



U.S. Department of Labor on behalf of the  
U.S. Department of Education

**Innovative Approaches to Literacy**

Assistance Listing Number: 84.215G

FY 2026 Grant Competition

Posted April 8, 2026

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## Program Information

The Employment and Training Administration at the U.S. Department of Labor (Labor) is soliciting applications in support of the administration of the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). IAL supports high-quality programs designed to develop and improve literacy skills for children and students from birth through 12th grade in high-need local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools. IAL promotes innovative literacy programs that support the development of literacy skills in low-income communities, including programs that (1) develop and enhance effective school library programs, which may include providing professional development for school librarians, books, and up-to-date materials to high-need schools; (2) provide early literacy services, including pediatric literacy programs through which, during well-child visits, medical providers trained in research-based methods of early language and literacy promotion provide developmentally appropriate books and recommendations to parents to

encourage them to read aloud to their children starting in infancy; and (3) provide high-quality books on a regular basis to children and adolescents from low-income communities to increase reading motivation, performance, and frequency. By expanding access to high-quality books, strengthening school library programs, and promoting early language and literacy development in low-income communities, the IAL program directly advances the goal of increasing reading proficiency. These strategies build strong foundational skills from birth through adolescence, ensuring that children and students—particularly those in high-need LEAs—receive the targeted supports necessary to improve their reading motivation, performance, and long-term literacy outcomes.

*Assistance Listing Number:* 84.215G.

*Program Authority:* [20 U.S.C. 6646](#).

*OMB Control Number:* 1894-0006.<sup>1</sup>

*For Further Information:* Simon Earle, (202) 453-7923, [Simon.Earle@ed.gov](mailto:Simon.Earle@ed.gov).

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$16,800,000.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 216 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and

reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit and voluntary. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0006. *Note:* Please do not return completed applications to this address.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$375,000 to \$750,000.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* \$500,000.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 25-35.

*Project Period:* 60 months.

*Application Deadline:* June 9, 2026

*Note:* This application notice and instructions is the official document governing the grant competition. ED is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

## Eligibility

### Eligible Applicants

To be considered for an award under this competition, an applicant must be one or more of the following:

- (a) An LEA in which 20 percent or more of the students served by the LEA are from families with an income below the poverty line (as defined in section 8101(41) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA)).
- (b) A consortium of such LEAs described in paragraph (1) above.
- (c) The Bureau of Indian Education.
- (d) An eligible national nonprofit organization that serves children and students within the attendance boundaries of one or more eligible LEAs.

*Note:* Under the definition of “poverty line” in section 8101(41) of the ESEA, the determination of the percentage of students served by an LEA from families with an income below the poverty line is based on the U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) data.

An entity that meets the definition of an LEA in section 8101(30) of the ESEA and that serves multiple LEAs, such as a county office of education, an education service agency, or regional service education agency, must provide the most recent SAIPE data for each of the individual LEAs it serves. To determine whether the entity meets the poverty threshold, ED will derive the entity's poverty rate by aggregating the number of students from families below the poverty line (as provided in SAIPE data) in each of the LEAs the entity serves and

dividing it by the total number of students (as provided in SAIPE data) in all of the LEAs the entity serves.

An LEA for which SAIPE data are not available, such as a non-geographic charter school, must provide a determination by the SEA that 20 percent or more of the students aged 5-17 in the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line based on the same State-derived poverty data the State educational agency used to determine the LEA's allocation under part A of title I of the ESEA.

*Note:* If you are a nonprofit organization, under [34 CFR 75.51](#), you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by providing (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; or (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant.

## Costs

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

### **Indirect Cost Rate Information**

This program uses a restricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see this [webpage](#).

### **Administrative Cost Limitation**

This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in [2 CFR part 200 subpart E](#) of the Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance.

### **Subgrantees**

A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

## Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Applications Available	April 8, 2026
Notice of Intent to Apply Deadline	May 8, 2026
Application Deadline	June 9, 2026
Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	August 7, 2026

ED will be able to review grant applications more efficiently if we know the approximate number of applicants that intend to apply. Therefore, we strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of their intent to submit an application. To do so, please email the program contact person listed above with the subject line “Intent to Apply,” and include the applicant's name and a contact person's name and email address. Applicants that do not submit a notice of intent to apply may still apply for funding; applicants that do submit a notice of intent to apply are not bound to apply or bound by the information provided.

**Applicants are required to follow the 2025 Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs**, published in the *Federal Register* on August 29, 2025 (90 FR 42234) and available at [ED 2025 Common Instructions](#).

