



# U.S. Department of Education

## State Personnel Development Grants (SPDG)

### Assistance Listing Number: 84.323A

#### Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Grant Competition

Posted April 15, 2026

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## Program Information

The purpose of the SPDG program 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 to improve results for children with disabilities. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to SEAs to carry out the activities described in the State plan submitted under section 653 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ([20 U.S.C. 1453](#)).

*Assistance Listing Number:* 84.323A.

*OMB Control Number:* 1820-0028.<sup>1</sup>

*Program Authority:* [20 U.S.C. 1451-1455](#).

*Note:* Projects will be awarded and must be operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws.

*For further information contact:* Jennifer Coffey. Telephone: (202) 987-0150. Email: [Jennifer.Coffey@ed.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Coffey@ed.gov).

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability and wish to access

telecommunications relay services, please dial 7-1-1.

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$7,301,695.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$500,000 - \$2,100,000 (for the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico). States may not receive less than \$500,000 in each year of the grant and must submit a budget in their application for not less than \$500,000 in each year of the grant. In the case of outlying areas (United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), awards will be not less than \$80,000.

*Note:* Pursuant to requirements in section 651(c)(5) of IDEA, ED will set the amount of each award after considering—

- (a) The amount of funds available for making the grants;
- (b) The relative population of the State or outlying area;
- (c) The types of activities proposed by the State or outlying area;
- (d) The alignment of proposed activities with section 612(a)(14) of IDEA, as

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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. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1820-0028. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 26.5 hours per response, including the 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 a benefit (P.L. 108-446, Sec. 650 and 682). If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please email [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov).

amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA);

- (e) The alignment of proposed activities with State plans and applications submitted under sections 1111 and 2101(d), respectively, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA); and
- (f) The use, as appropriate, of scientifically based research and activities.

Using the same considerations, ED funded these applications for FY 2025 at the following levels:

<b>State</b>	<b>FY 2025 Funding Amount</b>
Arkansas	\$1,076,798
Idaho	\$731,145
Illinois	\$2,027,854
Indiana	\$797,949
Montana	\$657,982
Nevada	\$788,195
New York	\$2,082,902
South Dakota	\$533,107
Tennessee	\$528,834

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* \$1,000,000, excluding the outlying areas.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 7.

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.

*Project Period:* Not less than one year and not more than five years.

*Application Deadline:* **June 16, 2026.**

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

## Eligibility

### Eligible Applicants

An SEA of one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or an outlying area (United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

*Note:* Public Law 95-134, which permits the consolidation of grants to the outlying areas, does not apply to funds received under this competition.

### Costs

#### Cost Sharing

This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

#### Indirect Cost Rate Information

This program uses an unrestricted 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 must award contracts and subgrants as described under Statutory Requirements, Use of Funds.<sup>2</sup>

## Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Applications Available	April 15, 2026
Application Deadline	June 16, 2026
Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	August 17, 2026

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<sup>2</sup> See section 654(c) of the IDEA.

**Applicants are required to follow the 2025 Common Instructions and Information 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](#).

*Note:* For new potential grantees unfamiliar with grantmaking at ED, please consult our [“Getting Started with Discretionary Grant Applications”](#) webpage.

## Program Description

### Priorities

This notice contains one absolute priority.<sup>3</sup> For FY 2026 and any subsequent year in which ED makes awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority.

*Absolute Priority:* ED considers only applications that meet the absolute priority.

Absolute Priority Title	Required	Priority Language
<i>Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness</i>	Yes	Prioritize and expand Registered Apprenticeships in education, including Registered Apprenticeships to prepare special educators, including those serving infants, toddlers, children, or youth with disabilities by including one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Supporting the development and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs designed to lead to educator certification.</li> <li>(b) Creating targeted pathways for instructional assistants, paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, career changers, and other individuals already working in educational settings to earn teaching credentials and to become certified educators while employed.</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with [34 CFR 75.105\(b\)\(2\)\(iv\)](#), the absolute priority is from the Secretary’s Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness (Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness Supplemental Priority) published in the *Federal Register* on April 13, 2026 ([91 FR 18780](#)).

