center for Education Evaluation is the group that conducts those evaluations that I mentioned in the previous slide, in evaluating the effectiveness of federal and other education programs. The National Center for Education Statistics is the center that houses the information about the condition and progress of education in the United States. They have a wealth of information, a variety of data sets that they administer -- a lot of great information that would be helpful for folks thinking about significance sections or the background sections of their grant applications. There's a great deal of information at NCES. If you're not familiar with NCES resources, I encourage you to check them out.

And then, finally, we have the two research centers that are represented in blue--The National Center for Education Research and the National Center for Special Education Research. And as I mentioned, I work in the special education center, and Erin works in the education research center. These are the two centers where you are going to have the major opportunity -- grant funding opportunities -- at IES . Our two centers have similar missions, with one difference being the population of interest -- that you're interested in focusing on. So, NCER supports rigorous research to address pressing education needs, from early childhood to postsecondary and adult education. And in NCSER, it's a similar mission. We want rigorous research addressing the pressing special education needs, but one note to make -- in NCSER, we fund research from infants and toddlers through, essentially, high school -- students with or at risk for disability, from birth to high school -- as long as they're receiving IDEA services. So, that's one difference. NCER research spans early childhood, which is, pre-kindergarten, through postsecondary and adult education and NCSER's research spans infants and toddlers through high school, or as long as students are receiving services through IDEA.

The objectives of our grant program are threefold. One is that we want to develop or identify education interventions that are going to improve education outcomes for students, enhance academic achievements, and that can be widely deployed. So we want to be able to develop new and innovative interventions that can be employed in a variety of different settings. One quick note about IES is when we use the term “intervention,” we use it very widely. So, we mean a practice, a program, a policy, an approach -- in education. Importantly, we also want to be able to identify what does not work, and thereby encourage innovation and further research. We know that there are a lot of programs being implemented in schools, curriculum being implemented in schools -- that may or may not have a strong research base behind them. And so we encourage folks to research those different programs, to find out if, indeed, they do work. Or if they don't work, then we can encourage further innovation and development of new programs.

And finally, we understand that not all programs work the same for all students, and not all students will receive the same benefit from programs. Therefore we want to understand the processes that underlie the effectiveness of education interventions--what works for whom, and under what condition?

One other thing to note about all grant funding opportunities at IES is that you must focus on student outcomes. We fund research to improve the quality of education for all students, understanding teaching, learning, the organization of education systems -- but throughout, regardless of the focus of your work, you must focus on student outcomes. You must address those student level education outcomes. Those outcomes can be academic outcomes. They can also be social and behavioral competencies that support students' success in school. If you're interested in doing research on school leaders, on teacher professional development -- that's fine, we support that work -- but within that work, you must address student outcomes. We are interested in work that can change adult behavior, for example, teacher professional development, as long as you can make the argument that there would be an impact on improving student outcomes and you measure those outcomes.

So, we have a question, and we may address this as we go through the webinar, but if we don't, we can circle back to it. But someone has a question about looking for opportunities in dual language education -- both for ELL students, as well as native English speakers, and we may speak to some of these opportunities as we move through the specific opportunities that we have at IES. So, if we don't answer your question, certainly, feel free to prompt us, and we can circle back at the end.

So, how do you identify the current fiscal year 2016 funding opportunities? There are a variety of things that you can do. One, begin at our website -- and we're going to go through a few screenshots of our website. We've been talking for a long time about our website being redesigned, and it's getting much closer to being redesigned now. We know it's not the most intuitive site, so we'll try and walk you through the important places on our site right now. But that is a great place to start. We have all the funding opportunities information available on our website. So, we'll walk you through that. Also, if you have not done so already, I encourage you to sign up for our IES Newsflash. And again, we'll show you a screenshot of how to do that. But the Newsflash is great. Whenever we release new funding opportunities, we will send out a Newsflash, so you will be notified when it hits the streets, so to speak. When we have new training opportunities, those get published on the IES Newsflash as well, as well as reports from the other centers, like the Education Statistics Center, and the Educational Evaluation Center.

When they release new reports, we'll send out Newsflashes. So, it's just great to be signed up for that, and to be in tune as to information coming out of IES.

The actual opportunities are also announced in the Federal Register, which is publicly available. You can review our current requests for applications, which –describes the types of awards that we have, and the requirements for those awards -- which, again, we'll go through as we move forward. And importantly, for IES, contact the program officer for the topics of interest in the relevant research center. We function a little bit differently than some of the other funding agencies, in that as program officers, we do not become involved in the review process. We have an office in IES that does that. They organize the review process, recruit reviewers. So, what that frees us up to do is to work with applicants, as little or as much as they wish, throughout the application process. We are free to talk to you about your ideas, and we can read up to full drafts of proposals, before you submit it. Of course, given enough time. But, we're really here to work for you, and be a resource for you. So don't be afraid to contact program officers with questions that you have. All of our contact information is available on the website, as well as in the appropriate requests for applications, for your particular research idea.

I'm going to walk you through our current website, to give you an idea of where you may look for some of those funding opportunities, and some of the important places on our website that you should pay attention to. This is a screenshot of our home site, and if you look at that gray bar across the top -- which is sometimes hard to see for folks -- we'll list some great information for you. We have highlighted here the News and Events tab at the top where you can sign up for that Newsflash, or if you want to see any presses releases and newsletters that we have, as well as upcoming events will be on that News and Events page. If there are any training events, as you see, research conference, training conferences. We run technical working group meetings, where we bring in seasoned folks to talk about various issues within education research. All that information is there on that News and Events site. And importantly, again, here's where you would sign up for the Newsflash. You just send in your -- send us your e-mail, and you'll be signed up for the Newsflash. You can specify to get information only from one center, if that is really all you were interested in -- though, I would encourage you to leave it a blanket Newsflash request for all the centers, because there would be relevant information, probably from all of the centers, via reports, or training opportunities, or potential funding opportunities -- that you may want to be aware of.

And then, importantly, is our funding opportunities page, which, again, you can reach from that top gray bar.. I'll show you that page, as well as the research funding webinar, such as this one, and you can look for what other webinars are available that would be, perhaps, more tailored to your specific research idea. And you can also use this tool to search funded research grants and contracts that we have.

For every grant and contract that we fund, we put an abstract on the website -- and it's a fairly detailed abstract -- it gives you a good idea of the type of grants that had been funded under a particular competition. So if you're curious as to how well you might fit, or what types of things we have funded in the past, that's a great place to look. Here's the funding opportunities page, which gives you a nice checklist of the things to look for, in the steps to applying for IES grants. Through this link, you can get to the actual funding opportunity -- meaning, get to the page that has the request for applications. For all funding opportunities, we ask that folks submit letters of

intent, which is just giving us a heads up that you're thinking about submitting a grant. They're not required -- they're just helpful for us. There're links to that here. The funding opportunities page webinars gives you links to download the appropriate request for applications, , application package, which we'll walk through, as well.