## Program Description

### Priorities

This notice includes two absolute priorities and two competitive preference priorities. Absolute Priority 1 is from the notice of final priorities and requirement for IAL (IAL NFP), published in the *Federal Register* on July 12, 2021 ([86 FR 36510](#)). Absolute Priority 2 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priorities and Definitions on Evidence-Based Literacy, Education Choice, and Returning Education to the States (2025 Supplemental Priorities), published in the *Federal Register* on September 9, 2025 ([90 FR 43514](#)). Competitive Preference Priority 1 is from [34 CFR 75.227](#). Competitive Preference Priority 2 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Meaningful Learning Opportunities (Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priority), published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2026 ([91 FR 6625](#)).

*Absolute Priority:* ED considers only applications that meet both absolute priorities.

*Competitive Preference Priorities:* An application may receive a maximum of 10 additional points under Competitive Preference Priority 1 and a maximum of 10 additional points under Competitive Preference Priority 2, for a maximum of 20 additional points under the competitive preference priorities. ED will not review or award points for a

competitive preference priority if an applicant fails to clearly identify it as a competitive preference priority that it wishes ED to consider for purposes of awarding competitive preference priority points.

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	Required	Priority Language	Points
<i>Absolute Priority 1</i>	<i>Projects, Carried Out in Coordination with School Libraries, for Book Distribution, Childhood Literacy Activities, or Both</i>	Yes	Projects that propose to coordinate with school libraries to carry out grant activities, such as book distributions, childhood literacy activities, or both, for the proposed project.	Not applicable
<i>Absolute Priority 2</i>	<i>Returning Education to the States</i>	Yes	Projects or proposals that will be carried out by entities identified, designated, or endorsed by a Governor or chief State education official for purposes of implementing the project or proposal.	Not Applicable
<i>Competitive Preference Priority 1</i>	<i>Rural Applicants</i>	No	The applicant proposes to serve a community that is served by one or more LEAs with a locale code of 32, 33, 41, 42, or 43. <i>Note:</i> Applicants are encouraged to retrieve locale codes from the National Center for Education Statistics <a href="#">School District search tool</a> , where LEAs can be looked up individually to retrieve locale codes.	0 or 5 points
<i>Competitive Preference Priority 2</i>	<i>Meaningful Learning Opportunities for Students</i>	No	Projects or proposals that are designed to do one or more of the following: (a) Expand high-quality interventions or accelerated learning supports for students based on strong, moderate, or promising	Up to 10 points

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	Required	Priority Language	Points
			<p>evidence (as defined in <a href="#">34 CFR 77.1</a>) aimed at improving student outcomes through one or more of the following priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Providing remedial or accelerated learning opportunities focused on individualized, differentiated, and scaffolded supports for students to access grade-level (or above grade-level) content; or</li> <li>(ii) Implementing, expanding, or scaling high-impact tutoring programs that occur during the regular school day, are aligned with practices to accelerate student learning in literacy and mathematics, and which include innovative delivery models or approaches, that may include outcomes-based contracting, artificial intelligence (AI), technology-enabled</li> </ul>	

Priority Type	Priority Title	Required	Priority Language	Points
			<p>platforms, or strategic partnerships and staffing.</p> <p>(b) Support families in providing meaningful at-home learning, which could include providing resources, educational materials, and access to learning platforms to support student learning needs.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> While Competitive Preference Priority 2(a)(ii) references mathematics, the IAL program’s primary focus is to support high-quality programs designed to develop and improve literacy skills and promote innovative literacy programs that support the development of literacy skills in low-income communities.</p>	

## Selection Criteria

Selection criteria outline how the application will be scored. The maximum possible total score an application can receive for addressing the criteria is 100 points. The maximum possible score for addressing each criterion is indicated in parentheses following the criterion. A scoring rubric will be provided as a suggested guideline to assist peer reviewers during the application review process.

The selection criteria for this competition are from [34 CFR 75.210](#).

