FY 2026 Ready to Learn Programming

INFORMATIONAL MATERIAL FOR APPLICANTS

Ready to Learn General Information

- These slides are intended as information only. Please refer to the official Application Notice and Instruction (ANI) and the Application Package in Grants.gov.

- A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document is available on the RTL website: https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/innovation-early-learning/ready-to-learn-television-rtl/

- The FAQ document addresses questions that applicants have asked previously. The Department of Education (ED) may update it throughout the competition with questions that applicants submit that are of general applicability.

- ED is unable to address applicant-specific questions at any time during the competition. But you can ask follow-up questions about the ANI at Readytolearn@ed.gov

General Purpose/History

RTL launched in 1995. It was authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and then reauthorized by Title IV of the ESEA in 2015.

The purpose of Ready to Learn Programming (Ready to Learn) is to promote school readiness through the development and dissemination of accessible instructional television and digital media programming for preschool and elementary school children and their families.

Grants are typically awarded in five-year cycles; the FY 2026 competition will be the first competition for new awards since 2020.

What's New This Year?

This is the second competition under a revised authorizing statute:https://oese.ed.gov/subpart-4-ready-to-learn-television/

A new program name was established in the authorizing statute: Ready to Learn Programming (instead of Ready to Learn Television)

Three new priorities: one invitational priority on literacy-based education, one competitive priority on meaningful learning opportunities, and one competitive priority on new potential grantees, each with special emphases:

- Focus on evidence-based literacy instruction;
- Focus on educational materials and access to learning platforms to support student learning needs
- Focus on novice applicants.

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Ready to Learn Grant Awards

- **Type of Award**: Cooperative Agreements to Eligible Public Telecommunications Entities
- **Estimated Available Funds**: $31,000,000 for FY 2026.
- **Estimated Range of Awards**: $6,000,000-$12,000,000 for the first year of the project. Funding for the second, third, fourth, and fifth years is subject to availability of funds and the approval of continuation awards (see 34 CFR 75.253).
- **Estimated Average Size of Awards**: $9,000,000 for the first year of the project; $45,000,000 over five years.
- **Estimated Number of Awards**: 1-3
- **Project Period**: Up to 60 months, project start date of October 1, 2026

Note: ED is not bound by any of the estimates presented here (all of which are quoted from the ANI).

What is a Cooperative Agreement?

If you receive an award, you will be asked to sign a Cooperative Agreement.

A cooperative agreement is a type of grant distinguished from other grants in that it provides for substantial involvement between ED and the grant recipient in carrying out the activity contemplated by the award.

The Cooperative Agreement will establish some additional expectations for reporting, communication, the federal program officer's role, and grants management.

Eligibility

Under section 4643 of the ESEA, to receive a cooperative agreement under this competition, an entity must be a **public telecommunications entity** that is able to demonstrate--

(a) A capacity for the development and national distribution of educational and instructional television programming of high quality that is accessible by a large majority of disadvantaged preschool and elementary school children;

(b) A capacity to contract with the producers of children's television programming for the purpose of developing educational television programming of high quality;

(c) A capacity, consistent with the entity's mission and nonprofit nature, to negotiate such contracts in a manner that returns to the entity an appropriate share of any ancillary income from sales of any program-related products; and

(d) A capacity to localize programming and materials to meet specific State and local needs and to provide educational outreach at the local level.

Definition of Public Telecommunications Entity

Public telecommunications entity means any enterprise which (a) is a public broadcast station or a noncommercial telecommunications entity; and (b) disseminates public telecommunications services to the public.

Demonstrating Eligibility in Your Application

In Appendix A of your grant application (see the application package), you should include evidence demonstrating that—

- The legal applicant meets both parts (a) and (b) of the definition of "public telecommunications entity"; and
- The legal applicant has each of the 4 capacities mentioned in the statute.

We do not recommend any specific way of demonstrating each of these eligibility requirements. How you do so is up to you.