We have a question about the URL for that -- since I did mention, it's not a very intuitive site -- it's ies.ed.gov, and the PowerPoint from this webinar will be available online, as well, in that webinar page we saw.. But everything can be found on ies.ed.gov.

So, I mentioned we have various -- and you saw some from that prior page -- various requests for applications that we have available right now. So, how do you identify appropriate grant programs? First is that you really need to read the request for applications, which will detail the specific requirements for each different opportunity. Review the research topics, the methodological requirements that are contained within each RFA. And then, as I mentioned before, look at the abstracts of projects funded under a research topic, or a program. They'll give you a really good sense of the types of things that we have funded in the past, and the types of things that might be appropriate for that particular competition.

This is probably what you're really on this webinar for -- is that, what are those funding opportunities for this coming year? The two centers that I mentioned before, that were in blue on that organizational chart -- the National Center for Education Research, and the National Center for Special Education Research -- the two centers where you are going to be most interested in for funding opportunities. So, we refer to those as 84.305A -- is the request for applications for the National Center for Education Research, and 84.324A is for the National Center for Special Education Research. These are our primary grant programs. The majority of the work that we fund comes under one of these RFAs. It is primarily a field initiated competition. There are 10 topics for NCER, and for NCSEER, there are 11 topics. You have to apply to a particular topic, and you have to apply to a particular goal, which is the type of project that you'll be working on. But again, it is a -- it is, in essence, a field initiated competition -- in that we give you some broad guidelines, and these topics and goals that you must work within, but you present us with your particular idea within those topics and goals

This is going to be a quick overview of the research topics across the two centers. And as you'll see -- because we are the Department of Education, we are -- of course, interested in academic outcomes, so you will see the topics of math, science, read/writing there.

But you'll also see those social and behavioral types of programs -- social and behavioral outcomes. We are interested in the intersection of cognition and student learning -- so, bridging cognitive science and learning sciences to understand how to improve education instruction in the classroom, education outcomes. And you'll also see there are many parallel topics across our two research centers. But again, we have a different focus on the student population. So, for the Special Education Center on the right, in purple, you must be focused on students with or at risk for disability, and on the left, for the Education Research Center, you're focused more on the general population, or students who might be at risk for academic failure, due to systemic issues, such as poverty, et cetera. In many cases, some applications could go to either center, depending on how you frame it, and how you think about it. And that's, again, where I would encourage you to reach out to program officers and discuss ideas and we can help you guide you into one -- which center might make the most sense for your particular project, as well as which

topic. The topics do have certain requirements within them -- and again, program officers can help guide you, if there might be some overlap between particular topics.

And then, as I mentioned, you have to apply for a research topic, and then a research goal. So, once you figure out what topic you would best fit into, you would have to apply to a particular goal, or type of project that you want to -- that you want to conduct. And they usually are the same, across the two research centers, but due to some funding restrictions, NCER has decided not to compete goal two, or development and innovation awards this coming year. It does not mean that they won't come back and fund development and innovation work in future years, but for this particular year, they've decided because we do get a lot of development and innovation grants, to put that on hold this year. So, only for fiscal year 2016 right now, education research is not competing development goals.

Overall you can think about the goals, these types of projects as being on a continuum, and I'm going to go into each one in a bit more detail. We fund the exploration work, which is to examine associations between education outcomes and what we consider malleable factors. We support the development of new and innovative interventions to improve outcomes for students, as well as evaluating them -- rigorously evaluating those interventions, as well as supporting measurement work.

The exploration goal, as I mentioned, is really to explore those associations between student education outcomes and malleable factors -- things that can be changed. Things that are under control of the school system, that if we were able to change them, would impact and improve student outcomes. We're interested, also, in understanding conditions that may mediate or moderate that relationship between the malleable factor and student outcomes. We support a variety of methodological approaches under exploration grants. So, you can analyze secondary data however, you can also collect primary data, if that is going to allow you to answer the questions that you have. You could complete a meta-analysis. We do allow that, under the exploration goal, as well. And any combination of these -- whatever is going to make the most sense, to answer the questions that you're asking, and to understand those associations.

The development and innovation goal, again, is just for the Special Education Research Center this year, and the intent is to develop an innovative intervention. And again, that intervention -- it could be a curriculum, a packaged program, an instructional approach. Or you can improve existing interventions. Maybe there's one that's existing out there that you think, with some tweaking, and some modification, could be an even better program. It could be a program that was designed to be implemented in other settings -- such as a clinic setting, or another setting that you think you could develop it to be a school-based intervention, and that would have impact on student outcome. So, you could come in with a development grant to further modify an existing program.

The development process must be an iterative process. And what we mean is, we know you may come in with an idea of what this program might look like, but then, we want to see the this iterative process of trying it out, getting feedback, collecting data from folks. It could be doing focus groups, interviews, observations, doing rating scales, et cetera -- see how well it's working, refine it, modify it, try it out again, collect more feedback. Try it out again, et cetera. We have no set number of iterations, but we want to see that process of trying it out, getting feedback,

leading up to a final product. We do see qualitative and quantitative methods, within a development grant. Important for the development work is to collect data on feasibility, usability, fidelity of implementation -- in the actual education setting. So, at the end of the development grant, what we want you to have is a developed intervention that can be used in schools -- people like it, folks want to use it, and that you conduct a pilot study to determine the potential impact on student outcomes. And the methodology to be used in a pilot study varies, as well, and we support a variety of methodologies in that pilot study. This is described in a little more detail in the request for applications, the requirements and recommendations for the pilot study.

The next type of project is our efficacy and replication goal, which is -- now that you have the fully developed intervention -- or perhaps there's an existing one out there that you want to rigorously test, and you're going to evaluate whether or not it is actually making an impact, and making a difference for students. In efficacy goals, we expect that the implementation would be under limited or ideal conditions, or it could be implemented under routine conditions. We do allow intervention developers and researchers to be involved in an efficacy study, making sure there's a tightly controlled environment, so we -- that you are really going to be able to answer whether or not this particular intervention is impacting student outcomes.

We also support replication work. Even though it's in the title, I think folks have a perception that maybe we weren't that interested in straight out replication of efficacy studies -- but we are. We do support replication of an efficacious intervention, where you're varying some of those original conditions. Maybe it's a new setting, or it's implemented with a new population. We also allow efficacy studies for follow up data collection -- to examine the longer term effects of an intervention that has already demonstrated efficacy, but you want to see if there are longer term impacts on outcomes. We do have that option, as well.

And, finally, we allow what we consider to be retrospective studies. So, you can analyze those retrospective or historical secondary data, with the intention of trying to test that -- the intervention had an impact on student outcomes, but the intervention had been implemented in the past. But you're asking the question of, "Did the implementation of this intervention improve outcomes for students?"