		<p>(c) Aligning secondary and postsecondary educator-registered apprenticeship programs with State educator licensure requirements and workforce shortage areas.</p> <p>(d) Providing technical assistance to school districts, educator preparation providers, institutions of higher education, and registered apprenticeship intermediaries to establish or expand Registered Educator Apprenticeship programs.</p> <p>(e) Promoting earn-and-learn models through registered apprenticeships that reduce financial barriers and increase access to the teaching profession, particularly in high-need subject areas, including provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Paid work experience in a full-time position;</li> <li>(2) A progression of wage increases; and</li> <li>(3) Coursework that leads to certification, delivered to accommodate full-time work schedules.</li> </ul>
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## Statutory Requirements

An applicant must meet the following statutory requirements:

### 1. State Personnel Development Plan.

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, and that—

- (a) Is designed to enable the State to meet the requirements of section 612(a)(14) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, and section 635(a)(8) and (9) of IDEA;
- (b) Is based on an assessment of State and local needs that identifies critical aspects and areas in need of improvement related to the preparation, ongoing training, and professional development of personnel who serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities within the State, including—

- (1) Current and anticipated personnel vacancies and shortages; and
  - (2) The number of preservice and in-service programs;
- (c) Is integrated and aligned, to the maximum extent possible, with State plans and activities under the ESEA; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA);
- (d) Describes a partnership agreement that is in effect for the period of the grant, which agreement must specify—
- (1) The nature and extent of the partnership described in section 652(b) of IDEA and the respective roles of each member of the partnership, including, if applicable, an individual, entity, or agency other than the SEA that has the responsibility under State law for teacher preparation and certification; and
  - (2) How the SEA will work with other persons and organizations involved in, and concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, including the respective roles of each of the persons and organizations;
- (e) Describes how the strategies and activities the SEA uses to address identified professional development and personnel needs will be coordinated with activities supported with other public resources (including funds provided under Part B and Part C of IDEA and retained for use at the State level for personnel and professional development purposes) and private resources;
- (f) Describes how the SEA will align its personnel development plan with the plan and application submitted under sections 1111 and 2101(d), respectively, of the ESEA;
- (g) Describes strategies the SEA will use to address the identified professional development and personnel needs and how such strategies will be implemented, including—
- (1) A description of the programs and activities that will provide personnel with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of, and improve the performance and achievement of, infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities; and
  - (2) How such strategies will be integrated, to the maximum extent possible, with other activities supported by grants funded under section 662 of IDEA;
- (h) Provides an assurance that the SEA will provide TA to local educational agencies (LEAs) to improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel who serve children with disabilities;

- (i) Provides an assurance that the SEA will provide TA to entities that provide services to infants and toddlers with disabilities to improve the quality of professional development available to meet the needs of personnel serving such children;
- (j) Describes how the SEA will recruit and retain teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, and other qualified personnel in geographic areas of greatest need;
- (k) Describes the steps the SEA will take to ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates by teachers who do not meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA; and
- (l) Describes how the SEA will assess, on a regular basis, the extent to which the strategies implemented have been effective in meeting the performance goals described in section 612(a)(15) of IDEA.

2. Partnerships.

(a) Required Partners.

Applicants must establish a partnership with LEAs and other State agencies involved in, or concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, including—

- (1) Not less than one institution of higher education<sup>4</sup> (IHE);
- (2) The State agencies responsible for administering Part C of IDEA, early education, childcare, and vocational rehabilitation programs; and
- (3) In accordance with section 652(b)(3) of IDEA, if State law assigns responsibility for teacher preparation and certification to an individual, entity, or agency other than the SEA, such individual, entity, or agency. The SEA must ensure that any activities it carries out under this program that are within such partner’s jurisdiction (which may include activities described in section 654(b) of IDEA) are carried out by that partner.

(b) Other Partners.

An SEA must work in partnership with other persons and organizations involved in, and concerned with, the education of children with disabilities, which may include—

- (1) The Governor;

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<sup>4</sup> For the purpose of this priority, “institution of higher education” has the meaning given the term in section 101 of the HEA, which is inclusive of community colleges, and also includes any college or university receiving funding from the Secretary of the Interior under the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act of 1978 (See section 602(17) of IDEA ([20 U.S.C. 1401\(17\)](#))).