Consortia Applications

If two or more public telecommunications entities wish to form a consortium and jointly submit a single application, they must follow the procedures for group applications described in 34 CFR 75.127 through 75.129.

Organizations **Not** Eligible to Apply to RTL

- A school, a school district (LEA), or pre-school provider
- A university or college (unless the university or college owns and operates a public TV station that meets the eligibility criteria)
- An independent TV or digital media producer
- A for-profit broadcast or media company
- A non-profit organization that does not meet the definition of public telecommunications entity

Note: non-eligible entities may be able to participate in a Ready to Learn application by partnering with an eligible applicant or by serving as a contractor or vendor.

Notice of Intent to Apply

Please submit a notice of intent to apply by sending an email to Readytolearn@ed.gov

- Include name of public telecommunications entity
- Include invitational priority to be addressed and subject matter focus of the proposed project (i.e. literacy, math, etc.)
- Please identify any major partners

Applicants may also fill out a brief letter of intent to apply form on the Ready to Learn website at: https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/innovation-early-learning/ready-to-learn-television-rtl/fy-2020-ready-learn-grant-competition/

Applicants that do not provide this email notification or fill out the form may still apply for funding.

Deadline for notice of intent to apply: June 8, 2026

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Television and Digital Media Content

Nationwide Distribution via Public Television

Educational Programs and Outreach

Research on Effectiveness

Under section 4643 of the ESEA, awards made under Ready to Learn must be used to—

1) Develop, produce, and distribute educational and instructional video programming for preschool and elementary school children and their parents in order to facilitate student academic achievement;

2) Facilitate the development, directly or through contracts with producers of children and family educational television programming, of educational programming for preschool and elementary school children, and the accompanying support materials and services that promote the effective use of such programming;

3) Facilitate the development of programming and digital content containing Ready to Learn-based children's programming and resources for parents and caregivers that is specially designed for nationwide distribution over public television stations' digital broadcasting channels and the internet;

4) Contract with entities (such as public telecommunications entities) so that programming developed under this program is disseminated and distributed to the widest possible audience appropriate to be served by the programming, and through the use of the most appropriate distribution technologies; and

5) Develop and disseminate education and training materials, including interactive programs and programs adaptable to distance learning technologies, that are designed—

(i) To promote school readiness; and

(ii) To promote the effective use of materials developed under paragraphs (2) and (3) among parents, teachers, Head Start providers, providers of family literacy services, childcare providers, early childhood educators, elementary school teachers, public libraries, and after-school program personnel caring for preschool and elementary school children.

Background on Television and Digital Media Content

- Focus particularly on children in low-income homes who may be lacking in educationally rich learning opportunities, and engage parents, caregivers.
- Aim to create educational media of the highest quality that can compete with the best commercially produced media.
- Bring educators and media producers together in cooperative working relationships while also using the Federal investment to leverage additional non-federal contributions in funding, talent, and resources.

Background on Television and Digital Media Content (continued)

- Base the television and digital media products on developmentally appropriate curriculum frameworks that align with widely accepted learning standards.
- Aim to create new, interrelated combinations of television and interactive media in which characters, narrative story lines, and problem-solving are used to connect the various media products (transmedia).
- Find the right balance between innovation and access. Take advantage of new technologies and opportunities, but not at the expense of what is available in low-income homes and communities.

Nationwide Distribution via Public Television and the Internet

- Design television and digital media content for nationwide distribution over public television stations' digital broadcasting channels and the internet, but other means of distribution are possible as well.
- Partner with those broadcasters, streamers, game companies, publishers, or others that will be integral to ensuring that the media is available to the widest possible audience nationwide.

Educational Programs and Outreach

- Develop and implement educational outreach programs in local communities nationwide.
- Partner with both local and national organizations that promote wider use of the educational media materials in homes, daycare facilities, museums, libraries, and a variety of other informal learning and school-based settings.
- Create supplemental materials for teachers, parents, and caregivers or guardians to use in these settings.