We also have an effectiveness goal, to evaluate whether a fully developed intervention that has evidence of efficacy now has the same or similar positive impact on student outcomes when it is implemented under routine conditions in the schools. -- This year, the requirement to be eligible to submit an effectiveness study is at least one study -- there has been at least one efficacy study exists that has shown the intervention has positive impact on student outcomes. Routine condition is as if you handed the package over to the schools and said, "Go to it." The implement the intervention, and see if you get similar outcomes. We also do not like to see intervention developer involvement in the effectiveness goal. So, if there's a training component that goes along with a particular intervention, that's fine. They can do training. But as far as being involved in the evaluation, we really want to see that done with an independent person -- an independent evaluator. And again, as I mentioned, this year, we ask that, prior to submitting that effectiveness proposal, you have to have at least one efficacy study which does show beneficial impact on student outcomes.

And, finally, we have a measurement goal. We support the development of new assessments, or refinement of existing assessments and validation of those assessments. Or, you could take an existing assessment and validate that assessment for a specific purpose, a context, or a population.

All right, I am going to pause for one second to see if there are questions. We are going to get to the deadlines for all the applications, and the specific dollar limits, etc. in just a second.

Erin Higgins:

One question is about whether or not there's a grant writing workshop being up. We do have a grant writing workshop webinar scheduled for Wednesday, June 3rd, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Jackie Buckley:

One thing to note about the RFA this year – as in every year, you should always pay attention to any changes from prior years' competitions, so if you're familiar with IES, or maybe you read an RFA from last year, maybe you did apply, or you didn't apply -- know that at the beginning of the RFA, we always have the major changes spelled out for you. So, what was changed from the prior request for applications? Definitely look at that section in the beginning that highlights those changes. One thing to note for this year -- as I mentioned -- NCER is not competing the development awards this year. They also made some changes to budgets for different awards, and different types of grants, within certain competitions. So, we differ across the two research centers and you'll have to pay attention to those changes, and read the RFA carefully, to make sure that you are getting the right budget amounts, and time frames, and things like that.

Here's just a quick overview of the maximum awards amounts. For each competition, we have a maximum dollar amount, as well as a maximum time frame that's allowed within the particular type of grant that that we fund. And you see, it varies, depending on the goal or the type of grant that you're interested in submitting. Exploration grants are either two years or four years, and that depends on whether or not you're collecting collecting primary data. If it's just secondary data analysis, it's two years. Otherwise, you get four years to do primary data collection and analysis.

Development and innovation is up to four years. Typical development grants are three years, with the idea that you do that iterative development process in the first two years, and then the last year is a pilot study. We specify in the RFA that no more than a third -- basically, about a third of your budget, can go to that pilot study, because we really want you to focus on that intervention development process. If given your intervention and context, you need 4 years to fully develop your intervention, you can justify that and ask for 4 years. Efficacy and replication grants depend on your specific type of efficacy grant and you'll see here -- the difference in the dollar amounts, and years, as well. So, depending on which center you submit, efficacy grant is five years, or four years. The follow-up study -- if you want to do a follow-up study as an efficacy grant -- meaning, you have evidence of an intervention improving outcomes, and you just want to follow students or follow kids, to see if the impact maintains -- three years. The retrospective study is three years. And then, you can see, with the effectiveness grants, five years or three years, depending on if you're doing an effectiveness study or a follow-up effectiveness studies, and then the measurement grant limits are listed there as well.

All right. we have a bunch of questions, so give me a minute and I'll go through these questions. So, is it permissible to apply for a grant as part of the requirements for a dissertation study? You know, depending on the type of work that you want to do, it could be a piece of a larger study, but at the same time, to apply for an IES grant, you have to show that you have the ability to conduct a research. I think for most dissertations, the work probably is not going to be at the same level, or the same depth, that would be required under the requirements for our grants, the requirements in our request for applications. If you look in the RFA, we're pretty detailed about what we want to see within each of these types of grants, for each of these goals. So, you would have to take a look at that, and see if your work would meet those requirements. My hunch is that most dissertation work would not -- but I don't want to exclude you outright, because it could be that you have a situation where it may make sense. I'm thinking, exploration work, perhaps. But it would really be an individual question; again, I encourage you to talk to program officers, and see if that would -- if that would fit, and if that would make sense.

The PowerPoint for -- I'm assuming, the PowerPoint for this webinar -- will be available on the IES website in a few weeks? So you'll get the transcript and the PowerPoint from all the webinars, and will be on our website. And do you have any samples of successful requests? I'm going to interpret that as wanting to see an example of a funded application. And that is another thing we'd encourage you to do. That's one way to see -- not only from the abstract of the types of work that we fund -- but to see a funded application, and there are a couple ways that you can go about doing it. Everything that we fund -- everything that's funded with federal dollars -- is available to the public, through the Freedom of Information Act. There's a process in place for that, which we can guide you to on the website. If you contact one of us, one of the program officers, we can direct you to that information. And you can request the applications that have been funded. You can look through the abstracts that we have available on our website, and pick, one or two that you think would be most relevant to you.

I also encourage folks to reach out to the principal investigators on the abstracts for funded grants because, for the most part, they are willing to share their grant with you. I think folks are very collaborative, and want to help new folks who are interested in funding from IES. We have had grantees who have said no. But then, you can come back and request it through the Freedom of Information Act anyway. It's just a much faster process to go directly to the P.I. But if you're not comfortable doing that, then, certainly, you can request it through it's called FOIA -- the Freedom of Information Act. And we can direct you to those particular sites on how to do that. The question there -- a couple questions about the goals. One, is "Can a project involve two goals? Such as exploration and development?" Not really. So, depending -- so, the development -- if you think about development grants, -- you should already have an idea of what has a potential to improve outcomes for students. And this is your way, based on prior research, based on theory, that you think you can impact those outcomes. And then you go through the iterative process to develop it. So, if you're at the stage where you still have exploration questions to ask, you're not ready for a development grant, yet. Exploration grants -- perhaps, it could be a short -- maybe you don't need two years to do a secondary data analysis on something, and it's something you can do more quickly. Maybe you just don't need the full time for that exploration grant, and you can do a shorter grant, and then roll into a development grant,

but it would be really hard, with the requirements that we have, to do those both within one grant.

Then, we had a question about, "Is the maximum funding amount tied to the maximum years allowed, or can a proposal be a three year project, for the full funding amount?" There are some exceptions, I believe, within certain funding opportunities. But in, say, the efficacy grants, you could ask for a smaller -- fewer number of years, but you would have to justify that cost, then, if you needed the full cost, but only, say, three years. If it makes sense, given your particular intervention, or your particular project, and if you can justify those costs, no, it's not a per-year dollar amount. There are some exceptions with some other RFAs, which we'll get into in a bit, in the webinar. But for the most part, there is that flexibility. We don't have a per-year dollar amount. It is a total, and you can divvy it up in a way that would make sense. It depends on your particular research question, and your particular intervention, and the constraints that you have.