- (2) Parents of children with disabilities ages birth through 26;
- (3) Parents of nondisabled children ages birth through 26;
- (4) Individuals with disabilities;
- (5) Parent training and information centers or community parent resource centers funded under sections 671 and 672 of IDEA, respectively;
- (6) Community based and other nonprofit organizations involved in the education and employment of individuals with disabilities;
- (7) Personnel as defined in section 651(b) of IDEA;
- (8) The State advisory panel established under Part B of IDEA;
- (9) The State interagency coordinating council established under Part C of IDEA;
- (10) Individuals knowledgeable about vocational education;
- (11) The State agency for higher education;
- (12) Public agencies with jurisdiction in the areas of health, mental health, social services, and juvenile justice;
- (13) Other providers of professional development that work with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and children with disabilities; and
- (14) Other individuals.

### 3. Use of Funds.

(a) Professional Development Activities—Each SEA that receives a grant under this program must use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State’s Personnel Development Plan, including one or more of the following:

- (1) Carrying out programs that provide support to both special education and regular education teachers of children with disabilities and principals, such as programs that—
  - (i) Provide teacher mentoring, team teaching, reduced class schedules and caseloads, and intensive professional development;
  - (ii) Use standards or assessments for guiding beginning teachers that are consistent with challenging State academic achievement standards and with the requirements for professional development, as defined in section 8101 of the ESEA; and

- (iii) Encourage collaborative and consultative models of providing early intervention, special education, and related services.
- (2) Encouraging and supporting the training of special education and regular education teachers and administrators to effectively use and integrate technology—
  - (i) Into curricula and instruction, including training to improve the ability to collect, manage, and analyze data to improve teaching, decision making, school improvement efforts, and accountability;
  - (ii) To enhance learning by children with disabilities; and
  - (iii) To effectively communicate with parents.
- (3) Providing professional development activities that—
  - (i) Improve the knowledge of special education and regular education teachers concerning—
    - (A) The academic and developmental or functional needs of students with disabilities; or
    - (B) Effective instructional strategies, methods, and skills, and the use of State academic content standards and student academic achievement and functional standards, and State assessments, to improve teaching practices and student academic achievement;
  - (ii) Improve the knowledge of special education and regular education teachers and principals and, in appropriate cases, paraprofessionals, concerning effective instructional practices, and that—
    - (A) Provide training in how to teach and address the needs of children with different learning styles and children who are limited English proficient;
    - (B) Involve collaborative groups of teachers, administrators, and, in appropriate cases, related services personnel;
    - (C) Provide training in methods of—
      - (1) Positive behavioral interventions and supports to improve student behavior in the classroom;
      - (2) Scientifically based reading instruction, including early literacy instruction;

- (3) Early and appropriate interventions to identify and help children with disabilities;
  - (4) Effective instruction for children with low-incidence disabilities;
  - (5) Successful transitioning to postsecondary opportunities; and
  - (6) Using classroom-based techniques to assist children prior to referral for special education;
- (D) Provide training to enable personnel to work with and involve parents in their child's education, including parents of low income and limited English proficient children with disabilities;
  - (E) Provide training for special education personnel and regular education personnel in planning, developing, and implementing effective and appropriate individualized education programs (IEPs); and
  - (F) Provide training to meet the needs of students with significant health, mobility, or behavioral needs prior to serving those students;
- (iii) Train administrators, principals, and other relevant school personnel in conducting effective IEP meetings; and
  - (iv) Train early intervention, preschool, and related services providers, and other relevant school personnel in conducting effective individualized family service plan (IFSP) meetings.
- (4) Developing and implementing initiatives to promote the recruitment and retention of special education teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA, as amended by the ESSA, particularly initiatives that have proven effective in recruiting and retaining teachers, including programs that provide—
    - (i) Teacher mentoring from exemplary special education teachers, principals, or superintendents;
    - (ii) Induction and support for special education teachers during their first three years of employment as teachers; or
    - (iii) Incentives, including financial incentives, to retain special education teachers who have a record of success in helping students with disabilities.
  - (5) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of personnel who serve children with disabilities, such as—

