

STATE PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS (SPDG)

CFDA 84.323A
FISCAL YEAR 2025

APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE: FEBRUARY 18, 2025, AT 11:59:59 PM ET

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Note Regarding this Webinar

- ▶ Slides are for guidance only and information has been summarized due to logistics of the webinar.
- ▶ Please read the entire Notice Inviting Applications (NIA).
- ▶ This short course from the Department of Education (the Department) may be helpful as you prepare to apply: Writing Competitive Grant Applications.
- ▶ Overall information on applying for discretionary grants in the Department can be found here.

Today's Topics

- ▶ Purpose of the SPDG Program
- ▶ Assistance for Developing Your Plan
- ▶ Considerations When Developing Your Plan
- ▶ Absolute Priorities
- ▶ Definitions & Requirements
- ▶ Contracts & Subgrants
- ▶ Government Performance Results Act (GPRA)
- ▶ Competitive Preference Priorities
- ▶ Selection Criteria

Purpose of the State Personnel Development Grant Program (SPDG)

The purpose of this program, authorized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), is to assist State educational agencies (SEAs) in reforming and improving their systems for personnel preparation and professional development in early intervention, educational, and transition services **in order to improve results for children with disabilities.**

Reminders

- ▶ Informational Webinars do **not** take the place of reading through the entire application package.
 - Certain sections of the application package will be highlighted, but other important information will not be.
- ▶ Best practice tips may be provided, but please keep in mind this is a **peer-reviewed competition**.
- ▶ If you are receiving **new** SPDG money in FY 2025 you cannot apply for a grant.
 - Grantees in a no-cost extension may apply.
- ▶ The **only eligible applicants** are State Educational Agencies (SEAs).

Assistance for Developing Your Plan

Evaluation Resources

CIPP Resources



Brief on Identifying Good Comparison Data



Brief on Using Extant Data

More CIPP Evaluation Resources

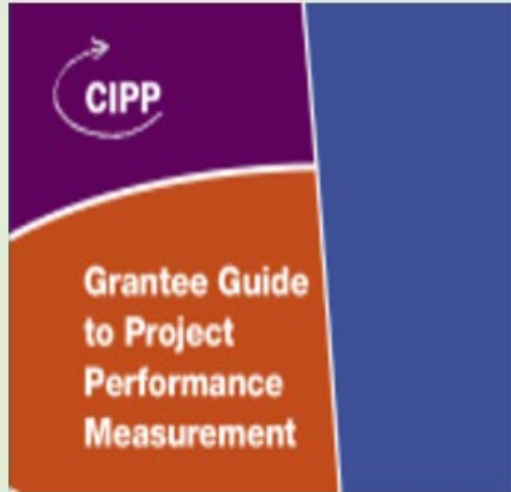


Demonstrating Evidence Across the Project Cycle



Budgeting for Evaluation Brief

Still more...



Grantee Guide to Project Performance Measurement



Using Your Logic Model to Create Your Evaluation Plan

Communication Planning



This SIGNetwork [toolkit](#) will help you develop and external and internal communication plan.



Determining who will be responsible for planning and implementing communications on your team is especially important.

Considerations When Developing your Application

Questions for You & Your Team to Consider

Have you reached out to other offices in your SEA to discuss statewide initiatives to:

- Align your professional development efforts;

- Determine how best to work toward a shared goal (e.g., *State Systemic Improvement Plan; Teacher & School Leader Incentive Grants; Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program*)?

Working with Other Partners

Reach out to your potential partners. Required partners are:

- ▶ IHEs
- ▶ OSEP-funded Parent Program grantees (PTI's & CPRCs)
- ▶ LEAs

Questions to ask:

- ▶ Do they see a shared need in the focus of your proposed project?
- ▶ What strengths can you build on?
- ▶ How do they see themselves helping to achieve the objectives of the grant?
- ▶ How will you measure success in this partnership?
- ▶ How would they like to engage in training, coaching, data collection and analysis, and so on?