Do you speak to expected sample size with the different goals? That's a great question, and it's a question we get asked a lot, and we don't have expected sample sizes -- such as blanket sample sizes/expectations for the different goals. It really depends on your particular methodology, and the research questions that you're trying to answer, and so, I would encourage you to reach out to your methodologist], who, hopefully, will be part of your research team, and getting those folks to help you try and answer those questions related to sample size. We usually get that question, often in the development and innovation grant -- because of expected sample sizes for the pilot study, and for that iterative process. As I mentioned, we don't have a -- we don't have an expectation for a number of iterations needed, for the sample size needed within that development grant. But within the development grant in particular, as long as you have diversity in your samples, so you're not developing something that is so unique to a niche population, that you have a diversity to be able to develop something that's going to be, eventually, widely deployed. But other than that, it really does come down to the research questions that you're trying to ask.

Erin Higgins:

There is a question about whether non-U.S. entities can apply, and what are the implications of doing that?

Jackie Buckley:

So they -- you can. And in the beginning of the request for applications, if you look at the document, we have a Frequently Asked Questions page in there, as well, that addresses this. We do allow non-U.S. entities to apply, or to have a research site that is not in the U.S. However, all that work must be applicable to U.S. schools. So, if you can argue that, and make that case, it is acceptable. But again, I would have you reach out to the program officers, and talk about your idea, and if that would -- if it seemed that is going to make sense, given our requirements and this emphasis applicability to U.S. schools.

Erin Higgins:

The other thing I'll add to that one is that non-U.S. institutions are not able to charge indirect costs. So, when you put together your budget, keep that in mind.

Jackie Buckley:

And we have a question from someone who is from a rural university, which we certainly have worked with folks studying rural settings—the question is this is a common issue about sample sizes, given the fact that they're in a rural setting, and smaller settings, so would they -- most likely, have a smaller sample size, and would they still be competitive for efficacy and replication? Again, it's going to come down to the questions that you're asking, the methods that you're using, and whether or not you're going to be able to answer those questions, given your sample size. In efficacy and replication, we do support a variety of methodologies, though we do emphasize randomized clinical trials. We would like to see that, if possible; however, we do support other methodologies, such as quasi-experimental designs. And within the National Center for Special Education Research, where sample size can be an issue for certain disability categories, we do support single case designs, which clearly has a smaller sample size requirement, so there are a variety of opportunities that allow you to conduct an efficacy grant, give a smaller sample size. So, there are options. But again, I would have you talk to program officers, and we could help talk through those issues with you.

So, the dates for the NCER and the NCSER special education applications are the same. Our application deadline is August 6th this year, at 4:30:00 p.m. That's zero for a reason, on August 6th. Your application has to be in by 4:30:00 p.m., not 4:30 p.m. and one second. Otherwise, it will be deemed late. And so we encourage you to submit as early as you can. Don't start at 4:00 p.m. on the deadline, because the applications are submitted through grants.gov, and grants.gov can get very overwhelmed that submission day, and sometimes, it can be really slow, or there may be some minor little box you didn't click, or some minor thing that you didn't do, that will hold up your application, and by the time you can correct it and resubmit it, it would be past the deadline. So, I say as early as you can get it in. Start early, so you can make sure that you take care of any potential issues before you run out of time. Our letter of intent due date has passed. We wanted to have folks submit letters of intent by May 21st. It is okay if you did not submit a letter of intent. They are not binding, and they are not required. They just help the review office know about how many applications are coming in, and the types of applications coming in. But again, it's okay if you have not submitted a letter of intent. You can still apply for a grant. I would encourage you to reach out to the appropriate program officer to discuss your research idea.

The application package, which is the actual forms that you use to submit the application are currently available on grants.gov. And for grants that are submitted this year, you can start anytime between July 1st and September 1st, 2016. So, I know it gets confusing with the dates in the fiscal years, so this webinar and this competition is for the fiscal year 2016 competition, which means your grant would start in 2016, but the process just starts for us earlier in 2015, which is why there's the 2015 dates for a 2016 competition.

Erin Higgins:

This is Erin Higgins, and we're now going to move to some of our other grants programs, and talk through the specifics of those, in terms of the general overview and requirements, and then, the dates and maximum budgets, and durations, as well.

So, we'll start with the research training grant programs, which are offered through both the National Center for Education Research, as well as the National Center for Special Education Research. The National Center for Education Research is offering 84.305B: The Research Training Grants Programs in the Education Sciences, and specifically, the topic Pathways to the Education Sciences Research Training Program. Through this program, IES is hoping to fund innovative training programs to promote diversity, and prepare underrepresented students for doctoral study in education research. Grants will be awarded to minority serving institutions, and other institutions of higher education who are in partnership with an MSI. So, it's important that, if you not an MSI, you have that partner as part of the application. The goal is to provide students from these groups with an introduction to education research and scientific methods, and provide them with meaningful opportunities to participate in education research studies. That is the only topic we're offering this year through the 84.305B competition.

We also have 84.324B: the National Center for Special Education Research Training Grants Program, and there are three different topics within that competition. The first is the Postdoctoral Research Training program, which is funding programs at doctoral granting institutions to prepare researchers who've already obtained their doctorate to become researchers capable of conducting high quality research independently. Another topic is Early Career Development and Mentoring, which provides support for investigators who are in the early stages of their careers with an interest in special education research. There are specific guidelines for how career development will take place with experienced mentors, and the goal is really to launch these investigators' independent careers. The third topic is Methods Training Using Single Case Designs, which is a program to help current education researchers maintain and enhance their research and data analysis skills related to single case research design, focused on children with disabilities.

Jackie Buckley:

One thing I want to note about the Special Education Training Grants is, as Erin had mentioned, the Postdoc program is awarded to an *institution* to develop a training program. And the Early Career Development and Mentoring Award is awarded to an *individual*, to help support their individual training and preparation for -- applying for grants as a P.I.

Erin Higgins:

We have a question about the pathways program, which is -- is an institution in the process of building master's and Ph.D. programs eligible to apply? So, this particular program is actually focused on students in undergraduate studies. So, look at the request for applications, and talk to the program officer who's in charge of the program, but it's possible that you could be eligible if you are an MSI, or if you partner with an MSI.

Now I will go over the award parameters for these competitions. For 305B, it's five years and \$1.2 million. And for 324B, it varies by topic, so Postdoctoral Research Training is five years, \$700,000. The Early Career Development and Mentoring topic is four years, \$400,000. And Methods Training is three years and \$700,000.

So, for these training program competitions, the deadline is actually different from what we had talked about for 305A and 324A. So, for these training grant programs, the deadline is August

20th, at 4:30:00 p.m. The letter of intent was due a couple days ago, so if you're interested in these programs, please reach out to the program officers, and express your interest. Start dates are July 1-September 1, 2016.