Research on Effectiveness

- Use formative research during the media design and development process
- Use effectiveness research to determine whether the media products are helping young children to learn and improve their school readiness:
  - Enlist independent researchers to conduct at least one rigorous study of effectiveness of the media when used in either the home or informal learning settings
  - Meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards found in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in the ANI)
- Use data analytics to study which elements and design decisions are contributing to learning effectiveness and why.

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“60%” Funding Requirement

Under section 4643 of the ESEA, not less than 60 percent of the amount appropriated under the above statutory requirements for each fiscal year may be used to carry out activities under paragraphs (2) through (4).

Under section 4643 of the ESEA, awards made under Ready to Learn must be used to—

1) Develop, produce, and distribute educational and instructional video programming for preschool and elementary school children and their parents in order to facilitate student academic achievement;

2) Facilitate the development, directly or through contracts with producers of children and family educational television programming, of educational programming for preschool and elementary school children, and the accompanying support materials and services that promote the effective use of such programming;

3) Facilitate the development of programming and digital content containing Ready to Learn-based children’s programming and resources for parents and caregivers that is specially designed for nationwide distribution over public television stations’ digital broadcasting channels and the internet;

4) Contract with entities (such as public telecommunications entities) so that programming developed under this program is disseminated and distributed to the widest possible audience appropriate to be served by the programming, and through the use of the most appropriate distribution technologies; and

5) Develop and disseminate education and training materials, including interactive programs and programs adaptable to distance learning technologies, that are designed—

   (i) To promote school readiness; and

   (ii) To promote the effective use of materials developed under paragraphs (2) and (3) among parents, teachers, Head Start providers, providers of family literacy services, child care providers, early childhood educators, elementary school teachers, public libraries, and after-school program personnel caring for preschool and elementary school children.

5% Limit on Administrative Costs

Under section 4643 of the ESEA, an entity that receives a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this section may use up to 5 percent of the amount received under the grant, contract, or agreement for the normal and customary expenses of administering the grant, contract, or agreement.

This limit applies to the total of indirect costs and direct administrative costs claimed by the grantee. If your indirect cost agreement specifies separate rates for Facilities and Administration, then you can claim the full amount of indirect costs for Facilities without regard to the administrative cap.

Accessibility Requirement

Products produced by projects funded through this competition must be accessible both for purposes of complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and to ensure that the needs of all users, including those with disabilities, are addressed.

In meeting the requirement to reach the “widest possible audience” set out in section 4643(a)(1)(B)(iv) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), applicants are expected to include the accommodations needed to provide accessibility to individuals with disabilities.

The RTL notice does not create any new regulations or requirements that go beyond existing federal law on accessibility.

A Note on Accessibility

Although the television programming created under Ready to Learn has generally been made accessible to users who have hearing or vision loss through captioning and video description, it can be challenging to include appropriate accessibility features in digital media because of the rapid changes in technology.

In such cases, Ready to Learn grantees should aim to lead in the development of new approaches to promote accessibility.

This is necessary both for purposes of complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and to ensure that the needs of all users, including those with disabilities, are addressed.

Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule

The media produced using Ready to Learn funds must comply with 16 CFR part 312, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule, which protects children under the age of 13 from unfair or deceptive use of personal information. This rule can be found at:

www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=4939e77c77a1a1a08c1cbf905fc4b409&node=16%3A1.0.1.3.36&rgn=div5.

Coordination of Activities

COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES – An entity receiving a grant or cooperative agreement under this section shall consult with the Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Services—

- to maximize the use of high-quality educational programming by preschool and elementary school children, and make such programming widely available to Federally funded programs serving such populations; and
- to coordinate activities with Federal programs that have major training components for early childhood development, including programs under the Head Start Act.—An entity receiving a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this section shall consult with the Secretary and the Secretary of Health and Human Services— U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) and State training activities funded under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.), regarding the availability and utilization of materials developed under paragraph (1)(B)(v) to enhance parent and child care provider skills in early childhood development and education.