- (a) *Need for the project (up to 10 points):* The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:
- (i) The data presented (including a comparison to local, State, regional, national, or international data) that demonstrates the issue, challenge, or opportunity to be addressed by the proposed project. (5 points)

- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project will provide support, resources, or services; or otherwise address the needs of the target population, including addressing the needs of underserved populations most affected by the issue, challenge, or opportunity, to be addressed by the proposed project and close gaps in educational opportunity. (5 points)

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Missing
9-10	7-8	5-6	3-4	1-2	0

*(b) Quality of the project design (up to 50 points):* The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (10 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (10 points)
- (iii) The extent to which the proposed project proposes specific, measurable targets, connected to strategies, activities, resources, outputs, and outcomes, and uses reliable administrative data to measure progress and inform continuous improvement. (10 points)
- (iv) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards and increased social, emotional, and educational development for students, including members of underserved populations. (10 points)
- (v) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes. (10 points)

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Missing
41-50	31-40	21-30	11-20	1-10	0

*(c) Quality of the management plan (Up to 40 points):* The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (15 points)
- (ii) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality and accessible products and services from the proposed project for the target population. (15 points)
- (iii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project. (10 points)

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Missing
34-40	26-33	18-25	9-17	1-8	0

## Performance Measures

For the purposes of ED reporting under [34 CFR 75.110](#), ED has established a set of performance measures.

Applications must describe:

The data collection and reporting methods the applicant would use and why those methods are likely to yield reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data.

The applicant's capacity to collect and report reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data, as evidenced by high-quality data collection, analysis, and reporting in other projects or research.

Program Measure	Description
Program Performance Measure 1	The percentage of fourth graders participating in the project who demonstrated individual student growth ( <i>i.e.</i> , an improvement in their achievement) over the past year on State reading or language arts assessments under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.
Program Performance Measure 2	The percentage of eighth graders participating in the project who demonstrated individual student growth ( <i>i.e.</i> , an improvement in their achievement) over the past year on State reading or language arts assessments under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.
Program Performance Measure 3	The percentage of schools participating in the project whose book-to-student ratios increase from the previous year.

Program Measure	Description
Program Performance Measure 4	The percentage of participating children who receive at least one free, grade- and language-appropriate book of their own.

All grantees will be expected to submit an annual performance report that includes data addressing these performance measures to the extent that they apply to the grantee’s project.

## Application Submission Information

### Pre-Application Webinar

ED will hold a pre-application meeting via webinar for prospective applicants. For information about the pre-application webinar, visit the [IAL website](#).

### Registration

To apply, you must first be registered in two systems: [SAM.gov](#) and [Grants.gov](#). If you are already registered, make sure your registration is active and up to date.

Grants.gov registration involves several steps, including registration on [SAM.gov](#) which may take approximately one week to complete, but could take upwards of several weeks to complete, depending upon the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM database by an applicant. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot apply until all registration steps are complete. Once your SAM registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to become available in Grants.gov. For detailed information on the registration steps, please go to [Grants.gov Applicant Registration](#). Please note that your organization will need to update its SAM registration annually.

#### **SAM.gov**

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. **Begin that process early.**

To register, go to [SAM.gov](#) and click on "[Get Started](#)."

Click on the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for the information you will need to register in SAM.gov.

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

## **Grants.gov**

You must also have an active account with Grants.gov.

To register, go to [Grants.gov](#) and click “[Register](#).” When ready, click on “[Get Registered Now](#)” and complete the required fields.

For more information or assistance, click on “[Applicant Registration Page](#).”

ED strongly recommends that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded. If Grants.gov rejects your application, you will need to resubmit successfully to Grants.gov before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date.

You must provide the Unique-Entity ID (UEI) on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This UEI is assigned to your organization in SAM at the time your organization registers in SAM. If you do not enter the UEI assigned by SAM on your application, Grants.gov will reject your application.

A Grants.gov applicant must apply online using Workspace, a shared environment in Grants.gov where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. The Grants.gov website contains [further instructions on how to apply](#).

### **Intergovernmental Review**

This is subject to Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of Executive Order 12372 is to strengthen federalism – or the distribution of responsibility between localities, States, and the Federal government – by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This idea includes supporting processes that State or local governments have developed to coordinate, and review proposed Federal financial grant applications. Grant applicants need to contact State Single Points of Contact (SPOC) for information on their State’s procedures. Multi-State applicants should follow procedures specific to each state. Further information about the [SPOC List and the official list of entities](#) can be found online.

### **Verify Submission**

Verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time and that it was validated successfully. To see the date/time your application was received, log in to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on the deadline date, and the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.

If the date/time received is later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date, your application is late. If your application has a status of “Received,” it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to “Validated” or “Rejected with Errors.” If the status is “Rejected with Errors,” your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the [Encountering Error Messages](#) webpage at Grants.gov.

For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the [Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet](#). If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below. *Note:* You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

### **Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov**

Please go to the [Grants.gov Support Center](#) for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov [Applicant FAQs](#) as well as [additional information on Workspace](#).