The next competition I'll talk about is the 305C Education Research and Development Center program. This is through the National Center for Education Research. This year, we're competing one topic, and that is the Virtual Learning topic, where the main goal is to develop or demonstrate the value of particular methodological approaches to researching and developing instructional practices, content, and education technologies delivered within instructional delivery platforms that are offered online, and that are in wide use. So, the keys that these online instructional delivery platforms need to be in wide use. We broadly define that -- it's in the request for applications. We also broadly define online instructional delivery platforms, so that, you could come in with a number of different focus areas, and potentially, education technologies to study. Another key thing to think about when you look at this request for applications is that the focus should be on low-income and low-performing K-12 students, and on identifying and evaluating instructional practices, content, et cetera, for those students. Secondly, the goal of the center is to explore how the large amounts of data that can be generated by these platforms can answer important research questions to improve teaching and learning. So, when you apply to this particular competition, applicants are expected to propose a mix of both experimental studies, within the context of the platform, as well as measurement studies looking at how to use the kinds of data that one could generate from these instructional delivery

In addition, the research and development centers are expected to provide leadership and outreach activities across the field, and to stakeholders like policymakers and practitioners, and so the goal there is to --propose activities with these kinds of audiences around issues such as big data for education, research, and practice, as well as to develop a hub where researchers, developers, and practitioners can come together to discuss issues related to online learning, review emerging findings, and support new collaborations.

We actually have a question now going back to our training grants program. So, for each of the training opportunities, there's only one grantee awarded per competition? That's a very good question. A lot of these competitions that I'm talking about now actually do have some caps on the number of awards that will be made. Unfortunately, I don't have that information off the top of my head for all of the competitions. It's in the request for applications for each competition and it will vary by competition. So, for some of them, it might be a couple of awards will be made. For others, for example, the Virtual Learning Center I just talked about, only up to one award will be made for that particular competition. But if you have a question about a specific application, take a look at that request for applications. It will be, very clearly, in there. Reach out to the program officer for that competition if you can't find it.

The next competition I'll talk about is our 305D Statistical Research and Methodology in Education Program. For this year, we're offering the Early Career topic only. For this topic, the goal is to support early career researchers as they implement their research agendas. The products of these kinds of grants are tools and techniques that could be used by education researchers to improve the design of their studies, or the analysis and interpretation of their data. This is not a program to support products such as ways to inform more math work or to develop

advanced statistical software only for other methodologists -- it's really intended for people to develop tools that mainstream education researchers can use. For eligibility for the early career topic, you must have received your Ph.D. on or after April 1st, 2011. Another requirement is that you need to include an experienced mentor and/or advisory board of experienced mentors. Again, this research topic is to improve methodological and statistical tools available to mainstream education researchers. The hope is that these tools can then be used to improve the design of studies, analysis, et cetera.

Another competition we're holding under the National Center for Education Research is actually an FY 15 competition with a very accelerated schedule. This is 84.305E, Evaluation of State Education Programs and Policies. For this program, the goal is to support partnerships between a research institution and a state educational agency to determine whether or not a fully developed program shows some beneficial impact on student education outcomes for three different topics -- college and career-ready standards and assessments, identifying and improving the lowest performing schools, and teacher and principal evaluation and support systems. So, if you have policies or programs that fall under these three categories, you could be eligible for this particular competition. There are specific requirements outlined in the request for applications for how to apply. Another important thing, like I said, is that this is a very accelerated schedule, so the application deadline is actually June 10th, which is very soon. The project start date is August 1st, 2015, so the review process will be very quick as well. Keep in mind, the June 10th date also has the same 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time deadline.

The next competition that I'll talk about is 305H, which is our Partnership and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice and Policy Program. This year, we're supporting one topic under this program: Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships in Education Research. The goal is to support new or established partnerships between research institutions and state or local education agencies. Under this mechanism, you would do some initial research, but a lot of what you'd be doing here is really focused on improving the partnership, or establishing the partnership, and then developing a joint plan for further research on an issue. So you could come in under 305H to establish a partnership and develop a research agenda, and then once you've done that, you might, then, go to our 305A or 324A competition, and put in a proposal for, let's say, an exploration study, or maybe an efficacy study. So, these are smaller scale projects that are really focused on forging that collaboration, doing some very initial, preliminary research, and then developing that longer-term research plan.

We have a new grant program this year -- 84.305N, Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice, where the goal is to establish research networks, to focus resources and attention on education problems or issues that are really high priority. This year, we're competing two topics -- Supporting Early Learning from Preschool through Early Elementary Grades, and Scalable Strategies to Support College Completion. The goal is to get a number of different researchers together to address a particular problem, and then get them to talk to each other, collaborate, and then disseminate at a national level to support further work in these two areas.

I'll go into some specifics about each of the topics. The Early Learning Network is intended to support a couple of different kinds of network contributors. First, up to four research teams will

be funded to conduct research to identify malleable factors that support early learning, from preschool through early elementary school grades. And these teams are going to conduct exploratory research in states, or cities, or school districts that provide preschool opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. There are a number of different requirements, in terms of the kinds of studies that these research teams can propose, so go ahead and look at the RFA, as I won't go into those details now. Another thing that these teams will do is actually support an assessment team, whose tasks I'll go over in a second, in piloting and validating a classroom observational tool. The Early Learning Network will also include up to one assessment team, who will develop and/or validate a classroom observation tool that can be used by practitioners. Again, they'll work closely with the research team to coordinate that process for validating that tool.

Lastly, there will be up to one Network Lead, and the Network Lead is responsible for making sure that the overall network runs smoothly, for coordinating dissemination of results, and for coming up with some joint network initiatives, such as some supplemental studies that come out of collaborations between network participants. It's a really interesting mechanism and a new opportunity that we're starting this year, and I encourage you, if this sounds interesting, to look at the request for applications for more information.

Within this competition, we have a second topic -- the College Completion Network. The College Completion Network is somewhat similar to the Early Learning Network, in that it will also support up to four research teams. The goal is to evaluate the impact and determine costs of interventions to support increased degree completion amongst students who are attending open- and broad- access institutions, such as four-year colleges and community colleges that are accepting 75 percent or more of their applicants. Researchers can come in with either a fully developed intervention to be evaluated, or can even propose to do some development work, along with an efficacy study. The goal is to bring together up to four different research teams to form the network. Similarly to the Early Learning Network, there will be up to one Network Lead, who will coordinate those dissemination activities, and potentially, supplemental studies, and other network initiatives. In order to apply to be Network Lead across both of these topics, you need to also be applying to be a research team or assessment team, in the case of the Early Learning Network,.