A Recommendation About Media Property Rights:

Prior to receiving a grant, the legal applicant (an eligible public telecommunications entity) is encouraged:

- To secure all necessary development and distribution rights to any media properties, characters, or other intellectual property that would be used in the grant project; and
- To have appropriate agreements in place with all partners (as necessary) to govern any current or future deal-making or revenue sharing.

These rights should extend the full length of the project period, including during any necessary project time extension. ED will not be party to these agreements.

Open Licensing Requirement

Note: The open licensing requirement in 2 CFR 3474.20 does not apply to the Ready to Learn program.

Cost Sharing/Matching

The Ready to Learn competition does not have a minimum cost sharing or matching requirement.

However, Ready to Learn does aim to use federal dollars to leverage shared contributions of funds or in-kind resources toward the development and distribution of television and digital media content.

If you receive a grant, you will be required to report each year on the non-federal contributions to the project (see GPRA measures below).

Subgrants

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

Funds can be distributed to partners and vendors through contracts that comply with the procurement regulations found in the Uniform Guidance:

https://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/uniform-guidance/index.html

GPRA Performance Measures

There are four Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) performance measures for Ready to Learn:

1) The number of children who use Ready to Learn produced educational media products, disaggregated by individual product, as determined by appropriate industry standard metrics or, when available, by tracking tools.
2) Dollars leveraged from non-Federal sources per Federal dollar dedicated to core non-outreach and non-research program activities.

(continued)

GPRA Performance Measures (continued)

3) The percentage of educational "transmedia products," along with necessary supporting materials, that are deemed to be of high quality in promoting learning by an independent panel of expert reviewers.

   Note: Expert panels will be convened in years three and five to review grantee-produced products. Applicants should include in their budget funds for two individuals in these years to spend two days in Washington, DC to attend these panel meetings and to demonstrate the identified products to reviewers.

4) The percentage of summative experimental or quasi-experimental research studies that demonstrate positive and statistically significant learning gains when Ready to Learn transmedia properties are compared to similar non-Ready to Learn-funded digital properties or to other more traditional educational materials.

   Note: Although this GPRA measure tracks the results of all of the experimental or quasi-experimental design studies produced under Ready to Learn, applicants should take note that, under the selection criteria, applications are evaluated on the extent to which they propose methods of evaluation that will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that meets What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as defined in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

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Competitive Preference Priority 1

The Secretary invites applications from eligible public telecommunications entities to create meaningful learning opportunities through educational television and digital media --

Specifically, projects or proposals that are designed to support families in providing meaningful at-home learning, which can include providing resources, educational materials, and access to learning platforms to support student learning needs.

Applicants are encouraged to use evidence –based research to determine the effectiveness of the media used in out-of-classroom settings to prepare children for success in school, and to help parents and educators understand the conditions and context in which it is effective.

Competitive Preference Priority 2

The Secretary invites applications from new potential grantees.

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant has never received a grant or cooperative agreement , including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with §§ 75.127 through 75.129 that received a grant or cooperative agreement, under the Ready to Learn program.

Invitational Priority

The Secretary invites applications from eligible public telecommunications entities to create evidence-based literacy instruction through educational television and digital media--

Specifically, projects or proposals that are designed to do one or more of the following:

(a) Advance, increase, or expand evidence-based literacy instruction (as defined in this notice), or

(b) Focus on evidence-based literacy instruction (as defined in this notice).

Applicants are encouraged to use evidence-based research to determine the effectiveness of the media used in out-of-classroom settings to prepare children for success in school, and to help parents and educators understand the conditions and context in which it is effective. Applicants may want to consult two What Works Clearinghouse Practice Guides as they prepare their applications, including *Preparing Young Children for School* and *Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten through 3rd Grade*.

Priorities

- There are no absolute priorities in this year's competition.
- Each of the two competitive priorities and one invitational priority is optional, and an applicant may address one, both, or neither of the priorities.
- If you do not address either of the priorities, you must still adhere to the general purposes and requirements of the authorizing statute.
- No additional points are awarded for addressing the invitational priority.
- Applications are scored against the selection criteria.