### **Submission Problems – What should you do?**

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or via email at: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov). You may also access the [Grants.gov Self- Service Knowledge Base web portal](#).

## **Application Review Information**

*Review and Selection Process:* We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under [34 CFR 75.217](#), information outside the rank order of applications, including the information in each application; and any other information—

- (a) Relevant to a criterion, priority, or other requirement that applies to the selection of applications for new grants;
- (b) Concerning the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous award under any ED program; and
- (c) Concerning the applicant's failure under any ED program to submit a performance report or its submission of a performance report of unacceptable quality.

Before making awards, ED staff will screen applications submitted in accordance with the requirements in this notice to determine whether applications have met eligibility and other requirements, including whether an application may fail to meet the “Terms and Conditions” applicable to awarded funds referenced elsewhere within this notice. This screening process may occur at various stages of the review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive a grant, regardless of whether the application was included in the peer review process. Applications not selected for funding will be informed of the Secretary's decision in accordance with [34 CFR 75.218](#).

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from ED ([34 CFR 100.4](#), [104.5](#), [106.4](#), [108.8](#), and [110.23](#)).

## Definitions

The definitions of “continuous improvement,” “demonstrates a rationale,” “experimental study,” “logic model,” “moderate evidence,” “project component,” “promising evidence,” “quality data,” “quasi-experimental design study,” “relevant outcome,” “strong evidence,” and “What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks” are from [34 CFR 77.1](#). The definition of “eligible national nonprofit organization” is from section 2226(b)(2) of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 6646\(b\)\(2\)](#)). The definition of “local educational agency” is from section 8101(30) of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 7801\(30\)](#)).

*Continuous improvement* means using plans for collecting and analyzing data about a project component's implementation and outcomes (including the pace and extent to which project outcomes are being met) to inform necessary changes throughout the project. These plans may include strategies to gather ongoing feedback from participants and stakeholders on the implementation of the project component.

*Eligible national nonprofit organization (NNP)* means an organization of national scope that—

- (a) Is supported by staff, which may include volunteers, or affiliates at the State and local levels; and
- (b) Demonstrates effectiveness or high-quality plans for addressing childhood literacy activities for the population targeted by the grant.

*Note:* A local affiliate of an NNP organization does not meet the definition of NNP organization. Only a national agency, organization, or institution is eligible to apply as an NNP organization.

*Experimental study* means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups of individuals (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving a project component or a control group that does not. Randomized controlled trials, regression discontinuity design studies, and single-case design studies are the specific types of experimental studies that, depending on their design and implementation (e.g., sample attrition in randomized controlled trials and regression discontinuity design studies), can meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservations as described in the WWC Handbooks:

- (a) A randomized controlled trial employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to receive the project component being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the project component (the control group).
- (b) A regression discontinuity design study assigns the project component being evaluated using a measured variable (e.g., assigning students reading below a cutoff score to tutoring or developmental education classes) and controls for that variable in the analysis of outcomes.
- (c) A single-case design study uses observations of a single case (e.g., a student eligible for a behavioral intervention) over time in the absence and presence of a controlled treatment manipulation to determine whether the outcome is systematically related to the treatment.

*Local educational agency:*

- (a) In general—The term local educational agency means a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.
- (b) Administrative Control and Direction—The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school.

- (c) Bureau of Indian Education Schools—The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education but only to the extent that including the school makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of the LEA receiving assistance under this Act with the smallest student population, except that the school shall not be subject to the jurisdiction of any State educational agency (SEA) other than the Bureau of Indian Education.
- (d) Educational Service Agencies—The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies.
- (e) State Educational Agency (SEA)—The term includes the SEA in a State in which the SEA is the sole educational agency for all public schools.

*Moderate evidence* means evidence of effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive that component, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

- (a) A practice guide prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, 4.1, or 5.0 of the WWC Handbooks reporting “strong evidence” or “moderate evidence” for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;
- (b) An intervention report prepared by the WWC using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, 4.1, or 5.0 of the WWC Handbooks reporting “Tier 1 strong evidence” of effectiveness or “Tier 2 moderate evidence” of effectiveness or a “positive effect” on a relevant outcome based on a sample including at least 20 students or other individuals from more than one site (such as a State, county, city, local educational agency (LEA), school, or postsecondary campus), or a “potentially positive effect” on a relevant outcome based on a sample including at least 350 students or other individuals from more than one site (such as a State, county, city, LEA, school, or postsecondary campus), with no reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or
- (c) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC most recently using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, 4.1, or 5.0 of the WWC Handbooks, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 5.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that—
  - (i) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;
  - (ii) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

- (iii) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, 4.1, or 5.0 of the WWC Handbooks; and
- (iv) Is based on a sample from more than one site (such as a State, county, city, LEA, school, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet the requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A) through (C) of this definition may together satisfy the requirement in this paragraph (iii)(D).

*Promising evidence* means evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following:

- (a) A practice guide prepared by the WWC reporting “strong evidence”, “moderate evidence”, or “promising evidence” for the corresponding practice guide recommendation;
- (b) An intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting “Tier 1 strong evidence” of effectiveness, or “Tier 2 moderate evidence” of effectiveness, or “Tier 3 promising evidence” of effectiveness, or a “positive effect,” or “potentially positive effect” on a relevant outcome, with no reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or
- (c) A single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that—
  - (i) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (such as a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group);
  - (ii) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome; and
  - (iii) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report.

*Project component* means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

*Quality data* encompasses utility, objectivity, and integrity of the information. “Utility” refers to how the data will be used, either for its intended use or other uses. “Objectivity” refers to

data being accurate, complete, reliable, and unbiased. “Integrity” refers to the protection of data from being manipulated.

*Quasi-experimental design study* means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations, but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbooks.

*Relevant outcome* means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program.

What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Handbooks (WWC Handbooks) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 5.0, or in the WWC Standards Handbook, Version 4.0 or 4.1, or in the WWC Procedures Handbook, Version 4.0 or 4.1, the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 (all incorporated by reference; see [§ 77.2](#)). Study findings eligible for review under WWC standards can meet WWC standards without reservations, meet WWC standards with reservations, or not meet WWC standards. WWC practice guides and intervention reports include findings from systematic reviews of evidence as described in the WWC Handbooks documentation.

## Award Requirements

### Terms and Conditions

If you are awarded a grant under this competition, you must ensure and may be required to demonstrate that federal funds will not be used under this project in any manner that violates the United States Constitution, Title VI or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ([42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.](#) or [42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.](#)), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ([20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.](#)), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act ([29 U.S.C. 794](#)), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 ([42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.](#)), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ([42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.](#)), the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2001 ([20 U.S.C. 7905](#)), section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended ([20 U.S.C. 1011f](#)), or other applicable federal law. To the extent that a grantee uses grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED may take appropriate enforcement action including the potential recovery of funds or may pursue termination or non-continuation. The Grant Award Notification document accompanying your award may contain further

terms and conditions, as necessary, to ensure grantee compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative priorities.

Please note the provisions of Executive Orders 14151, 14168, 14173, and 14190 as well as the U.S. Department of Justice’s July 29, 2025, non-regulatory “[Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination](#),” which clarifies the application of federal antidiscrimination laws to programs or initiatives that may involve discriminatory practices, including those labeled as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (“DEI”) programs.

Such activities may risk violating federal civil rights laws and may jeopardize federal funding. This includes any discriminatory equity ideology in violation of a Federal anti-discrimination law. A definition of “discriminatory equity ideology” is contained in Section 2(b) of Executive Order 14190. To the extent that any entity receiving grant funds under this grant uses those grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED reserves the right to take appropriate enforcement actions, including the recovery of grant funds or may pursue termination or non-continuation.

### **Applicable Regulations**

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The IAL NFP. (e) The 2025 Supplemental Priorities. (f) The Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priority.

*Note:* The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

### **Continuation Awards**

In making a continuation award under [34 CFR 75.253](#), ED considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; if ED has established performance measurement requirements; whether the grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the performance targets in the grantee's approved application; or whether the continuation of the project is in the best interest of the Federal Government.

In making a continuation award, ED also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to

Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department ([34 CFR 100.4](#), [104.5](#), [106.4](#), [108.8](#), and [110.23](#)). In making any continuation award determination, ED may consider all relevant information.

## Application Checklist

The application will require you to fill out several forms, which are listed and linked in grants.gov. See below for a description of forms and sections:

### 1. Standard Documents

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- ED Supplemental Information for SF-424
- ED Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information

### 2. Budget Information

- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)

### 3. Abstract Form

- Project Abstract

### 4. Project Narrative

- Application Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form)

### 5. Budget Narrative

- Budget Narrative Attachment Form

### 6. Other Attachment Forms

- Individual Resumes for Project Director & Key Personnel
- Documentation of Nonprofit Status (if applicable)
- Certification of LEA Eligibility

### 7. Assurances and Certifications

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form LLL)
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form

### Part 1: Standard Documents

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- ED Supplemental Information for SF-424

These forms require basic identifying information about the applicant and the application. Please provide all requested applicant information (including name, address, e-mail address and UEI). **When applying electronically via Grants.gov, you will need to ensure that the UEI on your application is the same as the UEI your organization used when it registered with the System for Award Management.**

Applicants are advised to complete the Application for Federal Assistance (Form SF-424) first. Grants.gov will automatically insert the correct Assistance Listing Number and program name automatically wherever needed on other forms.

Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the Standard Form (SF-424). Although this form accepts attachments, ED will only review materials/files attached in accordance with the instructions provided within this application.

## **Part 2: Budget Information**

### Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)

The SF-424A Budget Information Form is required. This part of your application contains information about the Federal funding you are requesting. The form requires high level, total funding requests for each year of the project, but only requires detailed information for Year 1 of the project. You will provide information on all years of the project, including an itemized budget breakdown for each year of the proposed project, in your Budget Narrative. Specific instructions for completing the Budget Narrative are provided within this application notice and instructions under Budget Narrative. Budget Narrative attachments are not included in the page count.

### ***Instructions for completing SF-424A:***

The SF-424A has six sections (A-F). While the form includes several sections and boxes, please use the information below to complete only the necessary sections.

### **Section A – Budget Summary**

- *Section A-Budget Summary:* Enter the name of the grant program for which you are requesting funds in 1(a).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(b): Enter the Assistance Listing Number (84.215G).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(e) “Federal”: Include the total amount requested for the entire performance period. The amount you enter here will auto populate in 5 (e).

- *Section A-Budget Summary: 1(f) “Non-Federal”*: Only include an amount in this section if you propose to include non-Federal financial resources as part of this project, including any non-Federal funds to meet any program cost sharing requirements. If not including non-Federal financial resources, leave this blank or include 0.
- *Section A-Budget Summary: 1(g)*: If using Grants.gov form, the total amount included here will be auto-calculated based on what is included in 1(e ) and 1(f).

## **Section B – Budget Categories**

### Section B-Budget Categories:

- *Line 6. Object Class Categories*: The categories listed here (a-k) are the categories you will need to further describe in the Budget Narrative. For this section, only include the total amount by category for Year 1 of the project. You will provide a breakdown by category for each year of the project in the Budget Narrative. If using Grants.gov, line 6 column (1) will be auto-populated with the name of the program for which you are requesting funding.
  - *Personnel (line 6a.)*: Enter project personnel salaries and wages only. Include fees and expenses for consultants on line 6f or 6h.
  - *Fringe Benefits (line 6b)*: The organization’s normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.
  - *Travel (line 6c)*: Indicate the travel costs of employees and participants only. Include travel of persons such as consultants on line 6f or 6h.
  - *Equipment (line 6d)*: Indicate the cost of tangible, non-expendable personal property that has a usefulness greater than one year and acquisition costs that are the lesser of the capitalization level established by the applicant entity for financial statement purposes or \$10,000 per article. Lower limits may be established to maintain consistency with the applicant’s policy.
  - *Supplies (line 6e)*: Show all tangible, expendable personal property. Direct supplies and materials differ from equipment in that they are consumable, expendable, and of a relatively low unit cost. Supplies

purchased with grant funds should directly benefit the grant project and be necessary for achieving the goals of the project.

- *Contractual (line 6f)*: The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant's services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.
  - *Construction (line 6g)*: Construction funds are not authorized, unless specified by the program. If construction is allowable, include the amount request for construction costs.
  - *Other (line 6h)*: Indicate all direct costs not covered on lines 1-6. For example, include costs such as space rental, required fees, honoraria and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. If applicable, include stipends under other. If stipends are included under other, do not include stipends when calculating the indirect cost. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.
  - *Total Direct Costs (line 6i)*: The sum of lines 6a-6h. If using Grants.gov, this number is auto-calculated.
  - *Indirect Costs (line 6j)*: Indicate the applicant's approved indirect cost rate, per [34 CFR 75.560 - 75.564](#). If an applicant does not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement with a cognizant Federal agency, the applicant must apply to ED for a temporary indirect cost rate if it wishes to charge indirect costs to the grant. For more information, go to [ED's website](#). In addition, a grantee, if it is eligible, may also use de minimis rate as provided for under [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).
  - *Total Cost (line 6i and 6j)*: This number should be equal to sum of lines 6i-6j (total of direct costs + indirect costs). If using Grants.gov, this number is auto-calculated. The sum for column one, labeled Project Year 6 (1), should also be equal to item 15a on the application cover sheet (SF Form 424).
- *Line 7. Program Income*: You may leave this field blank.