So, I just went over a number of different competitions. Now, I'm going to tell you about the award parameters for each of those. We already went over 305B and 324B. For 305C, that is the Virtual Learning R and D Center competition -- the maximum number of years that you can propose is five years, and the maximum award amount is up to \$10 million, but there is also a maximum of \$2 million a year. So, here's a case where we do have a cap on the maximum annual award amount, and it's \$2 million or less a year. For 305D, the Early Career Stats/Methods competition, it's a maximum number of years of two years, with \$200,000 as the total maximum budget, and a maximum annual budget of up to \$100,000 a year. Again, there's the yearly cap on that competition. For 305E the Evaluation of State Education Programs and Policies, which is that accelerated 2015 competition -- the maximum number of years is five years, and \$5 million is the total maximum budget, and the annual budget cap is \$1 million or less a year. Lastly, the 305H Research-Practitioner Partnerships competition is a maximum of two years, \$400,000 is the maximum budget, and the annual cap is \$200,000 per year.

Okay, so I'm going to pause for one second. It looks like I have one question here, which is, "Is this your only program that pertains to college level education?" I'm assuming you're talking about the networks program. And the answer to that is actually no. We have, under our 305A competition, a postsecondary and adult education topic. There are specifics about what kinds of postsecondary education outcomes you can focus on, and those are in the RFA. The topic description provides some context for what you can and can't focus on, and the program officers are a great resource to help you navigate that. That topic also includes adult education, so there are things you can research under adult education as well.

We have another question about the research networks -- "Do you have to identify all four research teams in your proposal, or do you submit as one of the research teams?" Good question. So, the answer to that is you submit as a single research team. So, each individual application will be reviewed on its own merits, and then the network will consist of up to four independent research teams. So, it's not that you're going to be identifying the four different teams that would come in. You're going to come in as one of the possible ones, and you don't have control over who the others will be. It depends on who else applies.

Jackie Buckley:

There was another question about whether any documents and materials are useful to read to fully understand that IES's areas of funding priorities and the agency mission. I think if you read those requests for applications for these different topics, they will give you that kind of information you need regarding the types of grants that we fund, and what work that we want to support, what work do we consider to be eligible and important for IES, and the Department of Education. I think it's pretty clear in the request for applications. One way we function a little differently from other agencies is we don't have priorities the way that other agencies have priorities. So even in the request for applications in a particular topic, we may identify areas that we think are really in need of good research, but even if you address those particular topics, you're not going to get a leg up, if you will, in the funding review process. We don't have priorities where, if you address that priority, you get bonus points or extra points, for addressing a particular area. We fund strictly by quality. So, you have to argue to the review panel that this is an important topic, and here's why. And here's my plan to research this particular topic. If they consider it an outstanding or excellent application, then it would be something that we would fund -- regardless of topic, regardless of type of project, and regardless of goal -- we don't have quotas. We really do fund strictly by quality.

Erin Higgins: And I would add to that that your best resource, besides the RFA, is going to be contacting the program officer for the topic you're interested, or the competition you're interested in applying to because they can give you some insight into the review process, and how to frame the significance of your work, so that it is compelling. So, maybe you haven't identified a clear education problem in the way you initially framed your idea, and program officers can help you think through how best to frame the idea so that the significance of your idea really comes through in the narrative.

Erin Higgins:

So, we did look up the limits for some of these competitions that someone had asked about, for training, in particular. So, for the pathways topic, which is in the 305B program -- we have a cap

of four awards. So, four or less awards would be made there. For the postdoc topic, under the 324B training program, up to two awards will be made. For early career, up to five awards will be made. And for the single case design training, up to one award will be made. Again, like I said, there are additional caps on some of these other competitions as well, and those are all listed in the RFAs, and so, you should attend to them.

I didn't yet go over the 305N Research Networks Maximums. So, here are those. They depend on what kind of application you're putting in. If you're putting in an Early Learning Network Research Team application, the maximum number of years is five years and the maximum award is \$4.5 million. There's no annual cap, as you can see here. For the Assessment Team, it's five years and \$2 million, and for the Early Learning Network Lead, it's five years and \$2 million. For the College Completion Network Research Team, it's five years, \$4 million. The College Completion Network Lead is five years and \$1 million. The difference in maximum award amounts across those two topics is reflecting the difference in expectations for the kinds of work that's being done there. So, again, look in the RFA. It may give you a better sense of the scope of work, given the topic and the position in the network you want to apply to.

Here are the important dates for these competitions. For most of these, the letter of intent is already past due. I encourage you to contact the program officer for these competitions to let them know you're interested in applying. The one letter of intent that is not yet past due is for 305N Research Networks. That letter of intent is due June 4th, 2015. So, there's still some time to put something in for that.

–The application deadline for 305C is August 20th, 2015. For 305D, Early Career, August 6th is the deadline. For 305E, that is the FY 15 competition, Evaluation of State and Local Education Programs and Policies -- the deadline is very soon, June 10th. For 305H, the deadline is August 6th. For 305N, Research Networks, the application deadline is August 6th. In all cases, applications are due by 4:30:00pm Washington, DC time.

Jackie Buckley:

We have one question. “With the Early Career Development and Mentoring Grant, can the individual be a current doctoral student? And can the individual be mentored by an established partnership between the institution and the research institute?” So, for the Early Career in a Special Education Early Career Development and Mentoring Grant, you have to have a Ph.D. You can be graduating, but I believe, you have to have a letter from institution as to where you are going to be employed, supporting your application. You do have to have a Ph.D. Or, as I say, be a recent graduate, or going to graduate by the time the award would be made -- and have the ability to have this mentoring and research opportunity -- so, be employed at an institution which will allow you, and support you, to do this kind of work. And can that individual be mentored by an established partnership between an institute of higher ed and a research institute? The mentoring -- it's spelled out in the request for applications, of the types of mentors that we want you to have. The one requirement is that it can't be your doctoral mentors, so we want to see you have a different mentor from someone with whom you had a prior mentoring role. If there is this partnership, then you can talk about the way the mentoring will occur through this partnership, as long as it is not that direct relationship with your former adviser, then that would

probably be okay. But again, I would encourage you to reach out to the program officers, and talk about that.

Jackie Buckley:

There's a question about, "Do Ed.Ds count toward the Ph.D. requirement?" The answer would be yes. So, any sort of doctorate that you have would be fine.

And then, "For the 305H grant and the 305A exploration grants, does IES fund qualitative or mixed methods research?" That's a great question, and the answer is that you can definitely come in and do qualitative and mixed methods research, as long as it makes sense, given your research question. So, it's really a matter of justifying the choice of methodology, given what you're trying to do. And again, I would encourage you to contact a program officer to talk through the best strategies for framing that, and for justifying that approach.