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Scoring

Selection Criterion	Points
A. Significance	10
B. Quality of the Project Design	40
C. Quality of the Management Plan	25
D. Quality of the Project Evaluation	25
Total	100

A. Significance (10 points)

The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to meeting program purposes and requirements and serving target population.

B. Quality of the Project Design (40 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, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program. (up to 5 points)

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project includes explicit plans for authentic, meaningful, and ongoing community members and partner engagement, including their involvement in planning, implementing, and revising project activities for underserved populations. (up to 5 points)

(iii) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes. (up to 5 points)

(iv) The likely utility of the resources (such as materials, processes, techniques, or data infrastructure) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for effective use in a variety of conditions, populations, or settings. (up to 5 points)

(v) The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls, continuous improvement efforts, and as appropriate, repeated testing of products. (up to 5 points)

(vi) The quality of the plan to deliver project services more efficiently at scale and maintain effectiveness. (up to 5 points)

(vii) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to meaningful improvements in early childhood and family outcomes. (up to 10 points)

Note: In responding to the Quality of project design selection criterion, an applicant should include a detailed description of its proposal to make materials widely available to communities and their members, as described in section 4643(a)(1)(B)(v), (a)(2) and (a)(4) of the ESEA, and to develop materials for national distribution, as described in section 4643(a)(1)(B)(iii) through (iv) of the ESEA.

C. Quality of the Management Plan (25 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 feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (up to 10 points)

(ii) The applicant's capacity (such as qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity), together with any project partners, to further develop and bring the proposed project effectively to scale on a national level during the grant period, based on the findings of the proposed project. (up to 10 points)

(iii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (up to 5 points)

D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (25 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers:

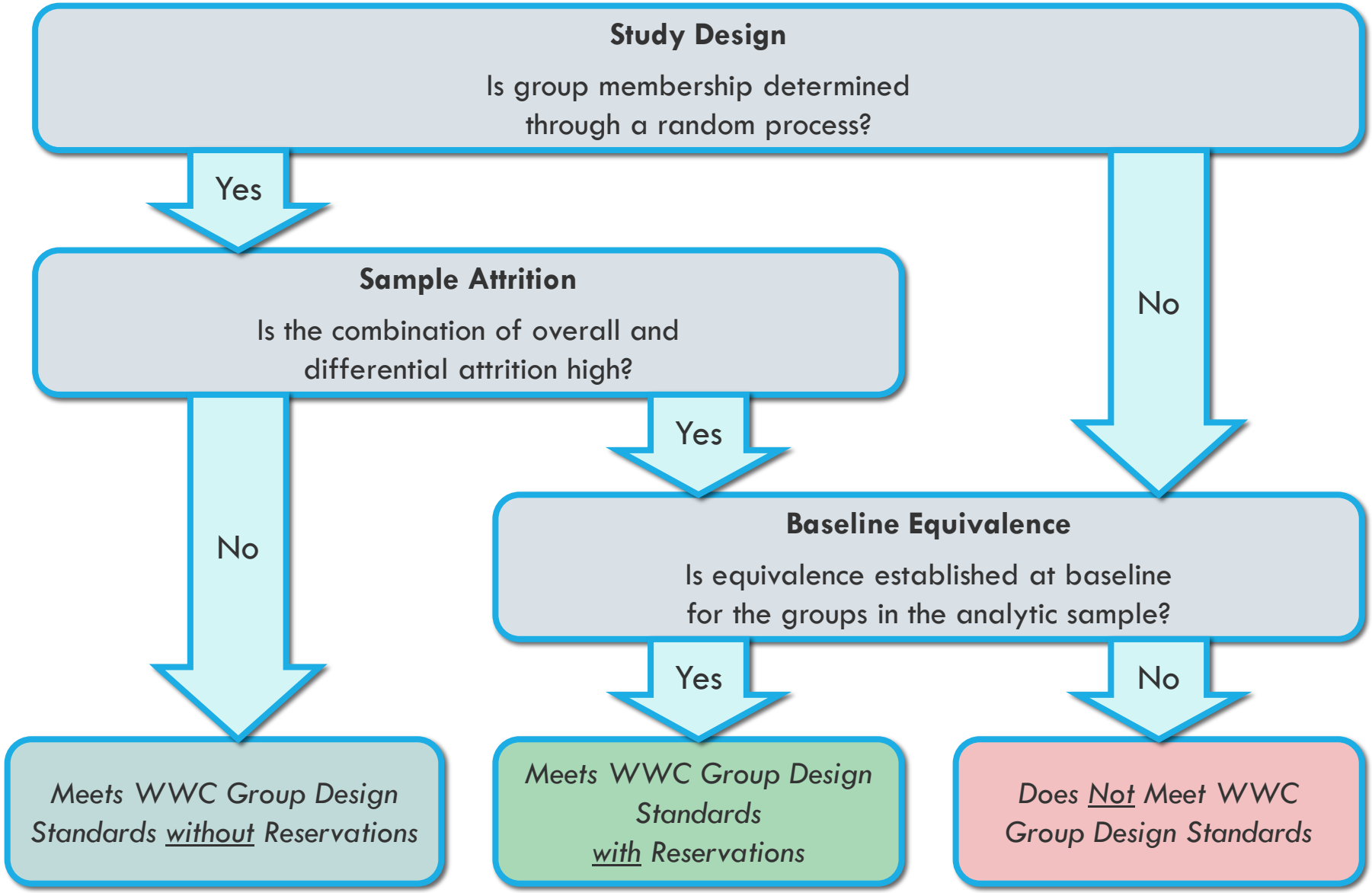
(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the effectiveness of the project on relevant outcomes that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks. (up to 10 points)

