

National Institute for Literacy (CFDA No. 84.257)

I. Legislation

Adult Education Act, Part D, Section 384(c)-(n), P.L. 102-73, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1213c (c)-(n)) (expires September 30, 1997).

II. Funding History

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Appropriation</u>
1993	\$4,909,000
1994	4,909,000
1995	4,862,000
1996	4,860,000

III. Analysis of Program Performance

A. Goals and Objectives

The National Institute for Literacy's (NIFL) mission is to work toward achieving the National Education Goal that all adults will be literate and able to compete in the workforce by the year 2000. NIFL helps ensure that all adults who need to improve their literacy and basic skills have opportunities to receive high-quality services that lead to success in the family, at work, and in the community by raising their awareness of the services available and by enhancing the capacity and effectiveness of state and local service delivery systems, particularly by promoting coordination among such systems. In carrying out all of its activities, NIFL leverages resources from other sources, involves adult learners in the design and implementation of projects and activities, and encourages collaboration to achieve success.

B. Strategies to Achieve the Goals

Services Supported

NIFL's activities have been organized into four areas designed to build capacity for systemic change and improvement in adult education: (1) using the Internet and print products to improve communication; (2) creating performance management systems and content standards to build program quality; (3) providing leadership in the policy and program areas; and (4) developing a research agenda to guide the many public and private efforts to increase adult literacy. Major activities are as follows:

- The Literacy Information and Communications System (LINCS) began in 1994 with the establishment of four listservs on the topics of workplace literacy, family literacy, learning disabilities, and English as a second language. NIFL also launched the LINCS regional hub sites to extend the reach of this project into states and local programs. In 1995-96, NIFL focused on making information of special interest to the literacy field available through LINCS in a user-friendly format. This effort complements the larger, general purpose collections available, such as ERIC. LINCS also includes uniform standards for putting unpublished materials on line, so that

Chapter 413-2

previously unavailable information can be shared throughout the literacy community in a single, shared format.

- Equipped for the Future (EFF) was launched in 1994 with planning grants to national, state, and local organizations interested in developing content standards for adult education and literacy services and planning for the implementation of these standards through reform of the teaching and learning process. EFF is based on a broad effort to build a national consensus by engaging a widening circle of adult learners, teachers, and others in defining the results of the adult education system.

In the first phase of this process a survey of adult learners was taken, which revealed four purposes for learning: gaining access to information, expressing ideas and opinions, solving problems and making decisions, and learning how to learn. In the second phase, three roles were also identified--those of citizen, worker, and parent--and these became the focus of additional projects designed to identify key activities adults typically engage in to carry out these roles. In the third phase NIFL has awarded grants to three national consortia to develop content standards for each of the three adult roles (V.1).

- The National Adult Literacy and Learning Disabilities Center (NALLDC) has increased awareness and understanding of learning disabilities and adult education through publications; presentations to national, state, and local conferences; and teleconferences. NALLDC has created a set of standards for instruments to screen for learning disabilities and instructional methods to be used in developing a “tool kit” for practitioners. The “tool kit” will be the basis of a NALLDC training and technical assistance effort to familiarize the adult education field with the results of its work and to improve the use of screening tools and instructional techniques for adults with learning disabilities.

C. Program Performance—Indicators of Impact and Effectiveness

Indicators of performance are under development for the National Institute for Literacy.

IV. Planned Studies

None.

V. Sources of Information

1. S.G. Stein, Equipped for the Future: A Reform Agenda for Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning (Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy, February 1997).

VI. Contacts for Further Information

Program Operations: Andrew Hartman, (202) 632-1500

Program Studies: Melissa Oppenheimer, (202) 401-3630