## **Section C – Non-Federal Resources**

This section should only be completed if you are proposing a cost share or if the program for which you are applying requires a Non-Federal cost share. If the program includes a cost share, provide a breakdown by including the dollars that will come from the applicant, State, and other sources, as applicable.

#### **Section D – Forecasted Cash Needs**

- *Line 13. Federal:* The total for 1st Year column will automatically calculate based on the funding amounts included in Quarters 1-4. These quarters apply to **Year One ONLY**. Enter the forecasted cash needs from Federal sources for each quarter of the first program year. The amount entered for each quarter will be used to auto-calculate the amount in line 15 and is your forecasted needs. You will have an opportunity to provide updates to these quarterly amounts in post-award.
- *Line 14. Non-Federal:* The total for 1st year column will automatically calculate based on the funding amounts included in Quarters 1-4. These quarters apply to **Year One ONLY. Leave this blank for each quarter if you are not including any Non-Federal Funds.** If including non-Federal funds, enter the forecasted cash needs from non-Federal sources for the first quarter of the first program year. If not applicable, leave blank.
- *Line 15. (sum of lines 13 and 14):* If using Grants.gov, the total is auto-calculated.

#### **Section E – Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project**

This section collects information for future funding periods. While the columns are labeled First (b) through Fourth (e), this is the section where you will include the **total** amount of Federal funds requested for Years 2-5, for five-year projects. You are only including the **total** amount of Federal funds requested for the outyears beyond Year 1. The total amount in Section D. line 13 plus the total amount in the outyears should match the project total requested in Section A line 5 (e).

- *Line 16 Column (a) Grant Program:* If using Grants.gov, this box will be auto-populated with the name of the program you included in Section A Line 1.
- *Line 16 Column (b) First:* Include the total amount requested for the first outyear. **Year 2 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.
- *Line 16 Column (c) Second:* Include the total amount requested for the second outyear. **Year 3 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.

- *Line 16 Column (d) Third:* Include the total amount requested for the third outyear. **Year 4 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.
- *Line 16 Column (e) Fourth:* Include the total amount requested for the fourth outyear. **Year 5 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.

## **Section F – Other Budget Information**

- *Line 21. Direct Charges:* You may leave this field blank.
- *Line 22. Indirect Charges:* Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) or 15% de minimis rate that will be in effect during the funding period, the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense.
- *Line 23. Remarks:* You may leave this field blank.

## **Part 3: Abstract Form**

The project abstract should not exceed two double spaced pages and should include a concise description of the following information:

- Project objectives and activities
- Absolute Priority (Absolute Priority 1 and Absolute Priority 2)
- Applicable competitive preference priorities
- Proposed project outcomes
- Proposed project partners, if applicable

Ensure that you only attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#).

## **Part 4: Project Narrative**

This section should be attached as a single document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form and should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process.

Ensure that you only attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#). When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application.

### **Table of Contents**

The Table of Contents shows where and how the important sections of your proposal are organized and should not exceed one double-spaced page.

## ❑ **Application Narrative**

ED encourages applicants to limit this section of the application to the equivalent of no more than 25 pages. The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the one- abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, logic model, or the letters of support. However, the recommended page limit does apply to the **Project Narrative**.

### **Part 5: Budget Narrative**

This section should be attached as a single document to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form. It should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process. Ensure that you attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#).

Each application must also provide a Budget Narrative for requested Federal funds. The Budget Narrative for requested Federal funds should provide a justification of how the money requested for each budget item will be spent, and the total amounts for each project year should match the total amounts in Section E – Budget Estimates of Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project in SF-424A.

This section requires an itemized budget breakdown for each project year and the basis for estimating the costs of personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs and any other projected expenditures. Be sure to complete an itemized budget breakdown and narrative for each year of the proposed project. Below is a breakdown of the categories to be included in the Budget Narrative for each project year:

- *Personnel*: List all staff positions by title including roles and responsibilities. For each position give the annual salary, the percentage of time devoted to the project, and the amount of each position's salary funded by the grant.
- *Fringe Benefits*: The institution's normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.
- *Travel*: For grantee staff only, specify the purpose, number of staff traveling, mileage, per diem, estimated number of in-state and out-of-state trips, and other estimated costs for each type of travel.
- *Equipment*: Identify each item of equipment you expect to purchase that has an estimated acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more per unit (or if your capitalization level is less than \$10,000, use your capitalization level) and a useful lifetime of more than one year (see [2 CFR Part 200.1](#) for the definition of Equipment). List the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item.

- *Supplies*: Identify the cost of supplies (e.g., general office supplies, desk/chairs, laptops/printers, other specialty items) in the detailed budget per category. Except for general office supplies, list the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. Supplies include all tangible personal property other than “equipment” (see [2 CFR Part 200.1](#) for the definition of Supplies). Items with a unit cost of less than \$10,000 are supplies, not “equipment.”
- *Contractual*: The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant’s services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.
- *Construction*: Construction funds are not authorized.
- *Other*: Indicate all direct costs not covered elsewhere. For example, include such costs as space rental, required fees, honoraria and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. List items, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.
- *Indirect Costs*: Indicate the applicant’s approved indirect cost rate, per sections [34 CFR 75.560 - 75.564](#). If an applicant does not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement with a cognizant Federal agency, the applicant must apply to ED for a temporary indirect cost rate if it wishes to charge indirect costs to the grant. For more information, go to [ED’s website](#). In addition, a grantee, if it is eligible, may also use de minimis rate as provided for under 2 CFR 200.414(f).
- *Total Cost*: This number should be total direct costs + indirect costs.

The Budget Narrative provides an opportunity for the applicant to identify the nature and amount of the proposed expenditures. The applicant should provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers and project staff to understand how requested funds will be used, how much will be expended, and the relationship between the requested funds and project activities and outcomes.

In accordance with [34 CFR 75.232](#), ED staff perform a cost analysis of each recommended project to ensure that costs relate to the activities and objectives of the project, are reasonable, allowable and allocable. ED may delete or reduce costs from the budget during this review.

*Note*: Applicants are encouraged to review the Cost Principles described in [2 CFR part 200 subpart E](#) of the Guidance for Federal Financial Assistance.

## **Part 6: Other Attachment Forms**

Attach one or more documents to the Other Attachments. You may provide all of the required information in a single document, or in multiple documents.

Ensure that you only attach the approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#).

Suggested order:

- Documentation and Certification of LEA Eligibility
  - Provide the most recent data from [U.S. Census Bureau's SAIPE website](#) for all applicable LEAs as evidence that the LEA(s) applying for the IAL grant meet the statutory requirement that to be an eligible LEA, 20 percent or more of families served by the LEA must be from families below the poverty line.
  - Please include calculations with your data. For example: “estimated number of relevant children 5 to 17 years old in poverty who are related to the householder” DIVIDED by “estimated population aged 5-17”.
  - For LEAs that do not have SAIPE data available and are not located on the [U.S. Census Bureau's SAIPE website](#), such as Charter Schools, provide a letter from the SEA certifying that 20 percent or more of the students aged 5-17 in the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line based on the same State-derived poverty data the SEA used to determine the LEA’s allocation under part A of title I of the ESEA.
- Documentation of Non-Profit Status (if applicable)
  - Under [34 CFR 75.51](#), nonprofit organizations must demonstrate status by providing: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.
- Reference List
- Appendix A
- Resumes/Vitae
- Letters
- Supplementary Information

- Other Appendices

## **Part 7: Assurances and Certifications**

Be certain to complete all required assurances and certifications and include all required information in the appropriate place on each form. The assurances and certifications required for this application are:

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**
- Grants.Gov Lobbying Form – “Certification Regarding Lobbying”**

*Note:* While it is required to submit the lobbying form that best meets an applicants’ situation, the two forms are classified as “optional” in Grants.gov to avoid submission errors when only one of the lobbying form is submitted.

## **Attaching Files – Additional Tips**

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application:

- When you submit your application electronically, you must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in Portable Document Format (PDF). ED recommends applicants submit all documents as read-only flattened PDFs, meaning any fillable PDF files must be saved and submitted as non-fillable PDF files and not as interactive or fillable PDF files, to better ensure applications are processed in a more timely, accurate, and efficient manner.
- Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.
- When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded file names must be fewer than 50 characters, and, in general, applicants should not use any special characters. However, Grants.gov does allow for the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to review.
- Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can result in difficulties opening the files. For reference, the average discretionary grant application package with all attachments is less than 5 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.