



U.S. Department of Education

## National Assessment Center

### Assistance Listing Number (ALN): 84.326G

Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Grant Competition

Posted May 20, 2026

#### Contents

Program Information .....	2
Eligibility.....	3
Eligible Applicants .....	3
Costs.....	4
Submission Requirements and Deadlines.....	4
Program Description .....	5
Priorities .....	5
Selection Criteria.....	10
Performance Measures .....	12
General Requirements .....	13
Application Submission Information.....	13
Application Review Information.....	16
Award Requirements.....	17
Application Checklist .....	19

## Program Information

The purpose of this grant competition is to establish a National Assessment Center to improve children with disabilities' participation in and performance on State and districtwide assessments. This award is funded under the Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program. The goal of this program is to promote academic achievement and to improve results for children with disabilities by providing technical assistance (TA), supporting model demonstration projects, disseminating useful information, and implementing activities supported by scientifically based research.

This award aligns to requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Specifically, section 612(a)(16) requires that all children with disabilities are included with appropriate accommodations in general State and districtwide assessments as indicated in their individualized education programs, including assessments described under

section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and alternate assessments. Many States have also adopted kindergarten entry assessments to assess multiple developmental domains and support early learning. Additionally, Section 663(b)(2) of IDEA requires that the Secretary use funds to support activities to improve the participation of children with disabilities in State assessments.

*ALN:* 84.326G.

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

*Program Authority:* [20 U.S.C. 1463](#) and [1481-1482](#).

*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:* Kristen Rhoads. Telephone: (202) 987-0153. Email: [Kristen.Rhoads@ed.gov](mailto:Kristen.Rhoads@ed.gov).

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

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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. Public reporting burden for this collection of information 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).

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

*Type of Award:* Cooperative agreement.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$1,000,000.

*Maximum Award:* We will not make an award exceeding \$1,000,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 1.

*Project Period:* Up to 60 months.

*Application Deadline:* **July 20, 2026.**

*Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking:* Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) ([5](#)

[U.S.C. 553](#)), ED generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities and requirements. Section 681(d) of IDEA, however, makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

*Note:* This application notice and instructions document is the official document governing the grant competition. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

## Eligibility

### Eligible Applicants

State educational agencies (SEAs); State lead agencies under Part C of the IDEA; local educational agencies (LEAs), including public charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law; institutions of higher education<sup>2</sup> (IHEs); other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; freely associated States and outlying areas; Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

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

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<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this competition, "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\(17\)](#))).

applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

## 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

Under [34 CFR 75.708\(b\) and \(c\)](#), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants—to directly carry out project activities described in its application—to the following types of entities: IHEs (including community colleges), nonprofit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application, and other public agencies. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application or that it selects through a competition under procedures established by the grantee, consistent with [34 CFR 75.708\(b\)\(2\)](#). However, an eligible applicant is not required to award subgrants and may instead administer the program directly. Additionally, under [34 CFR 75.708\(b\) and \(c\)](#) subgrantees are not authorized to further subgrant.

## Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Applications Available	<b>May 20, 2026</b>
Application Deadline	<b>July 20, 2026</b>
Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	<b>September 18, 2026</b>

**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 competition includes one absolute priority and one competitive preference priority.<sup>3</sup> For FY 2026 the absolute and competitive preference priorities are as reflected in this document.

*Absolute Priority:* ED considers only applications that meet the absolute priority. The absolute priority must be identified in the abstract form and the project narrative section of the application.

<b>Absolute Priority Title</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Priority Language</b>
<i>National Assessment Center</i>	Yes	The purpose of this priority is to fund a cooperative agreement to support the establishment and operation of a National Assessment Center (Center) to improve children with disabilities’ participation in and performance on State and districtwide assessments.

*Competitive Preference Priority:* An application may receive a maximum of seven additional points under the Competitive Preference Priority, depending on how well the applicant meets the priority. ED will not review or award points for the Competitive Preference Priority if an applicant fails to clearly identify it as a competitive preference priority that it wishes ED to consider.

<b>Competitive Preference Priority Title</b>	<b>Required</b>	<b>Priority Language</b>	<b>Points</b>
<i>Improving Alternate Assessments</i>	No	Projects or proposals that are designed to support States with the development, implementation, and scaling of improved alternate assessments, including those that use adaptive technologies, that provide timely and	Up to 7 points

<sup>3</sup> The absolute and competitive preference priorities are from the allowable activities in, or otherwise authorized under, the statute (See sections 663 and 681(d) of IDEA; [20 U.S.C. 1463](#) and [1481](#)).

Competitive Preference Priority Title	Required	Priority Language	Points
		useful information to educators, students, and families to address the learning needs of students with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and assist states in meeting the 1 percent threshold. <sup>4</sup>	

**Absolute Priority Program Requirements:**

The project must achieve, at a minimum, the following expected outcomes:

(a) Increased capacity of SEAs and LEAs to:

- i. Use State and districtwide assessment<sup>5</sup> data to increase accountability for and learning by children with disabilities,<sup>6</sup> including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities;
- ii. Understand how children with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, are included in and benefit from State and districtwide assessments;
- iii. Administer evidence-based accessible assessments that most accurately demonstrate an individual child’s current skills and potential; and
- iv. Implement assessment practices and requirements that increase and support the full participation of children with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, in State and districtwide assessments and meet the 95 percent participation rate<sup>7</sup> and 1 percent threshold<sup>8</sup> requirements

(b) Increased capacity of parents of children with disabilities to understand the statutory and regulatory bases for and the benefits of full participation of all children with disabilities in assessments, including general assessments with and without accommodations, alternate assessments based on grade-level academic achievement standards, and

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<sup>4</sup> See [34 CFR 200.6\(c\)\(3\)](#).

<sup>5</sup> For the purpose of this priority, “State and districtwide assessments” includes summative, interim, and alternate assessments.

<sup>6</sup> For the purpose of this priority, “children with disabilities” means children ages 3 through 21 with the full range of disabilities.

<sup>7</sup> See Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), [§1111\(c\)\(4\)\(E\)\(ii\)\(II\)](#).

<sup>8</sup> See [34 CFR 200.6\(c\)\(3\)](#).

alternate assessments based on alternate academic achievement standards for children with the most significant cognitive disabilities

**Absolute Priority Application Requirements:**

In addition, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the following requirements. These requirements align with the selection criteria that are proposed for this competition.

- (a) Describe in the narrative section of the application under “Significance,” how the proposed project will—
  - (1) Address the needs of SEAs and LEAs to implement appropriate assessments for children with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and analyze and use resulting data to support methods for increasing children’s participation in and performance on State and districtwide assessments. To meet this requirement, the applicant must—
    - (i) Demonstrate knowledge of current education issues and policy initiatives related to state and districtwide assessments including implementation of the 95 percent participation rate<sup>9</sup> and 1 percent threshold<sup>10</sup> requirements; and
  - (2) Present relevant national, State, and, when applicable, district data that describe the current landscape of assessment participation and performance for children with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and demonstrate the need for improved assessment and alternate assessment practices, data collection, analysis, and use, to better support improved outcomes; Strengthen accountability for children with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities, and improve their learning outcomes through improvements in the collection, analysis, and use of State and district assessment data, including data on the 95 percent participation rate<sup>11</sup> and the 1 percent threshold<sup>12</sup> requirement.
- (b) Describe, in the narrative section of the application under “Quality of the project design,” how the proposed project will—

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<sup>9</sup> See Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), [§1111\(c\)\(4\)\(E\)\(ii\)\(II\)](#).

<sup>10</sup> See [34 CFR 200.6\(c\)\(3\)](#).

<sup>11</sup> See Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), [§1111\(c\)\(4\)\(E\)\(ii\)\(II\)](#).

<sup>12</sup> See [34 CFR 200.6\(c\)\(3\)](#).

- (1) Be based on current research and make use of evidence-based<sup>13</sup> practices (EBPs);
- (2) Develop products and provide TA services that are of high quality and sufficient intensity and duration to achieve improved participation in and performance on State and districtwide assessments for children with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe—

- (i) The proposed approach to using technology to achieve the intended project outcomes, which must include the responsible use of technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) systems, to develop products and services and maximize project efficiencies;

*Note:* Review this [ED guidance](#) on the use of Federal grant funds to improve education outcomes using AI and principles for responsible use of AI.

- (ii) How it proposes to identify or develop the knowledge base on the following topics to increase the participation and learning of children with disabilities:
  - (A) The full participation of children with disabilities, including those with the most significant cognitive disabilities in accountability systems;
  - (B) Assessment accommodations;
  - (C) Alternate assessments;
  - (D) The full participation of children with disabilities in kindergarten entry assessments;
  - (E) Universal design of assessments; and
  - (F) Digitally based assessments.

- (iii) The proposed approach to universal, general TA,<sup>14</sup> which must describe—

- (A) The intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients, that will receive the products and services;

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<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of this priority, “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](#)).

<sup>14</sup> “Universal, general TA” means TA and information provided to independent users through their own initiative, resulting in minimal interaction with TA project staff. This category of TA includes information or products, such as newsletters, guidebooks, or research syntheses, downloaded from the TA project’s website by independent users. Brief communications by TA project staff with recipients, either by telephone or email, are also considered universal, general TA.

- (B) The products and services that the project proposes to make available;
  - (C) The development and maintenance of a high-quality website, with an easy-to-navigate design, that meets or exceeds government- or industry-recognized standards for accessibility; and
  - (D) The expected reach and impact of universal, general TA;
- (iv) The proposed approach to targeted, specialized TA,<sup>15</sup> which must describe—
- (A) The intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients, that will receive the products and services;
  - (B) The products and services that the project proposes to make available;
  - (C) The proposed approach to measure the readiness of potential TA recipients to work with the project, including, at a minimum, an assessment of potential recipients’ current infrastructure, available resources, and ability to build capacity at the local level; and
  - (D) The expected impact of targeted, specialized TA;
- (v) The proposed approach to intensive, sustained TA,<sup>16</sup> which must describe—
- (A) The intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients from a variety of settings and geographic distribution, that will receive the products and services designed to impact SEAs’ and LEAs’ use of assessment data to develop, evaluate and improve education policies and increase accountability for and learning of children with disabilities;
  - (B) The proposed approach to measure the readiness of SEA and LEA personnel to work with the project, including their commitment to the initiative, alignment of the initiative to their needs, current infrastructure, available resources, and ability to build capacity at the SEA and LEA levels; and
  - (C) The expected impact of intensive, sustained TA; and

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<sup>15</sup> “Targeted, specialized TA” means TA services based on needs common to multiple recipients and not extensively individualized. A relationship is established between the TA recipient and one or more TA project staff. This category can also include episodic, less labor-intensive events that extend over a period of time, such as facilitating a series of conference calls on single or multiple topics that are designed around the needs of the recipients. Facilitating communities of practice can also be considered targeted, specialized TA.

<sup>16</sup> “Intensive, sustained TA” means TA services requiring a stable, ongoing relationship between the TA project staff and the TA recipient. “TA services” are defined as negotiated series of activities designed to reach a valued outcome. This category of TA should result in changes to policy, program, practice, or operations that support increased recipient capacity or improved outcomes at one or more systems levels.

- (vi) The proposed approach to individualize TA to meet the needs of TA recipients requesting targeted or intensive TA, using recipient-provided data;
  - (3) Systematically disseminate information, products, and services to varied intended audiences. To address this requirement the applicant must describe the strategies the project will utilize to promote awareness and use of its products and services and how its products and communications will meet or exceed government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility.
- (c) Address the following application requirements. The applicant must—
- (1) Include, in Appendix A, personnel-loading charts and timelines, as applicable, to illustrate the management plan described in the narrative;
  - (2) Ensure that annual project progress toward meeting project goals is posted on the project website; and
  - (3) Include, in Appendix A, an assurance to assist OSEP with the transfer of pertinent resources and products and to maintain the continuity of services to States during the transition to a new award at the end of this award period, as appropriate.

## Selection Criteria

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

- (a) *Significance* (10 points). The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
  - (1) The extent to which the specific nature and magnitude of gaps or challenges are identified and the extent to which these gaps or challenges will be addressed by the services, supports, infrastructure, or opportunities described in the proposed project.
  - (2) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially contributions toward improving teaching practice and student learning and achievement.
- (b) *Quality of the project design* (35 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 the following factors:
  - (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 services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge and an evidence-based project component.
- (4) 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.
- (5) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the use of efficient strategies, including the use of technology, as appropriate, and the leveraging of non-project resources.

(c) *Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building* (20 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 the following factors:

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building are appropriate to the context within which the project operates and the target population of the proposed project.
- (2) 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.
- (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.

(d) *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 the following factors:

- (1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.
- (2) The adequacy of support for the project, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant or the lead applicant organization.

(3) 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.

(e) *Quality of the management plan* (20 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 the following factors:

- (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.
- (4) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality and accessible products and services from the proposed project for the target population

## Performance Measures

ED has established a set of performance measures that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities 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.

<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Description</b>
Program Performance Measure 1	The percentage of Technical Assistance and Dissemination products and services deemed to be

Performance Measure	Description
	of high quality by an independent review panel of experts qualified to review the substantive content of the products and services.
Program Performance Measure 2	The percentage of Special Education Technical Assistance and Dissemination products and services deemed by an independent review panel of qualified experts to be of high relevance to educational and early intervention policy or practice.
Program Performance Measure 3	The percentage of all Special Education Technical Assistance and Dissemination products and services deemed by an independent review panel of qualified experts to be useful in improving educational or early intervention policy or practice.
Program Performance Measure 4	The cost efficiency of the Technical Assistance and Dissemination Program includes the percentage of milestones achieved in the current annual performance report period and the percentage of funds spent during the current fiscal year.

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 (see section 605 of IDEA).
- (b) Each applicant for, and recipient of, funding under this program must involve individuals with disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

**Application Submission Information**

**Competition Resources**

Resources specific to this competition will be available on the [84.326G Grant Competition webpage](#).

## 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 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 online.

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 [Grants.gov support page](#) for help. 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 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](#)).

## 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.

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 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](#).

*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; and, 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)
- 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 Unique Entity ID (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 if applicable.
- *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 an annual set-aside of five percent of the grant amount to support emerging needs that are consistent with the proposed project's intended outcomes. 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 on the [84.326G Grant Competition webpage](#).

### **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.

**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 50 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 details in order to expedite the review process.

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 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.