OTHER POSSIBLE PARTNERS (NOT AN EXHAUSTIVE LIST)

Office of
Rehabilitative
Services

Early Intervention
Providers

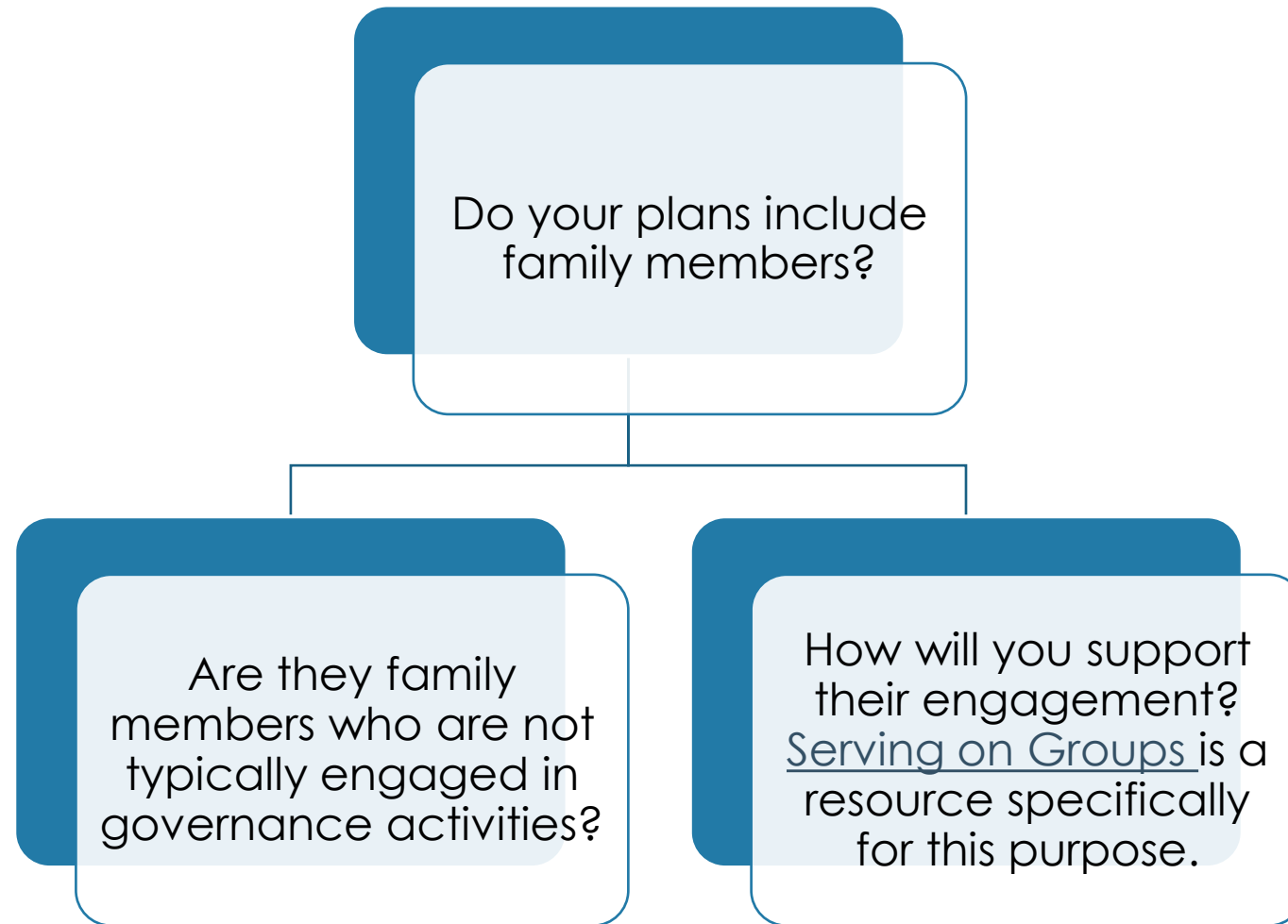
Other family
organizations

External evaluator

State associations
(e.g., principals,
superintendents,
teachers, school
psychologists, etc.)