Erin Higgins:

So let's talk about finding application packages. I'll note that there's an application process webinar on Monday, July 1st, from 2:00-3:30 p.m. I encourage you to attend that webinar to get some more insights into preparing an application, and finding the application on grants.gov. If you've never been to grants.gov before, this is what it looks like. And what you're going to do is click on that search grant tab, and then search for the CFDA number that you're interested in, and that, then, will take you to the correct application packages. All the application packages are currently available. They've been up since May 21st, so you should be able to go ahead and download those now. I encourage you to start this process as early as possible, for the reasons which Jackie mentioned earlier, that if you're waiting until the day of to start this application, a lot could potentially go wrong, in terms of errors in the application that you might make, in terms of not checking a box, but also, the system could be slow. You also should note that there are particular registration processes that you need to go through that might take some time – potentially a couple of weeks, for example, if you don't have yet a DUNS number. The application process webinar is really useful because it goes over all of these different components that you need to have in order to prepare that application. We don't do that in this particular webinar, but I want to encourage you to attend that one, and get that information. That information is also available in the back of every request for application, so you don't need to wait for that webinar to find out that information. It's all laid out in the last couple of parts of each request for application.

In order to apply, you'll want to look at the request for application for the competition that you're interested in. It reiterates the dates and times for due dates. It also talks through the requirements for the competition. Like I mentioned, it provides information in the back on how to apply through grants.gov. The application package is the second piece of this that you'll need, and again, that's currently available at grants.gov.

So, what happens once you submit your application? First, applications are reviewed for compliance and responsiveness to the request for applications for the competition that you've applied to. And so, we define compliance as things like, you've adhered to the number of pages of the narrative that are required for this particular competition -- that you haven't gone over the page limit. Things like font size, how you've used the appendixes, and ensuring you haven't gone over the page limit for those, that kind of thing. Responsiveness is really about seeing if

you have attended to the requirements of the competition, and ensuring that your application is responsive to them. If you are both responsive and compliant, then you will be assigned to a review panel. Two to three panel members will conduct a primary review of your application -- they experts in their areas, and they will provide some feedback to applicants about the application, and regardless of the outcome, you'll receive that feedback when award decisions have been released. Once a primary review of each application has occurred, the most competitive applications are then reviewed by the full panel of reviewers. They're discussed in the panel and then they're rated. From there, we make the funding decisions, and then contact all applicants, giving them statements from the reviewers, so that they could potentially resubmit their applications. Or for those that are funded, we award the grants for that fiscal year.

You will be notified no later than July 1st, 2016 for most competitions, whether or not you've received funding for your application. The notification comes through the applicant notification system, and that system is one that you get prompted to sign up for, once you've submitted your application. Or, if you've submitted before, you should already have an account. It provides you with information about the status of the award, and then, when summary statements of reviewer comments are released, it provides you with those, as well.

If you're not granted an award the first time, review your summary statement, and talk to the program officer. The program officer might have some insight into what you can do differently, and ways to think about the reviewer comments to help you improve your application.

Another thing we encourage you to do is go to our website and look at the resources page. It provides links to different trainings and other information and content that could help you improve your application, such as information about methodology -- that kind of thing. Also, there are past webinars, with transcripts and slides available to you that you could look through. In addition, like we've already mentioned, there are a number of future webinars that you could benefit from. We mentioned the grant writing webinar and the application progress webinar. There are also some others that focus on particular competitions. You can find information on the webinars if you hover over the Funding Opportunities part of the header on our website, and there's a link there to the research funding webinars.

Here's what the Resources for Researchers page looks like. To get here, you just click that For Researchers header, under the gray header there. If you want to find the future webinars page, you can either get to it from this resources page, or if you hover over "Funding Opportunities," there's a link to the webinars from there, as well.

Again, to reiterate, when writing a grant application, read the request for applications. It provides all that information that you need about the requirements for the particular competition, maximum award amounts and durations, deadlines, et cetera. Make sure you also look at abstracts of funded projects. This is a great resource for you, in terms of figuring out what kinds of research tends to fall under particular topics and what kinds of research questions people ask for different goals. Keep in mind as you look at these that the request for applications does change from year to year, so something that was funded, let's say, in FY 11, might not meet all the same requirements as this current competition. So, as you read these, just keep that in mind, and use the abstracts as a general source of information, but of course, look at the request for

applications from this year, to make sure you're addressing the requirements for this year's competition.

Take part in the webinars, like we already said. There's the URL that gets you directly to the webinars page, but again, you can just get to it by going to our website and then hovering over Funding Opportunities. Again, discuss your ideas with a program officer. The best way to approach this is e-mail them first with a synopsis of your idea. Then, they'll reach out to you, and potentially schedule a call to follow up with you. Another thing you can do is e-mail us with short questions, and we're happy to respond to those quickly, if you don't want to wait for a call to get those questions answered.

Read the requests for applications carefully. Call or e-mail program officers early. As program officers, we can actually review draft proposals, then provide feedback. So, if that's something of interest to you, contact the program officer, and see what kinds of deadlines they might have for reviewing application materials, and go from there. I'll stop on this page, which provides you with that link to the funding page, and also our e-mail addresses. But if you have specific questions about particular programs and topics that we've talked about here, I encourage you to go to the topic pages on our website and/or the RFAs because those provide the contact information for the person who will be the best resource to answer your specific question. So, I'll pause here, and it looks like we do have a number of questions.

Jackie Buckley:

So, we had a few questions about applicant eligibility. Oone, "Are those applicant eligibility requirement different for each program, and where would you find that information?" All the information would be in each request for application, the discussions about applicant eligibility, and in general, for the research topics as long as you have the ability to conduct the research that you say you're going to do -- it can be for profit, non-profit, et cetera, it's a fairly broad eligibility requirement. They do change a little bit for the training grants, depending on the particular training grant, or particular needs, and they may have more specified applicant eligibility requirements. Again, those would be in -- they're spelled out -- in the request for applications. There was another question about who determines those applicant eligibility requirements, and when are those reevaluated? And there, I'm guessing there's a particular question behind that question, so feel free to ask that -- or e-mail one of us offline, and we can certainly talk about that. I'm guessing it may be related to training, but those are decisions made with IES leadership about what some of those eligibility requirements would be. They have been re-evaluated for the NCSER Early Career award. Certainly, if there is a particular issue, feel free to reach out to one of us, and we can always raise that issue. When the new requests for applications come out each year, we may be able to incorporate some of those suggestions, if there's something that we missed, or something in the eligibility requirements that isn't clear. .

We also had questions earlier about -- getting back to the non-U.S. applicants. About how often we get non-U.S. applications, how successful they've been, in any special consideration? I haven't gotten many non-U.S. applications -- we tend to see them more from Canada, than any other country -- just, you know, relationships with universities there, being close. And how successful -- I don't know -- Erin, if you have any other insight in that -- so, I haven't seen many. As Erin mentioned before, non-U.S. entities cannot charge indirect rates, which is a little hard, too, depending on the nature of the research.

And I see a question now for international applications, should they include a U.S. researcher. I think, one -- I think, you have to get back to what is the relevance for U.S. education, in making that argument. It's assumed that includes U.S. researchers and non-U.S. researchers, and sites, perhaps. I think with that you might be able to better argue that relevance, and what it would mean for U.S. education. I think relevance to US schools are some of the hurdles that you have to overcome, with non-U.S. applicants applying. But again, I encourage you to reach out to program officers, and we can talk through -- and maybe talk to each other, and find out if there are certain examples, or things that we can help direct you in thinking about -- in either deciding to apply to IES, or if you do apply to IES, what things you should think about including in your application.

Erin Higgins:

Yeah, I would add to that that I, like Jackie, have not seen lots of these applications, but I can think of one or two that have been successful. In one case, it was somebody partnering with a U.S. institution and collecting data in the United States, and the P.I. had a particular set of expertise, so it made sense for them to use and to partner with that U.S. institution. As Jackie said, I think a lot of what we see is from Canada, and that's possibly because their system has some similarities, and you can make an argument, potentially, that the work you're doing there could translate to U.S. schools. As Jackie said, that's really the main thing -- can you make the argument, that what you're doing is generalizable to students in the United States? And is the research you are doing relevant to education in the United States? If it is, then it's certainly worthwhile to at least start the conversation with the program officer, and potentially apply as a non-U.S. institution. If it turns out it's somewhat of a stretch, it will make more sense to partner with somebody in the United States.

Jackie Buckley:

Someone also asked about a minimum -- going back to eligibility requirements -- probably a minimum number of publications that applicants must have. We don't have a minimum number, but I would say that if you are a junior investigator, -- if you have not had large scale federal grants, or if you're new in a particular research area, our reviewers do look at your C.V. and look at publications in this particular area that you're interested in exploring or doing work in. And I would say, if you don't have that experience, you really need to think about building a team who is going to have the experience necessary to conduct this particular research, and maybe get a strong co-investigator, or co-P.I. who does have the publication record to work with you, to develop and implement this research project. I think reviewers like to see that, if you're more junior, to have that team in place. They will examine your particular qualifications, o, if you don't -- if the expertise is not long and deep for you, then get folks on your team who do have that experience and expertise.

We had a question earlier, too, about, "If you're a new grant seeker, does it make the most sense to begin with an exploration grant?" And what I tell more junior folks who don't have that grant experience, I think exploration grants are great -- secondary data analysis. You don't have to go collect data. If that is in your skill set, and would answer questions that you're interested in asking, and seems a natural next step in your research progression -- because they are lower cost, lower, I guess, investment, and it would be nice to then lead to a development grant, lead to an

efficacy study. But you don't have to. We certainly have folks start off in efficacy studies, or start out with a development grant.

And then, there was a comment earlier about the Newsflash. And Newsflash being delayed -- they're getting a Newsflash notifying them on something that had been released weeks ago. So, you know, it could happen. We try -- we have a web team that tries to stay on top of those things, so when something is released -- it might not happen that exact same day, but shortly thereafter, a Newsflash would go out. So, I'm not sure what happened in this particular instance that you're mentioning about the delay in getting something notified via the Newsflash of something that had been released weeks ago. And I apologize that for happening, but it could happen. But we do try and stay on top of the Newsflashes - they are released in a relatively short time, from when something is published, or something becomes publicly available. That is one of the most effective ways to get the most updated information -- is the Newsflash. As long as you're paying attention to our website, we have -- if you're logged on to [ies.ed.gov](http://ies.ed.gov), we have the What's New section.. You can check the News and Event site. So, I apologize for that, but the Newsflash should be the most updated.

Okay, so, we have a question about for 305N -- can non-institutional, non-profit organizations apply? And the answer there is yes. So, applicants who have the ability and capacity to conduct scientifically valued research eligible to apply -- that includes, but is not limited to, non-profit and for profit organizations, and public and private agencies and institutions, such as colleges and universities.

Jackie Buckley:

There is a question of "Could any of the funding in an exploration grant be used to implement the intervention to be evaluated?" So, in an exploration grant, if you look at the requirements and read in the RFA for exploration grants, the idea isn't -- you're not asking all the questions in a exploration grant -- it's more hypothesis -- generating and understanding relationships between these malleable factors and gentle impacts on student outcomes. You can do a [original] data collection within that.

Erin Higgins:

So, that said, if you were applying to efficacy, you would be able to use some of those grant funds to fund implementation of the intervention. If you were to go to effectiveness, there's a cap on the percentage of the award that can be spent on implementation. So, consult those two goals for more information there. As Jackie said, this sounds like more of an efficacy question than an exploration one.

Jackie Buckley:

And then, I have one question earlier, related to the training grants, and who can be mentors on those early career awards. And the question was, "Can a committee member from the thesis be a mentor?" And I think I would have to look at the specific requirements again, but I think that may be okay, unless you have a long and standing relationship of mentoring the relationship with that person, even though they're not your primary adviser, but if you've worked with them a lot, and that's clear -- maybe you've published with them, I would have to look at the specifics within the RFA, but the idea for the early career mentoring is that you get new and additional mentoring

for areas that you need additional support, to be able to build your capacity to conduct IES research -- not just a continuation of your doctoral training. And so, there could be exceptions. Of course, and I would encourage you to reach out to the program officer, and discuss your particular situation. You can have prior relationships, as long as it is not a clear mentoring relationship

I'll hold on for a minute to see if there are any other questions. Oh, so, someone wants me to repeat the date and time of the upcoming proposal writing workshop -- so, let me just get that. Hold on one second. So, the grant writing workshop is going to be Wednesday, June 3rd, from 1:30-3:00 p.m. Again, all of our future webinars are listed on our website. If you hover over Funding Opportunities, you'll see a link to the Researching Funding Webinars, and that will give you a complete list.

Jackie Buckley:

And I missed the question from earlier about development and innovation awards. "Can they be four years, if they're really only wanting three years?" So -- we used to have three year development and innovation grants, but then for folks who were developing, say, year-long curriculum, or longer program, it was hard to do iterative work and pilot test within three years. We changed in the past couple years, to allow for four years development and innovation grant. -- You can certainly apply for a four year grant, as long as you can justify your research plan, and the need for the four years. I think most development work can be done in three years, but that is just a global statement from me, based on work that we've funded in the past. But if you need longer time to develop -- to fully develop and pilot test an intervention, then you need the four years. , Regardless of topic or goal or RFA, you need to justify the time, in dollar amounts, that you're asking for, regardless. And so, as long as you can do that, then, sure. And you stay under those maximums, they're fine.

Erin Higgins:

It looks like we don't have any additional questions, but of course, as we've said, if you have questions afterward, we're happy to answer those offline. Here are our e-mail addresses. If it's a specific question about a particular competition or topic, though, we encourage you to reach out to the program officer for that particular competition and/or topic. Thanks for coming, and again, feel free to contact us if you have additional questions.

[end of transcript]