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building are appropriate to the context within which the project operates and the target population of the proposed project. (up to 5 points)

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building will provide guidance for quality assurance and continuous improvement. (5 points)

(iv) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a dissemination strategy that is likely to promote others' learning from the project. (up to 5 points)

Note: We encourage applicants to review the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook for technical assistance on evaluation.


Study Design
Is group membership determined through a random process?
Yes
No
Sample Attrition
Is the combination of overall and differential attrition high?
Yes
No
Baseline Equivalence
Is equivalence established at baseline for the groups in the analytic sample?
Yes
No
Meets WWC Group Design Standards without Reservations
Meets WWC Group Design Standards with Reservations
Does Not Meet WWC Group Design Standards

Experimental Study

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 Handbook:

(i) 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);

(ii) 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; and

(iii) 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.

Quasi-experimental Study

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 Handbook.

WWC Handbook

What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (WWC Handbook) means the standards and procedures set forth in the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 5.0 or Version 4.1 (incorporated by reference, see 34 CFR 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 Handbook documentation.

Note: The What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 5.0), as well as the January 2020 (Version 4.1) and October 2017 (Version 4.0), released What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks, the WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook, Version 3.0 or Version 2.1 are all available at https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Handbooks.

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Application Package

The application package includes the forms and specific instructions you will need to submit an application.

The application package may be found on the RTL website at: Ready to Learn Programming

You must submit your application electronically using grants.gov.

Application Requirements

Under section 4643 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), to be eligible to receive a cooperative agreement under Ready to Learn, an eligible entity must include in its application--

(1) A description of the activities to be carried out under this section;

(2) A list of the types of entities with which such entity will enter into contracts under section 4643(a)(1)(B)(iv) of the ESEA ;

(3) A description of the activities the entity will undertake widely to disseminate the content developed under this section; and

(4) A description of how the entity will comply with section 4643(a)(2) of the ESEA.

Application Requirements (continued)

Specific to Application Requirement #2 --

(2) A list of the types of entities with which such entity will enter into contracts under section 4643(a)(1)(B)(iv) of the ESEA

Refers to: (iv) contract with entities (such as public telecommunications entities) so that programming developed under this section is disseminated and distributed to the widest possible audience appropriate to be served by the programming, and through the use of the most appropriate distribution technologies.

Application Requirements (continued)

Specific to Application Requirement #4 --

4) A description of how the entity will comply with section 4643(a)(2) of the ESEA

Section 4643 (a)(2) refers to availability: In awarding or entering into grants, contracts, or cooperative agreements under this section, the Secretary shall ensure that eligible entities make programming widely available, with support materials as appropriate, to young children, parents, child care workers, Head Start providers, and providers of family literacy services to increase the effective use of such programming.

Uniform Guidance
Cost Principles and Audit Requirements

ED has streamlined the requirements for receiving and using federal awards. Information on this "Uniform Guidance" can be found in the FAQs and at this website: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/uniform-guidance/index.html

Some important differences from past regulations:

- The Cost Principles that outline allowable costs and were previously found in OMB Circulars A-21, A-122, and A-87 are now found in subpart E of 2 CFR Part 200, which applies to LEAs, IHEs, and NPOs.
- A-133 Audit Requirements now in subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200.

Budget and Budget Narrative

The budget narrative should be organized according to the categories used in the required budget form SF 424:

Salaries	Equipment	Other
Benefits	Supplies	Indirect
Travel	Contractual	Training Stipends

The budget narrative should provide line item detail for each of these categories

- Rates and quantities and time commitments should be specified
- You should break out the costs of large contracts using the categories from the SF 424 and provide line item detail
- You should identify which costs you consider administrative (as discussed earlier)

Include Budget/Budget Narrative for Non-Federal cost share using the same categories from the SF 424

Append your Indirect Cost Agreement (if you are requesting indirect costs)

Indirect Costs

It is acceptable to charge indirect costs based on your indirect cost rate agreement with the federal government.

Reminder: The administrative cost cap of 5% applies to both indirect costs (except for indirect costs specifically identified as facility indirect costs) and direct administrative costs.

Note: Contracts may include reasonable overhead as part of the costs of services provided, but these are not counted toward the administrative cap.

Applying Via Grants.gov

To apply for an RTL grant, go to the “Apply for Grants” link on the left hand side of the Grants.gov homepage.

Next, follow the step-by-step application instructions. The CFDA number you will enter for Step 1 is 84.295.

If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and keep a record of it. You can also contact them via email at support@grants.gov.

Registering in SAM.gov

In order to submit an application through Grants.gov, applicants must be active in the System for Award Management (SAM).

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM database by an entity. Thus, if you are submitting an application under the RTL Pre-Application competition, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your UEI number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

Once your SAM registration is active, you will need to allow 24 to 48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov.

Information about SAM is available at www.SAM.gov. To further assist you with obtaining and registering your UEI number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, the ED has prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html.

Registering in Grants.gov

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov site (www.Grants.gov).

In order to apply for an RTL grant, you must complete the Grants.gov registration process. Go to the “Get Registered” link on the left hand side of the Grants.gov homepage. There will be a tutorial on this page that instructs applicants on how to complete the registration process.

The registration process can take between three to five business days (or as long as four weeks if all steps are not completed in a timely manner).

Please register early!

Other Important Application Tips

- Register for SAM and Grants.gov as soon as possible!
- Include resumes of all key staff
- Include evidence documenting eligibility in Appendix A
- Submit all documents as read-only, flattened PDFs
  - All files uploaded into Grants.gov must be in PDF format (uploaded file types other than .PDF, or if you submit a password-protected file, ED will be unable to review that material)
  - Do not include any hyperlinks, digital files, or videos
- Submit Early
  - Applications submitted after the July 8, 2026 (11:59:59 PM Washington, DC time) deadline will be rejected, no exceptions.

Ready to Learn Programming

RTL website: Ready to Learn Programming

RTL competition page:

- Application Notice and Instructions (ANI)
- Notice of Intent to Apply Form
- Informational Powerpoint Material
- Call for Peer Reviewers (for those who are not applying or partnering in an application)
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

E-mail: Readytolearn@ed.gov