Library System

Community
organizations



ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES

Absolute Priorities 1, 2, & 3 Are Required

The competitive preference priorities are not required.



Whether or not you are responding to the competitive preference priorities you are required to respond to **Absolute Priorities 1, 2, and 3.**



What follows is an overview of each.

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1: **APPLICANTS MUST DEMONSTRATE** **HOW THEY WILL...**

USE EVIDENCE-BASED (AS DEFINED IN THIS NOTICE) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES THAT WILL INCREASE IMPLEMENTATION OF EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES AND RESULT IN IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES;

Absolute Priority 1 (*cont.*)

Provide **ongoing assistance** to personnel receiving SPDG-supported professional development that supports the implementation of evidence-based practices with fidelity (as defined in this notice); and

Absolute Priority 1 (*cont.*)

Use technology to more efficiently and effectively provide ongoing professional development to personnel, including to personnel in rural areas and to other populations, such as personnel in urban or high-need local educational agencies (LEAs) (as defined in this notice).

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 2

[1]

An applicant must submit a State Personnel Development Plan that identifies and addresses the State and local needs for the personnel preparation and professional development of personnel, as well as individuals who provide direct supplementary aids and services to children with disabilities.



Choose at least 1 activity from section (a) and 1 action from section (b) in “Use of Funds.”

Absolute Priority 3

Projects designed to develop the **capacity of administrators and educators to develop systems and use strategies** that **build trust and engagement** with families, while further strengthening the role families play in their child's development and learning.

OSEP Expectations for Engaging Families in Discretionary Grants



Provision of training, technical assistance, and coaching to build the capacity of family members to participate fully in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project;



Provision of training, technical assistance, and coaching to build the capacity of all project staff to engage families equitably;



Provision of financial resources such as honoraria and stipends for childcare and travel, to support family members' active participation in the project planning, implementation, and evaluation; and



Recruitment of family members for positions on projects, including using non-traditional recruitment and networking strategies.

OSEP's Family Engagement Assumptions

Incorporating family perspectives and experiences into project operations benefits the project and its audiences.

Effectively engaging families requires projects to clearly plan for how they will engage families, build trusting and respectful partnerships, and identify the expected outcomes of the collaboration.

Effective engagement strategies incorporate current research.

Effective capacity building strategies are based on the most current research on adult learning principles and coaching.

Families need a continuum of support in order to effectively engage with projects, including culturally competent and trauma-informed supports.

Engaging families requires commitment to carrying out intensive, ongoing work building and maintaining partnerships.

Effective family-staff partnerships can increase the project's efficiency and effectiveness.

Definitions & Requirements

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Defining Terms — “Personnel”

“As defined by section 651 (b) of IDEA, the term “**personnel**” means special education teachers, regular education teachers, principals, administrators, related services personnel, paraprofessionals, and early intervention personnel serving infants, toddlers, preschoolers, or children with disabilities, except where a particular category of personnel, such as related services personnel, is identified.”

Defining Terms — Fidelity

Fidelity means the delivery of instruction in the way in which it was designed to be delivered.

One of the GPRA measures you must collect focuses on improving fidelity as a result of your professional development practices.

COMMON REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the requirements contained in these priorities, to be considered for funding, applicants must meet the following application and administrative requirements:

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under “Significance,” how the proposed project will--

1

(1) Align with and integrate other State initiatives and programs, as well as district and local improvement plans, to leverage existing professional development and data systems;

2

(2) Develop and implement plans to sustain the grant program after the grant funding has ended; and

3

(3) Integrate family engagement into all project efforts by supporting capacity building for personnel and families.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under “Quality of Project Services,” how the proposed project will--

- 1) Ensure equal access and treatment for members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe how it will--
 - i. Develop the knowledge and ability of personnel to be culturally responsive and engage children and families with a strengths-based approach;
 - ii. Engage students, families, and community members to assess the appropriateness and impact of the intervention, program, or strategies; and
 - iii. Review program procedures and resources to ensure a diversity of perspectives are brought into the project; and