- (i) Innovative professional development programs (which may be provided through partnerships that include IHEs), including programs that train teachers and principals to integrate technology into curricula and instruction to improve teaching, learning, and technology literacy, which must be consistent with the definition of professional development in section 8101 of the ESEA; and
  - (ii) The development and use of proven, cost-effective strategies for the implementation of professional development activities, such as through the use of technology and distance learning.
- (6) Carrying out programs and activities that are designed to improve the quality of early intervention personnel, including paraprofessionals and primary referral sources, such as—
- (i) Professional development programs to improve the delivery of early intervention services;
  - (ii) Initiatives to promote the recruitment and retention of early intervention personnel; and
  - (iii) Interagency activities to ensure that early intervention personnel are adequately prepared and trained.
- (b) Other Activities—Each SEA that receives a grant under this program must use the grant funds to support activities in accordance with the State’s Personnel Development Plan, including one or more of the following:
- (1) Reforming special education and regular education teacher certification (including recertification) or licensing requirements to ensure that—
    - (i) Special education and regular education teachers have—
      - (A) The training and information necessary to address the full range of needs of children with disabilities across disability categories; and
      - (B) The necessary subject matter knowledge and teaching skills in the academic subjects that the teachers teach;
    - (ii) Special education and regular education teacher certification (including recertification) or licensing requirements are aligned with challenging State academic content standards; and
    - (iii) Special education and regular education teachers have the subject matter knowledge and teaching skills, including technology literacy, necessary to help

students with disabilities meet challenging State student academic achievement and functional standards.

- (2) Programs that establish, expand, or improve alternative routes for State certification of special education teachers for individuals with a baccalaureate or master's degree who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA including mid-career professionals from other occupations, paraprofessionals, and recent college or university graduates with records of academic distinction who demonstrate the potential to become highly effective special education teachers.
- (3) Teacher advancement initiatives for special education teachers that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths (such as paths to becoming a career teacher, mentor teacher, or exemplary teacher) and pay differentiation.
- (4) Developing and implementing mechanisms to assist LEAs and schools in effectively recruiting and retaining special education teachers who meet the qualifications described in section 612(a)(14)(C) of IDEA.
- (5) Reforming tenure systems, implementing teacher testing for subject matter knowledge, and implementing teacher testing for State certification or licensure, consistent with title II of the HEA ([20 U.S.C. 1021 et seq.](#)).
- (6) Funding projects to promote reciprocity of teacher certification or licensing between or among States for special education teachers, except that no reciprocity agreement developed under this absolute priority or developed using funds awarded under the SPDG competition may lead to the weakening of any State teacher certification or licensing requirement.
- (7) Assisting LEAs to serve children with disabilities through the development and use of proven, innovative strategies to deliver intensive professional development programs that are both cost effective and easily accessible, such as strategies that involve delivery through the use of technology, peer networks, and distance learning.
- (8) Developing, or assisting LEAs in developing, merit-based performance systems and strategies that provide differential and bonus pay for special education teachers.
- (9) Supporting activities that ensure that teachers are able to use challenging State academic content standards and student academic achievement and functional standards, and State assessments for all children with disabilities, to improve

instructional practices and improve the academic achievement of children with disabilities.

(10) When applicable, coordinating with, and expanding centers established under section 2113(c)(18) of the ESEA, as amended by No Child Left Behind Act of 2002, to benefit special education teachers.

(c) Contracts and 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 State lead agency (LA) (as defined in this notice) under Part C of IDEA, to carry out the State Personnel Development 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).

## Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for this competition are from [34 CFR 75.210](#) and are listed below:

(a) *Significance (20 points)*. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) 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.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates the magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project.

(3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to build

recipient and project capacity in ways that lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(4) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in systemic change that supports continuous, sustainable, and measurable improvement.

(b) *Quality of the project design (25 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:

(1) 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.

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

(3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project demonstrates meaningful community engagement and input to ensure that the project is appropriate to successfully address the needs of the target population or other identified needs and will be used to inform continuous improvement strategies.

(4) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects the most recent and relevant knowledge and practices from research and effective practice.

(5) The extent to which the proposed project will include coordination with other Federal investments, as well as appropriate agencies and organizations providing similar services to the target population.

(c) *Adequacy of resources (15 points)*. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

(1) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

(2) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project and the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(3) The potential for the purposes, activities, or benefits of the proposed project to be institutionalized into the ongoing practices and programs of the applicant, agency, or organization and continue after Federal funding ends.

(d) *Quality of the management plan (15 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:

- (1) 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.
- (2) 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.
- (3) The extent to which the key personnel in the project, when hired, have the qualifications required for the proposed project, including formal training or work experience in fields related to the objectives of the project, and represent or have lived experiences of the target population.

(e) *Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building (25 points)*. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building are thorough, feasible, relevant, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
- (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building are designed to measure the fidelity of implementation of the project.
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quality data that are quantitative and qualitative.
- (4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building will provide performance feedback and provide formative, diagnostic, or interim data that is a periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

## Performance Measures

ED has developed the following performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the SPDG program, and for the purposes of reporting to ED under [34 CFR 75.110](#).

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 Performance Measure 1	The percentage of SPDG-funded initiatives that meet the benchmarks for use of evidence-based professional development practices over time.
Program Performance Measure 2	The percentage of SPDG-funded initiatives that meet the benchmark for improvement in implementation over time.
Program Performance Measure 3	The percentage of initiatives that meet targets for their use of funds to sustain SPDG-supported practices.
Program Performance Measure 4	The percentage of projects that improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

Each grantee funded under this competition must collect and annually report data related to its performance on these measures in the project’s annual and final performance report to ED in accordance with section 653(d) of IDEA and [34 CFR 75.590](#). Applicants should discuss in the application narrative how they propose to collect performance data for these measures.

## General Requirements

- (a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities.<sup>5</sup>
- (b) Applicants for, and recipients of, funding must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project.<sup>6</sup>
- (c) Applicants must include a logic model (as defined in [34 CFR 77.1\(c\)](#)) or other conceptual framework.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See section 606 of IDEA.

<sup>6</sup> See section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA.

<sup>7</sup> See [34 CFR 75.112](#).

(d) A grantee funded under this competition must conduct an independent evaluation (as defined in [34 CFR 77.1\(c\)](#)).<sup>8</sup>

## Application Submission Information

### Competition Resources

Resources specific to this competition will be available at the [SPDG 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](#). 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

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<sup>8</sup> See [34 CFR 75.590](#).

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 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. Once ED receives your application from Grants.gov, an Agency Tracking Number (PR/award number) will be assigned to your application and will be available for viewing on Grants.gov’s Track My Application link.

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 [Grants.gov site](#).

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 <https://www.grants.gov/support> 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:* ED reminds 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](#).

Peer reviewers will read, prepare a written evaluation of, and score the assigned applications, using the selection criteria provided in this notice.

In the event there are two or more applications with the same final score, and there are insufficient funds to fully support each of these applications, the scores under selection criterion (b) Quality of the project design will be used as a tiebreaker. If the scores remain tied, then the scores under selection criterion (d) Quality of the management plan will be used to break the tie.

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

For FY 2026 and any subsequent year in which ED makes awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, the following definitions apply to this competition. ED provides the source of the definitions in parentheses.

*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. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*Demonstrates a rationale* means that there is a key project component included in the project's logic model that is supported by citations of high-quality research or evaluation findings that suggest that the project component is likely to significantly improve relevant outcomes. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*Evaluation* means an assessment using systematic data collection and analysis of one or more programs, policies, practices, and organizations intended to assess their implementation, outcomes, effectiveness, or efficiency. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*Evidence-based* means the proposed project component is supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*Evidence-building* means a systematic plan for identifying and answering questions relevant to programs and policies through performance measurement, exploratory studies, or program evaluation. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*Independent evaluation* means an evaluation of a project component that is designed and carried out independently of, but in coordination with, the entities that develop or implement the project component. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*Lead agency* means the agency designated by the State's Governor under section 635(a)(10) of IDEA and [34 CFR 303.120](#) that receives funds under section 643 of IDEA to administer the State's responsibilities under part C of IDEA. ([34 CFR 303.22](#))

*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 for such combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools. (Section 602(19) of IDEA ([20 U.S.C. 1401\(19\)](#)))

*Logic model* (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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—
  - (1) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;
  - (2) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;
  - (3) 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
  - (4) 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 requirements in paragraphs (iii)(A) through (C) of this definition may together satisfy the requirement in this paragraph (iii)(D). ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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). ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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 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—
  - (1) Is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (e.g., a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group);
  - (2) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome; and
  - (3) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*State educational agency* means the State board of education or other agency or officer primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools, or, if there is no such officer or agency, an officer or agency designated by the Governor or by State law. (Section 602(32) of IDEA ([20 U.S.C. 1401\(32\)](#)))

*Strong evidence* means evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome for a sample that overlaps with the populations and 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” 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 a “positive effect” on a relevant outcome based on a sample including at least 350 students or other individuals across more than one site (such as a State, county, city, local educational agency (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 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—
  - (1) Meets WWC standards without reservations;
  - (2) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;
  - (3) 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
  - (4) 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). ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

*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. ([34 CFR 77.1](#))

## 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.

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. 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.

### **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 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements For Federal Awards in [2 CFR part 200](#), as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in [2 CFR part 3474](#). (d) Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness Supplemental Priority.

*Note:* The regulations in [34 CFR part 79](#) apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian Tribes.

*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 ED ([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

## 2. Budget Information

- ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524)

## 3. ED 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

## 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)

*Note:* Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the SF-424 in Part I. Although this form accepts attachments, that option should not be used.

- 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.

For more information, review the [instructions online](#).

## Part 2: Budget Information

### ED Budget Information Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524)

This part of your application contains information about the Federal funding you are requesting. Remember that you must provide all requested budget information for each year of the project and the total column in order to be considered for Federal funding. Specific instructions for completing the budget forms are provided within this application package.

Applicants must provide a summary of requested Federal funds for each line-item category included on the worksheet. Applicants should provide dollar amounts for all requested years of the desired grant award. Example form can be found [here](#).

Instructions for completing ED Form 524 Section A:

- *Name of Institution/Organization*: Enter the name of the applicant in the space provided.
- *Personnel (line 1)*: Enter project personnel salaries and wages only. Include fees and expenses for consultants on line 6.
- *Fringe Benefits (line 2)*: 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 (line 3)*: Indicate the travel costs of employees and participants only. It is permissible to include travel for a two-day project directors' conference and a one and one-half-day SPDG meeting in Washington, DC in each year of the project. Include travel of persons such as consultants on line 6.
- *Equipment (line 4)*: 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 5)*: 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 6)*: 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 7)*: Construction funds are not authorized.
- *Other (line 8)*: 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. Include \$6,000 annually for support of the SPDG program network and website. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.
- *Total Direct Costs (line 9)*: The sum of lines 1-8.
- *Indirect Costs (line 10)*: Indicate the applicant's approved indirect cost rate, per [34 CFR 75.560-564](#). 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\(f\)](#).
- *Training Stipends (line 11)*: Include all applicable training stipends.
- *Total Cost (line 12)*: This should equal to sum of lines 9-11 (total direct costs + indirect + stipends). The sum for column one, labeled Project Year 1 (a), should also be equal to item 15a on the application cover sheet (SF Form 424).

## Section B: Non-Federal Funding Summary

If you are required to provide or volunteer to provide cost-sharing or matching funds or other non-Federal resources to the project, these should be shown for each applicable budget category on lines 1-11 of Section B.

*Lines 1-11, columns (a)-(e)*: For each project year, for which matching funds or other contributions are provided, show the total contribution for each applicable budget category.

*Lines 1-11, column (h)*: Show the multi-year total for each budget category. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this column blank.

*Line 12, columns (a)-(e)*: Show the total matching or other contribution for each project year.

*Line 12, column (h):* Show the total amount to be contributed for all years of the multi-year project. If non-Federal contributions are provided for only one year, leave this space blank.

### **Part 3: ED Abstract Form**

For the application Abstract, applicants should use the template located at the [SPDG webpage](#).

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](#).

#### **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 70 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 abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

### **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 (which serves to meet the requirements of ED Form 524, Section C) 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.

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.

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.

### **Suggested Guidelines for the Budget Narrative**

1. Provide an itemized budget breakdown and justification by project year. The budget narrative fulfills the requirement of Form ED 524 - Section C Budget Narrative. For this program, applicants do not need to fill in non-Federal funds or resources listed in Section B.
2. If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, this information is to be completed by your Business Office. Specify the estimated amount of the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied and the total indirect expense. Depending on the grant program to which you are applying and/or your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, some direct cost budget categories in your grant application budget may not be included in the base and multiplied by your indirect cost rate. Please indicate which costs are included and which costs are excluded from the base to which the indirect cost rate is applied.

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

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

Ensure that you only attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#) and that you upload the attachments in the order they should appear in the application.

Suggested order:

- 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 in Grants.gov, 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 (SF LLL Form)**
- 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 read-only flattened Portable Document Formats (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 ED.

- 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.