(2) Achieve the project's goals and objectives. To meet this requirement, the applicant must provide--

- i. Either a logic model (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1) or theory of action (to be provided in Appendix A), which demonstrates how the proposed project will achieve intended measurable outcomes;
- ii. A description of proposed in-State and national partners that the project will work with to achieve the goals and objectives of the grant and how the impact of these partnerships will be measured; and

- (iii) A description of how the project will be based on current research and make use of evidence-based (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1) practices. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe--
 - A. The current research base for the chosen interventions;
 - B. The evidence-based model or practices to be used in the project's professional development activities; and
 - C. How implementation science will be used to support full and sustained use of evidence-based practices and result in sustained systems of implementation support.

(c) In the narrative section of the application under “Quality of the project evaluation,” include an evaluation plan for the project developed in consultation with and implemented by a third-party evaluator. The evaluation plan must--

- 1) Articulate formative and summative evaluation questions, including important process and outcome evaluation questions. These questions should be related to the project’s proposed logic model or theory of action required under paragraph (b)(2)(i) of these requirements;
- 2) Describe how progress in and fidelity of implementation, as well as project outcomes, will be measured to answer the evaluation questions. Specify the measures and associated instruments or sources for data appropriate to the evaluation questions. Include information regarding reliability and validity of measures where appropriate;

- 3) Describe strategies for analyzing data and how data collected as part of this plan will be used to inform and improve service delivery over the course of the project and to refine the proposed logic model or theory of action and evaluation plan, including subsequent data collection;
- 4) Provide a timeline for conducting the evaluation and include staff assignments for completing the plan. The timeline must indicate that the data will be available annually for the annual performance report to the Department; and
- 5) Dedicate sufficient funds in each budget year to cover the costs of developing or refining the evaluation plan in consultation with a third-party evaluator, as well as the costs associated with the implementation of the evaluation plan by the third-party evaluator.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under “Adequacy of resources,” how--

- 1) The proposed project will encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, as appropriate;
- 2) The proposed key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors have the qualifications and experience to carry out the proposed activities and achieve the project's intended outcomes;
- 3) The applicant and any key partners have adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities; and
- 4) The proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the anticipated results and benefits and funds will be spent in a way that increases their efficiency and cost-effectiveness, including by reducing waste or achieving better outcomes.

(e) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under “Quality of the management plan,” how the proposed management plan will ensure that the project’s intended outcomes will be achieved on time and within budget.

- 1) Clearly defined responsibilities for key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors, as applicable;
- 2) Timelines and milestones for accomplishing the project tasks;
- 3) How key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors will be allocated to the project and how these allocations are appropriate and adequate to achieve the project’s intended outcomes; and
- 4) How the proposed project will benefit from a diversity of perspectives, including those of families, educators, TA providers, researchers, and policy makers, among others, in its development and operation.

Additional SPDG Requirements

- 3) Include, in the budget, attendance at the following:
 - i. An annual one and one-half day SPDG National Meeting in the Washington, DC area during each year of the project period; and
 - ii. A three-day project directors' conference in Washington, DC, during each year of the project period, provided that, if the conference is conducted virtually, the project must reallocate unused travel funds no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period; and
- 4) Budget \$6,000 annually for support of the SPDG program network and website currently administered by the University of Oregon (www.signetwork.org)

Contracts & Subgrants

CONTRACTS & SUBGRANTS

An SEA that receives a grant under this program

- 1) **Must award contracts or subgrants to LEAs, IHEs, parent training and information centers, or community parent resource centers, as appropriate, to carry out the State Personnel Development Plan; and**
- 2) May award contracts and subgrants to other public and private entities, including the lead agency under Part C of IDEA, to carry out the State plan.

(d) Use of Funds for Professional Development—

An SEA that receives a grant under this program must use—

- 1) **Not less than 90 percent of the funds** the SEA receives under the grant for any fiscal year for the Professional Development **Activities described in paragraph (a)**; and
- 2) **Not more than 10 percent of the funds** the SEA receives under the grant for any fiscal year for the **Other Activities described in paragraph (b)**.

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE RESULTS ACT (GPRA)

GPRA: Performance Measures

- ▶ Projects use **professional development practices supported by evidence** to support the attainment of identified competencies;
- ▶ Participants in SPDG professional development demonstrate **improvement in implementation of SPDG-supported practices** over time;
- ▶ Projects use SPDG professional development **funds to provide activities designed to sustain the use of SPDG-supported practices**;
- ▶ Projects **improve outcomes for children with disabilities**.

GPRA Resources

- ▶ Materials are available to assist applicants in planning to collect GPRA data.
- ▶ Please review Rubric A: SPDG Evidence-based Professional Development Components Rubric to learn about the professional development components required for the SPDG grants.
- ▶ Will need to describe the tool you will use to measure fidelity.

Planning & Budgeting

Describe potential sites you plan to work with.

- We are aware that there is flux in early childhood and education systems currently.
- We are also aware that sites may change, with approval from your Project Officer, if you are funded.

You can request a lower level of funding your first year to begin ramping up your activities as sites are ready.

- Please take into consideration a remaining balance you may have from a previous SPDG grant.

Funding Amounts

- ▶ Estimated Range of Awards: \$500,000–\$2,100,000 (for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico).
 - In the case of outlying areas (United States Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), awards will be not less than \$80,000.
- ▶ Other than the outlying areas, applicants must ask for \$500,00 or more for each of the 5 years.

Note: We will set the amount of each award after considering—

- ▶ The amount of funds available for making the grants;
- ▶ The relative population of the State or outlying area;
- ▶ The types of activities proposed by the State or outlying area;
- ▶ The alignment of proposed activities with section 612(a)(14) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA;
- ▶ The alignment of proposed activities with State plans and applications submitted under sections 1111 and 2101(d), respectively, of the ESEA; and
- ▶ The use, as appropriate, of research and instruction supported by evidence.

Format and Page Limit Recommendations

We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to **no more than 70 pages** and (2) use the following standards:

- ▶ A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- ▶ Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- ▶ Use a font that is 12 point or larger.
- ▶ Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

Appendices

Upload the attachments in the order they should appear in the application.

Suggested order:

- ▶ Reference List
- ▶ Appendix A (See Dear Applicant letter for description)
- ▶ Resumes/Vitae
- ▶ Letters
- ▶ Supplementary Information
- ▶ Other Appendices

Note

The Project Narrative Attachment Form should include the narrative (text) that addresses each of the selection criteria, listed elsewhere in this document. The selection criteria will be used to evaluate applications submitted for this competition. The narrative has recommended formatting and page limits (check the Page Limits section of this document for formatting and page limit recommendations for the competition to which you are applying). The table of contents and list of priority requirements, if applicable, do not count toward the recommended narrative page limit.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES

4 Competitive Preference Priorities

- ▶ You may choose to respond to up to 2.
- ▶ Priority 1 can result in 5 extra points.
- ▶ Priority 2-4 can result in 2 extra points.
- ▶ You must make clear which CPPs you are responding to (up to 2).
- ▶ Use the Abstract Template to declare which CPPs you are responding to.

Selection Criteria

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Selection Criteria

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Significance | (20 points) |
| 2. Quality of the Project Design | (25 points) |
| 3. Quality of Project Personnel | (10 points) |
| 4. Adequacy of Resources and Quality of the Management Plan | (20 points) |
| 5. Quality of the Project Evaluation | (25 points) |

100 points

Final Piece of Advice

Consider having a novice reader review your draft application.

- ▶ Have them look for missing details.
- ▶ Unclear ideas.
- ▶ Undefined terms.
- ▶ And whether you have painted a vivid picture of what you plan to do.

THANK YOU!

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Grants.gov Support Desk:

Email at: support@grants.gov

1-800-518-4726

Grants.gov How-to's:

[https://grants-](https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants)

[portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants](https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants)