



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

## Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED)

Assistance Listing Number: 84.423A

FY 2026 Grant Competition

April 16, 2026

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## Program Information

The Employment and Training Administration at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is soliciting applications in support of the administration of the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) program on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education (ED). The SEED program provides funding to increase the number of highly effective educators by supporting the implementation of evidence-based practices that prepare, develop, or enhance the skills of educators to improve student outcomes. These grants will allow eligible entities to develop, expand, and evaluate practices that can serve as models to be sustained and disseminated.

Applicants can receive competitive preference points to projects or proposals that will be carried out by State educational agency grantees. This priority aligns to the Administration's efforts to ensure federal education dollars empower states to best meet their teachers' and students' needs. Applicants can also receive competitive preference points for projects or

proposals that are designed to responsibly advance artificial intelligence and/or prioritize and expand Registered Apprenticeships.

*Assistance Listing Number:* 84.423A.

*Program Authority:* Section 2242 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA) ([20 U.S.C. 6672](#)).

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

*For Further Information:* Orman Feres. Telephone: (202) 453-6921. Email: [Orman.Feres@ED.gov](mailto:Orman.Feres@ED.gov) or [SEED@ED.gov](mailto:SEED@ED.gov).

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants.

*Estimated Available Funds:* \$90,000,000.

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

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$1 million to \$6 million per project year.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* \$3,500,000 per performance period.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 25-30.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 87 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering, and maintaining the data needed, and completing and

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

*Project Period:* Up to 36 months.

*Application Deadline:* June 1, 2026

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

## Eligibility

### Eligible Applicants

To receive funds under this program, an applicant must be:

- (a) An institution of higher education (IHE) that provides course materials or resources that are evidence-based in increasing academic achievement, graduation rates, or rates of postsecondary education matriculation;
- (b) A national nonprofit entity with a demonstrated record of raising student academic achievement, graduation rates, and rates of higher education attendance, matriculation, or completion, or of effectiveness in providing preparation and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders;
- (c) The Bureau of Indian Education; or
- (d) A partnership consisting of--
  - (i) One or more entities described in paragraph (a) or (b); and
  - (ii) A for-profit entity.

*Note:* If you are a nonprofit organization, under [34 CFR 75.51](#), you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by any of the following means: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

## Costs

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

Under section 2242 of the ESEA, each grant recipient must provide, from non-Federal sources, at least 25 percent of the total cost for each year of the project activities. These funds may be provided in cash or in-kind contributions. Applicants must include a budget showing their matching contributions on an annual basis relative to the annual budget amount of SEED grant funds and must provide evidence of their matching contributions for the first year of the grant in their grant applications.

*Note:* The combination of Federal and non-Federal funds should equal the total cost of the project. Therefore, grantees are generally required to support no less than 25 percent of the total cost of the project with non-Federal funds. Applicants are strongly encouraged to take this requirement into account when requesting Federal funds and limit their request appropriately and should verify that their project budget reflect the costs allocations appropriately. (Cost share formula: total program cost (the amount of the Federal grant + the amount of the non-Federal match) x .75 = Federal award amount).

### **Supplement-Not-Supplant**

This program involves supplement-not-supplant funding requirements. Under section 2301 of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 6691](#)), funds made available under title II of the ESEA must be used to supplement, and not supplant, non-Federal funds that would otherwise be used for activities authorized under this title.

### **Indirect Cost Rate Information**

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

### **Administrative Cost Limitation**

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

### **Subgrantees**

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: local educational agencies (LEA), IHE, State and local governments, including State educational agencies (SEA), and other public or private entities suitable to carry out

the activities proposed in the application. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application or under procedures established by the grantee.

## Renewal

Under section 2242(b)(2) of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 6672](#)), ED may renew a grant awarded under this section for one additional 24 month period, beyond the 36 month project period.

*Note:* During the course of the third year of the project period for grants awarded under this competition, we will provide details on the potential renewal process. In making decisions to award a two-year renewal award, we will review performance data submitted in regularly required reporting, and may request narrative information to be assessed using selection criteria under [34 CFR 75.210](#).

## Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Applications Available	April 16, 2026
Application Deadline	June 1, 2026
Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	July 31, 2026

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

## Program Description

### Priorities

This notice includes four absolute priorities and three competitive preference priorities. Absolute Priorities 1 and 2 are from section 2242 of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 6672](#)) and 34 CFR 75.226. Absolute Priority 3 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priorities and Definitions on Supporting Meaningful Learning Opportunities (Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priority), published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2026 ([91 FR 6625](#)). Absolute Priority 4 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priorities and Definitions on Promoting Evidence-Based Literacy, Education Choice, and Returning Education to the States (2025 Supplemental Priorities), published in the *Federal Register* on September 9, 2025 ([90 FR 43514](#)). Competitive Preference Priority 1 is from the 2025 Supplemental Priorities. Competitive Preference Priority 2 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Advancing Artificial Intelligence in Education (Advancing Artificial Intelligence Priority), published in the *Federal Register* on April 13, 2026 ([91 FR 18774](#)).

Competitive Preference Priority 3 is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness (Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness Supplemental Priority) NFP published in the Federal Register on April 13, 2026 ([91 FR 18780](#)).

*Absolute Priority:* ED considers only applications that meet either of Absolute Priority 1 or 2, and either of Absolute Priorities 3 or 4. As explained in Evidence Form section of the Application Checklist, applicants must provide evidence citation(s) to meet either Absolute Priority 1 or 2, in addition to providing evidence citation(s) for Absolute Priority 3 or 4.

*Competitive Preference Priorities:* An application may receive a maximum of 10 additional points under Competitive Preference Priority 1, a maximum of 5 additional points under Competitive Preference Priority 2, and a maximum of 5 additional points under Competitive Preference Priority 3 for a maximum of 20 additional points under the competitive preference priorities. ED will not review or award points for a competitive preference priority if an applicant fails to clearly identify it as a competitive preference priority.

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
<i>Absolute Priority 1</i>	<i>Supporting Effective Teachers</i>	Yes, Absolute Priority 1 <b>or</b> Absolute Priority 2	This priority is for projects that will implement activities that are supported by moderate evidence. Applicants under this priority may propose one or more of the following activities: (a) Providing teachers from nontraditional preparation and certification routes or pathways to serve in traditionally underserved LEAs; (b) Providing evidence-based professional development activities that address literacy, numeracy, remedial, or other needs of LEAs and the students the agencies serve; or (c) Providing teachers with evidence-based professional enhancement activities, which may include activities that lead to an advanced credential.	Not applicable
<i>Absolute Priority 2</i>	<i>Supporting Effective Principals or Other School Leaders</i>	Yes, Absolute Priority 1 <b>or</b> Absolute Priority 2	This priority is for projects that will implement activities that are supported by promising evidence. Applicants under this priority may propose one or more of the following activities:	Not Applicable

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Providing principals or other school leaders from nontraditional preparation and certification routes or pathways to serve in traditionally underserved LEAs;</li> <li>(b) Providing principals or other school leaders with evidence-based professional development activities that address literacy, numeracy, remedial, or other needs of LEAs and the students the agencies serve; or</li> <li>(c) Providing principals or other school leaders with evidence-based professional enhancement activities, which may include activities that lead to an advanced credential.</li> </ul>	
<i>Absolute Priority 3</i>	<i>Promoting Evidence-Based Literacy</i>	Yes, Absolute Priority 3 <b>or</b> Absolute Priority 4	<p>Projects or proposals to do one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Advance, increase, or expand evidence-based literacy instruction (as defined in this notice), or</li> <li>(b) Focus on evidence-based literacy instruction (as defined in this notice).</li> </ul>	Not Applicable
<i>Absolute Priority 4</i>	<i>Meaningful Learning Opportunities for Students</i>	Yes, Absolute Priority 3 <b>or</b> Absolute Priority 4	<p>Projects or proposals that are designed to strengthen core instruction through improving mathematics instruction to promote student achievement through one or more of the following priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Assisting states in developing comprehensive statewide plans to raise mathematics achievement that align with mathematics instruction based on strong, moderate, or promising evidence (as defined in <a href="#">34 CFR 77.1</a>);</li> <li>(b) Selecting, adopting, and/or implementing high-quality instructional materials in mathematics; or</li> </ul>	Not applicable

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
			(c) Offering high-quality professional development based on strong, moderate, or promising evidence (as defined in <a href="#">34 CFR 77.1</a> ) in mathematics for educators, which may include teachers, paraprofessionals, and other licensed educators or support for principals and other school leaders on managing the implementation of high-quality mathematics instruction.	
<i>Competitive Preference Priority 1</i>	<i>Returning Education to the States</i>	No	Projects or proposals that will be carried out by entities identified, designated, or endorsed by a Governor or chief State education official for purposes of implementing the project or proposal.	0 or 10 points
<i>Competitive Preference Priority 2</i>	<i>Advancing Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education</i>	No	Projects or proposals to expand the understanding of artificial intelligence through providing professional development for educators on the integration of the fundamentals of AI into their respective subject areas. <i>Note:</i> This may include AI literacy. Please see DOL's <a href="#">Artificial Intelligence Literacy Framework</a> for additional background and a resource.	Up to 5 points
<i>Competitive Preference Priority 3</i>	<i>Career Pathways and Workforce Readiness</i>	No	Projects or proposals that are designed to prioritize and expand Registered Apprenticeships in education, including Registered Apprenticeships to prepare one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Elementary educators, or</li> <li>(b) Secondary educators, by including one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Supporting the development and expansion of Registered Apprenticeship programs designed to lead to educator certification.</li> <li>(ii) Creating targeted pathways for instructional assistants, paraprofessionals,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Up to 5 points

Priority Type	Priority Title	Required	Priority Language	Points
			<p>substitute teachers, career changers, and other individuals already working in educational settings to earn teaching credentials and to become certified educators while employed.</p> <p>(iii) Aligning secondary and postsecondary educator-registered apprenticeship programs with State educator licensure requirements and workforce shortage areas.</p> <p>(iv) 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>(v) 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> <ol 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> </ol>	

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
			<i>Note:</i> Registered Apprenticeships are industry-vetted and approved and validated by DOL or a State Apprenticeship Agency as fulfilling the requirements of <a href="#">29 CFR part 29</a> .	

An applicant must identify at least one, but no more than two, citations for the purposes of meeting the evidence requirements under Absolute Priority 1 or Absolute Priority 2. In addition, an applicant must provide at least one, but no more than two, citations meeting the evidence requirements under Absolute Priority 3 or Absolute Priority 4. For more information on meeting the evidence citation requirement for this program, review the “Evidence Form” section.

## Selection Criteria

Selection criteria outline how the application will be scored. The maximum possible total score an application can receive for addressing the criteria is 100 points. The maximum possible score for addressing each criterion is indicated in parentheses following the criterion. The selection criteria for this competition are from [34 CFR 75.210](#).

- (a) *Quality of the project design (Up to 40 points):* The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:
- (i) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services. (Up to 8 points)
  - (ii) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield sustainable results that will extend beyond the project period. (Up to 8 points)
  - (iii) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes. (Up to 8 points)
  - (iv) 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. (Up to 8 points)

- (v) 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. (Up to 8 points)
- (b) *Quality of the management plan (Up to 25 points):* The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors.
- (i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program. (Up to 13 points)
  - (ii) The feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (Up to 12 points)
- (c) *Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building (Up to 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 the following factors:
- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the effectiveness of the project on relevant outcomes that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservations, as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks. (Up to 7 points)
  - (2) The extent to which performance feedback and formative data are integral to the design of the proposed project and will be used to inform continuous improvement. (Up to 6 points)
  - (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. (Up to 6 points)
  - (4) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including valid and reliable information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project. (Up to 6 points)

Note: The What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbooks are available at the [What Works Clearinghouse website](#).

(d) *Adequacy of resources (Up to 10 points)*: The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (i) The adequacy of support for the project, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant or the lead applicant organization. (Up to 5 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served, the depth and intensity of services, and the anticipated results and benefits. (Up to 5 points)

See the Appendix for the suggested scoring rubric external peer reviewers can use in evaluating applications.

## Performance Measures

The SEED program is designed to foster the use of rigorous evidence-based practices in selecting and implementing strategies and interventions that support educators' development across the continuum of their careers (e.g., in preparation, recruitment, professional learning, and leadership development). For the purposes of ED reporting under [34 CFR 75.110](#), ED has established a set of performance measures.

Applications must describe:

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

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

Program Measure	Description
Program Performance Measure 1	Percentage of teachers, principals or school leaders who serve concentrations of high-need students.
Program Performance Measure 2	Percentage of teachers, principals or school leaders who serve concentrations of high-need students and are designated as highly effective.
Program Performance Measure 3	Percentage of teachers, principals or school leaders who serve concentrations of high-need students for

Program Measure	Description
	at least two years and are designated as highly effective.
Program Performance Measure 4	Percentage of students demonstrating improvement in mathematics through pre and post assessments.
Program Performance Measure 5	Percentage of students demonstrating improvement in literacy through pre and post assessments.
Program Performance Measure 6	Number of grantees with evaluations that meet the WWC standards with reservations. Grantees will report annually on each measure.
Program Performance Measure 7	Percentage of teachers, principals or school leaders who become certified through Registered Apprenticeship programs, when applicable.

# Application Submission Information

## Pre-Application Webinar

ED will conduct informational webinars to provide technical assistance to interested applicants for grants under this program. The schedule for these informational webinars that will occur approximately 2 weeks after the publication of this notice on Grants.gov will be posted at [SEED website](#), including a Registered Apprenticeship 101 webinar hosted by DOL.

## 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.

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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](https://www.grants.gov) and click “[Register.](#)” When ready, click on “[Get Registered Now](#)” and complete the required fields.

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

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

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

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

## **Intergovernmental Review**

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

## Verify Submission

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

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

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

## Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

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

## Submission Problems – What should you do?

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

## Application Review Information

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

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

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

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, ED 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](#)).

Under section 2242 of the ESEA, we consider the following additional factors in selecting an application for an award:

- (a) ED must ensure that, to the extent practicable, grants are distributed among eligible entities that will serve geographically diverse areas, including urban, suburban, and rural areas.
- (b) ED must not award more than one grant under this program to an eligible entity during a grant competition. If an entity submits multiple applications for this competition, only the highest rated application will be considered for an award.

## Definitions

The definition of “evidence-based” is from section 8101 of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 7801](#)) (as referenced in section 2242 of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 6672\(e\)](#)). The definitions of “institution of higher education,” which incorporates by reference section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 ([20 U.S.C. 7801\(a\)](#)), “local educational agency,” “professional development,” “school leader,” and “State educational agency” are from section 8101 of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 7801](#)). The definitions of “continuous improvement,” “evaluation,” “evidence-

building,” “experimental study,” “logic model,” “moderate evidence,” “project component,” “promising evidence,” “quality data,” “quasi-experimental design study,” “relevant outcome,” and “What Works Clearinghouse Handbooks” [34 CFR 77.1](#). The definition of “national nonprofit entity” is from the notice of final definition published in the *Federal Register* on April 4, 2022 (87 FR 19388) (Final Definition). The definition of “evidence framework,” “evidence-based literacy instruction,” “experimental study,” and “quasi-experimental design study” is from the 2025 Supplemental Priorities. The definition of “artificial intelligence” is from the Advancing Artificial Intelligence Supplemental Priority.

*Artificial intelligence (AI)* has the meaning set forth in [15 U.S.C. 9401\(3\)](#).

*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.

*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.

*Evidence framework* means an approach to providing a determination about whether an activity, strategy, or intervention meets each aspect of the definition of strong evidence or moderate evidence (as defined in [20 U.S.C. 7801\(21\)\(A\)\(i\)\(I-II\)](#)), as applicable.

(a) An evidence framework must include each of the following:

- (i) Whether or not a study is an experimental study or quasi-experimental design study;
- (ii) Whether or not a study shows a positive, statistically significant effect on student outcomes or other relevant outcomes;
- (iii) Whether or not a study uses outcome measures that demonstrate validity and reliability, that do not give an unfair advantage to participants in one condition over another, and that are measured consistently for the groups or participants that are being compared;
- (iv) Whether or not a study design is otherwise of high quality, including whether it minimizes factors outside the intervention that could affect student or other relevant outcomes (confounds) and whether random assignment (if used) was done with integrity; and

- (v) Whether or not study implementation and analysis is appropriate, including whether groups or participants being compared demonstrate baseline equivalence on key individual and other relevant characteristics, whether differences in baseline equivalence are statistically controlled, and by considering the impact on the validity of the study of any changes to the sample over time.
- (b) An evidence framework may be implemented or verified by the Department or peer reviewers with statistical expertise who affirm an applicant's assertion that relevant information is strong evidence or moderate evidence because it is supported by study ratings included in the What Works Clearinghouse in one or more of:
  - (i) a practice guide;
  - (ii) an intervention report; or
  - (iii) individual studies otherwise assessed to meet strong evidence or moderate evidence.

*Evidence-based*, when used with respect to a State, LEA, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on--

- (a) Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
- (b) Moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study; or
- (c) Promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias.

*Evidence-based literacy instruction* means literacy instruction that relates to explicit, systematic and intentional instruction in phonological awareness, phonic decoding, oral and sign language, vocabulary, language structure, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and writing; promotes knowledge-rich materials; and is backed by one or more of the following, as supported by an evidence framework (as defined in this notice):

- (a) strong evidence, meaning an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study (strong evidence as defined in [20 U.S.C. 7801\(21\)\(A\)\(i\)\(I\)](#)) or

- (b) moderate evidence, meaning an activity, strategy, or intervention that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study (moderate evidence as defined in [20 U.S.C. 7801\(21\)\(A\)\(i\)\(III\)](#)).

*Evidence-building* means a systematic plan for identifying and answering questions relevant to programs and policies through performance measurement, exploratory studies, or program evaluation.

*Experimental study* (for the purposes of the Promoting Evidence-Based Literacy competitive preference priority) means a study that is designed to compare outcomes between two groups (such as students) that are otherwise equivalent except for their assignment to either a treatment group receiving an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy as compared with a control group that does not. Experimental studies can support claims of strong evidence. Randomized controlled trials and single-case design studies are specific types of experimental studies that meet this definition.

*Experimental study* (for the purpose of the other priorities) 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.

*Institution of higher education* (IHE) means an educational institution in any State that--

- (a) Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate, or persons who meet the requirements of section 484(d) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA);
- (b) Is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;
- (c) Provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree, or awards a degree that is acceptable for admission to a graduate or professional degree program, subject to review and approval by the Secretary;
- (d) Is a public or other nonprofit institution; and
- (e) Is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted pre-accreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

*Local educational agency* (LEA) means:

- (a) In General. A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools.
- (b) Administrative Control and Direction. The term includes any other public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public elementary school or secondary school.
- (c) Bureau of Indian Education Schools. The term includes an elementary school or secondary school funded by the Bureau of Indian Education but only to the extent that including the school makes the school eligible for programs for which specific eligibility is not provided to the school in another provision of law and the school does not have a student population that is smaller than the student population of

the LEA receiving assistance under the ESEA with the smallest student population, except that the school shall not be subject to the jurisdiction of any State educational agency (SEA) other than the Bureau of Indian Education.

(d) Educational Service Agencies. The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies.

(e) State Educational Agency. The term includes the SEA in a State in which the SEA is the sole educational agency for all public schools.

*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.

*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, LEA, school, or postsecondary campus), or a “potentially positive effect” on a relevant outcome based on a sample including at least 350 students or other individuals from more than one site (such as a State, county, city, LEA, school, or postsecondary campus), with no reporting of a “negative effect” or “potentially negative effect” on a relevant outcome; or
- (c) A single experimental study or quasi-experimental design study reviewed and reported by the WWC most recently using version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, 4.1, or 5.0 of the WWC Handbooks, or otherwise assessed by the Department using version 5.0 of the WWC Handbook, as appropriate, and that—
  - (i) Meets WWC standards with or without reservations;
  - (ii) Includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome;

- (iii) Includes no overriding statistically significant and negative effects on relevant outcomes reported in the study or in a corresponding WWC intervention report prepared under version 2.1, 3.0, 4.0, 4.1, or 5.0 of the WWC Handbooks; and
- (iv) Is based on a sample from more than one site (such as a State, county, city, LEA, school, or postsecondary campus) and includes at least 350 students or other individuals across sites. Multiple studies of the same project component that each meet the requirements in paragraphs (a)(i) through (iii) of this definition may together satisfy the requirement in this paragraph (c)(4).

*National nonprofit entity* means an entity that—

- (a) Meets the definition of “nonprofit” under [34 CFR 77.1\(c\)](#); and
- (b) Is of national scope, which requires that the entity—
  - (i) Provides services in three or more States; and
  - (ii) Demonstrates a proven record of serving or benefitting teachers, principals, or other school leaders across these States.

*Professional development* means activities that—

- (a) Are an integral part of school and LEA strategies for providing educators (including teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, paraprofessionals, and, as applicable, early childhood educators) with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable students to succeed in a well-rounded education and to meet the challenging State academic standards; and
- (b) Are sustained (not stand-alone, 1-day, or short term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom-focused, and may include activities that—
  - (i) Improve and increase teachers’—
    - (1) Knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach;
    - (2) Understanding of how students learn; and
    - (3) Ability to analyze student work and achievement from multiple sources, including how to adjust instructional strategies, assessments, and materials based on such analysis;

- (ii) Are an integral part of broad schoolwide and districtwide educational improvement plans;
- (iii) Allow personalized plans for each educator to address the educator's specific needs identified in observation or other feedback;
- (iv) Improve classroom management skills;
- (v) Support the recruitment, hiring, and training of effective teachers, including teachers who became certified through State and local alternative routes to certification;
- (vi) Advance teacher understanding of—
  - (1) Effective instructional strategies that are evidence-based; and
  - (2) Strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers;
- (vii) Are aligned with, and directly related to, academic goals of the school or LEA;
- (viii) Are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, other school leaders, parents, representatives of Indian Tribes (as applicable), and administrators of schools to be served under the ESEA;
- (ix) Are designed to give teachers of English Learners, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;
- (x) To the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers, principals, and other school leaders in the use of technology (including education about the harms of copyright piracy), so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and academic subjects in which the teachers teach;
- (xi) As a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;

- (xii) Are designed to give teachers of children with disabilities or children with developmental delays, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and academic support services, to those children, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, multi-tier system of supports, and use of accommodations;
- (xiii) Include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice;
- (xiv) Include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, other school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents and families;
- (xv) Involve the forming of partnerships with IHEs, including, as applicable, Tribal Colleges and Universities as defined in section 316(b) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)), to establish school-based teacher, principal, and other school leader training programs that provide prospective teachers, novice teachers, principals, and other school leaders with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers, principals, other school leaders, and faculty of such institutions;
- (xvi) Create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by an LEA receiving assistance under part A of title I of the ESEA) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers;
- (xvii) Provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in paragraph (2) of this definition that are designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom; and
- (xviii) Where practicable, provide jointly for school staff and other early childhood education program providers, to address the transition to elementary school, including issues related to school readiness.

*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).

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

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

*Quality data* encompasses utility, objectivity, and integrity of the information. “Utility” refers to how the data will be used, either for its intended use or other uses. “Objectivity” refers to data being accurate, complete, reliable, and unbiased. “Integrity” refers to the protection of data from being manipulated.

*Quasi-experimental design study* (for the purposes of the Promoting Evidence-Based Literacy competitive preference priority) 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. Cross-sectional group designs, comparative interrupted time series, difference-in-difference designs, and growth curve designs are specific types of quasi-experimental studies that meet this definition. This type of study can meet the definition of moderate evidence but not strong evidence.

*Quasi-experimental design study* (for the purpose of the other priorities) means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental study by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. This type of study, depending on design and implementation (e.g., establishment of baseline equivalence of the groups being compared), can meet WWC standards with reservations,

but cannot meet WWC standards without reservations, as described in the WWC Handbooks.

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

*School leader* means a principal, assistant principal, or other individual who is—

- (a) An employee or officer of an elementary school or secondary school, LEA, or other entity operating an elementary school or secondary school; and
- (b) Responsible for the daily instructional leadership and managerial operations in the elementary school or secondary school building.

*State educational agency (SEA)* means the agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools.

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

## Award Requirements

### Terms and Conditions

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

The Grant Award Notification document accompanying your award may contain further terms and conditions, as necessary, to ensure grantee compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative priorities.

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

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

### **Applicable Regulations**

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

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

### **Continuation Awards**

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

In making a continuation award, ED also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from 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
- ED Grant Application Form for Project Objectives and Performance Measures Information
- Evidence Form

## 2. Budget Information

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

## 3. Abstract Form

- Project Abstract

## 4. Project Narrative

- Application Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form)

## 5. Budget Narrative

- Budget Narrative Attachment Form

## 6. Other Attachments Form

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

## 7. Assurances and Certifications

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

### Part 1: Standard Documents

Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

ED Supplemental Information for SF-424

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

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

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

## **Part 2: Budget Information**

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

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

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

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

### **Section A – Budget Summary**

- *Section A-Budget Summary:* Enter the name of the grant program for which you are requesting funds in 1(a).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(b): Enter the Assistance Listing Number (84.423A).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(e) “Federal”: Include the total amount requested for the entire performance period. The amount you enter here will auto populate in 5 (e).
- *Section A-Budget Summary:* 1(f) “Non-Federal”: Only include an amount in this section if you propose to include non-Federal financial resources as part of this project, including any non-Federal funds to meet any program cost sharing requirements. If not including non-Federal financial resources, leave this blank or include 0.

- *Section A-Budget Summary: 1(g):* If using Grants.gov form, the total amount included here will be auto-calculated based on what is included in 1(e) and 1(f).

## **Section B – Budget Categories**

### Section B-Budget Categories:

- *Line 6. Object Class Categories:* The categories listed here (a-k) are the categories you will need to further describe in the Budget Narrative. For this section, only include the total amount by category for Year 1 of the project. You will provide a breakdown by category for each year of the project in the Budget Narrative. If using Grants.gov, line 6 column (1) will be auto-populated with the name of the program for which you are requesting funding.
  - *Personnel (line 6a.):* Enter project personnel salaries and wages only. Include fees and expenses for consultants on line 6f or 6h.
  - *Fringe Benefits (line 6b):* The organization’s normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.
  - *Travel (line 6c):* Indicate the travel costs of employees and participants only. Include travel of persons such as consultants on line 6f or 6h.
  - *Equipment (line 6d):* Indicate the cost of tangible, non-expendable personal property that has a usefulness greater than one year and acquisition costs that are the lesser of the capitalization level established by the applicant entity for financial statement purposes or \$10,000 per article. Lower limits may be established to maintain consistency with the applicant’s policy.
  - *Supplies (line 6e):* Show all tangible, expendable personal property. Direct supplies and materials differ from equipment in that they are consumable, expendable, and of a relatively low unit cost. Supplies purchased with grant funds should directly benefit the grant project and be necessary for achieving the goals of the project.
  - *Contractual (line 6f):* The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant’s services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.
  - *Construction (line 6g):* Construction funds are not authorized, unless specified by the program. If construction is allowable, include the amount request for construction costs.
  - *Other (line 6h):* Indicate all direct costs not covered on lines 1-6. For example, include costs such as space rental, required fees, honoraria

and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. If applicable, include stipends under other. Do not include stipends when calculating the indirect cost. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.

- *Total Direct Costs (line 6i)*: The sum of lines 6a-6h. If using Grants.gov, this number is auto-calculated.
  - *Indirect Costs (line 6j)*: Enter the amount of indirect cost in accordance with the program requirements, negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or the 15% de minimis rate. Costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. For more information, please see the grantor agency requirements. If not applicable, leave blank..
  - *Total Cost (line 6i and 6j)*: This number should be equal to sum of lines 6i-6j (total of direct costs + indirect costs). If using Grants.gov, this number is auto-calculated. The sum for column one, labeled Project Year 6 (1), should also be equal to item 15a on the application cover sheet (SF Form 424).
- *Line 7. Program Income*: You may leave this field blank.

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

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

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

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

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

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

- *Line 16 Column (a) Grant Program:* If using Grants.gov, this box will be auto-populated with the name of the program you included in Section A Line 1.
- *Line 16 Column (b) First:* Include the total amount requested for the first outyear. **Year 2 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.
- *Line 16 Column (c) Second:* Include the total amount requested for the second outyear. **Year 3 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.
- *Line 16 Column (d) Third:* Include the total amount requested for the third outyear. **Year 4 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.
- *Line 16 Column (e) Fourth:* Include the total amount requested for the fourth outyear. **Year 5 of the project.** Ensure this amount matches what is in your Budget Narrative.

## Section F – Other Budget Information

- *Line 21. Direct Charges:* You may leave this field blank.
- *Line 22. Indirect Charges:* Enter the type of indirect rate (provisional, predetermined, final or fixed) or 10% de minimis rate that will be in effect during the funding period, the estimated amount of the base to which the rate is applied, and the total indirect expense.

*Line 23. Remarks:* You may leave this field blank.

## Part 3: Abstract Form

Eligible applicants must submit a project abstract, not to exceed one page, to the Abstract Form. The one-page abstract should be limited to 2000 characters and should be written in a language that can be understood by a range of audiences. The abstract should be uploaded to the Abstract Form section and should contain the following information:

- The name and eligibility classification of each applicant;
- Provide a list of the names of all participating LEAs, State agencies (including the Bureau of Indian Education if it is an applicant), or nonprofit or for-profit organizations

or entities in the application;

- Indicate if the application is from a single eligible applicant or a partnership and identify the applicant's eligibility classification (e.g., an LEA);
- Describe the reach of the proposed project by indicating the total number of schools, teachers, principals, etc., and students directly impacted by the project in the participating LEA(s);
- A summary statement of the project objectives and activities; and
- An identification of the absolute and competitive preference priorities for which the applicant is applying.

#### **Part 4: Project Narrative**

The Project Narrative should describe the project that an applicant would carry out as well as other required elements if its application is funded. It also should include the eligible applicant's response to the Selection Criteria since the application will be evaluated and scored against these criteria. The Project Narrative should, as a general matter, follow the order of the Selection Criteria. It should contain clear headings to help ED staff and peer reviewers match the narrative with the Selection Criteria. Finally, the Project Narrative also may include the eligible applicant's response, if any, to one or both Competitive Preference Priorities.

It is also important that applicants here clearly describe their approach to the Absolute Priorities and Competitive Preference Priorities for which they intend to address. The budgetary information associated with the SEED program's 25% non-Federal matching funds requirement – and any other non-Federal resources offered to support the project – should be included in the Budget Narrative. Other relevant information about matching funds may be included in the Project Narrative. Depending on the priority, an applicant may be able to address a priority fully within the context of its selection criteria discussion. In other cases, an applicant may wish to address a priority outside of the selection criteria discussion.

The Project Narrative should be organized in the following manner in order to expedite the review process. First, a Table of Contents should be included which shows how your Project Narrative is organized and where important sections of your proposal are located. The Table of Contents should not exceed **one** double spaced page.

*ED encourages applicants to limit this section of the application to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages.* The Table of Contents does not count toward this desired limit.

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

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

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

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

- *Personnel*: List all staff positions by title including roles and responsibilities. For each position give the annual salary, the percentage of time devoted to the project, and the amount of each position’s salary funded by the grant.
- *Fringe Benefits*: The institution’s normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this line blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect cost.
- *Travel*: For grantee staff only, specify the purpose, number of staff traveling, mileage, per diem, estimated number of in-state and out-of-state trips, and other estimated costs for each type of travel.
- *Equipment*: Identify each item of equipment you expect to purchase that has an estimated acquisition cost of \$10,000 or more per unit (or if your capitalization level is less than \$10,000, use your capitalization level) and a useful lifetime of more than one year (see [2 CFR Part 200.1](#) for the definition of Equipment). List the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item.
- *Supplies*: Identify the cost of supplies (e.g., general office supplies, desk/chairs, laptops/printers, other specialty items) in the detailed budget per category. Except for general office supplies, list the item, quantity, and the unit cost per item. Supplies include all tangible personal property other than “equipment” (see [2 CFR Part 200.1](#) for the definition of Supplies). Items with a unit cost of less than \$10,000 are supplies, not “equipment.”
- *Contractual*: The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established

internal procurement system. Include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant's services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.

- *Construction*: Construction funds are not authorized.
- *Other*: Indicate all direct costs not covered elsewhere. For example, include such costs as space rental, required fees, honoraria and travel (where a contract is not in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. List items, such as stipends or incentives, not covered elsewhere. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate.
- *Indirect Costs*: Indicate the applicant's approved indirect cost rate, per sections [34 CFR 75.560 - 75.564](#). If an applicant does not have an approved indirect cost rate agreement with a cognizant Federal agency, the applicant must apply to ED for a temporary indirect cost rate if it wishes to charge indirect costs to the grant. For more information, go to [ED's website](#). In addition, a grantee, if it is eligible, may also use de minimis rate as provided for under [2 CFR 200.414\(f\)](#).
- *Total Cost*: This number should be total direct costs + indirect costs.

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

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

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

Remember that you must provide all requested budget information for each year of the project (up to 36 months) and the total amount identified in the SF-424A. The annual budget period will be October 1 – September 30. For instance, the budget for year 1 should include the estimated costs for October 1, 2026 – September 30, 2027, and so forth.

*Note About Year 1 Budget Planning*: In planning their budgets, applicants should closely align the requested Federal funds with the specific needs of their project and the timing of project activities for each grant year. In Year 1, rather than automatically budgeting for 12 months of staff salaries, applicants should account for when they intend to hire key grant personnel to determine the accurate amount of "Personnel" funds needed. In addition,

applicants should consider the expected start date for specific project activities relative to the anticipated start of the grant's period of performance (October 1, 2026) to determine the amount of funds needed in Year 1. The SEED program competition peer reviewers will take into account the feasibility of each applicant's use of funds when scoring and ranking applications.

### **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 approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#).

Required items such as the logic model for the project, letter or other documentation showing the applicant's ability and intent to meet the program's statutory matching funds requirement, and high-need school documentation should be included as appendices to the Other Attachments form. Other items such as resumes of key personnel, letters of support from project partners, and additional artifacts that support the project should also be **attached as appendices to the Other Attachments Form**. For each appendix, applicants are asked to label each file with the Appendix name and upload the file to the Other Attachments Form. Please adhere to the following guidelines when uploading appendices into the Other Attachments form:

- Eligible applicants should attach all appendices to the Other Attachments Form. The Grants.gov system will allow applicants to attach as many as ten separate appendices in this section; however, applicants are encouraged to limit the number of appendix entries to a reasonable number for a reviewer to read. The entire application package should be no larger than 8MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.
- The following structure is recommended for uploading and labeling appendices:

**Appendix A: Logic Model**

**Appendix B: Resumes of Key Personnel**

**Appendix C: Current Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement**

**Appendix D: Letters of Support and MOUs from partners, if applicable**

**Appendix E: Match Intent and Ability Letter (if applicable to the program)**

**Appendix F: Proprietary Information** - *Eligible Applicants should identify any specific proprietary information and page numbers in the application where it can be found*

**Appendix G: Other documents, if applicable**

**Appendix H: Optional SEED Applicant Checklist**

The SEED Program Office has developed an optional SEED Applicant Checklist to help prospective applicants ensure their application includes all required information before it is submitted in Grants.gov. The checklist also serves the purpose of documenting and identifying where required information can be found in the application. Submitting the optional checklist will enable ED to more efficiently and accurately, determine whether grant applications meet all eligibility requirements. Further, use of the checklist will enable reviewers and ED staff to identify where in your application required information is located and prevent your application from being found ineligible for funding because this information cannot be located. Therefore, we strongly encourage, each potential applicant to complete and submit the optional checklist. You may download a copy of the checklist from the applicant information section of the [SEED webpage](#).

## Evidence Form

As previously indicated, an applicant must identify at least one, but no more than two, citations for the purposes of meeting the evidence requirements under either Absolute Priority 1 or Absolute Priority 2. In addition, an applicant must provide at least one, but no more than two, citations meeting the evidence requirements under either Absolute Priority 3 or Absolute Priority 4. An applicant must ensure that all evidence is available to ED from publicly available sources and provide links or other guidance indicating where it is available. In addition to including up to two citations for each Absolute Priority selected, an applicant must provide a description of (1) the positive outcome(s) and practice(s) the applicant intends to replicate under its SEED grant and (2) the relevance of the outcome(s) and practice(s) to the SEED program. Applicants must use the Evidence Form to clearly identify and describe the positive outcomes related to these citations. Applicants should adhere to the following specific instructions for completing the Evidence Form.

**1. Level of Evidence.** Check the box next to the level of evidence for which you are applying. See the Notice Inviting Applications for the evidence definitions.

**2. Citation and Relevance.** Fill in the chart for each of the studies you are submitting to meet the evidence standards. If allowable under the program you are applying for, you may

add additional rows to include more than four citations. (See below for an example citation.)

**a. Research/Citation.** For Promising, Moderate, and Strong Evidence, provide the full citation for each study or WWC publication you are using as evidence. If the study has been reviewed by the WWC, please include the rating it received, the WWC review standards version, and the URL link to the description of that finding in the WWC reviewed studies database. Include a copy of the study or a URL link to the study, if available. Note that, to provide promising, moderate, or strong evidence, you must cite either a specific recommendation from a WWC practice guide, a WWC intervention report, or a publicly available, original study of the effectiveness of a component of your proposed project on a student outcome or other relevant outcome.

**b. Relevant Outcome(s)/Relevant Finding(s).** For Promising, Moderate and Strong Evidence, describe: 1) the project component included in the study (or WWC practice guide or intervention report) that is also a component of your proposed project, 2) the student outcome(s) or other relevant outcome(s) that are included in both the study (or WWC practice guide or intervention report) and in the logic model (theory of action) for your proposed project, and 3) the study (or WWC intervention report) finding(s) or WWC practice guide recommendations supporting a favorable relationship between a project component and a relevant outcome. Cite page and table numbers from the study (or WWC practice guide or intervention report), where applicable.

**c. Project Component(s)/Overlap of Population and/or Settings.** For Promising, Moderate, and Strong Evidence, explain how the population and/or setting in your proposed project are similar to the populations and settings included in the relevant finding(s). Cite page numbers from the study or WWC publication, where applicable.

## Appendix

### FY 2026 SEED Application Suggested Scoring Rubric

(a) <b>Quality of the project design (Up to 40 points):</b> <i>The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:</i>		
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Factor Scoring Guidance</b>
(i) 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 lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.	8	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-4 Adequate – 5-7 Exceptional – 8
(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield sustainable results that will extend beyond the project period.	8	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-4 Adequate – 5-7 Exceptional – 8
(iii) The quality of the logic model or other conceptual framework underlying the proposed project, including how inputs are related to outcomes.	8	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-4 Adequate – 5-7 Exceptional – 8
(iv) 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.	8	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-4 Adequate – 5-7 Exceptional – 8
(v) 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.	8	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-4 Adequate – 5-7 Exceptional – 8
(b) <b>Quality of the management plan (Up to 25 points):</b> <i>The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the</i>		

<i>quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:</i>		
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Factor Scoring Guidance</b>
(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program.	13	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-6 Adequate – 7-12 Exceptional – 13
(ii) 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.	12	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-6 Adequate – 7-11 Exceptional – 12
<b>(c) Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building (Up to 25 points):</b> <i>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:</i>		
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Factors Scoring Guidance</b>
(i) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.	7	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-3 Adequate – 4-6 Exceptional – 7
(ii) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.	6	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-3 Adequate – 4-5 Exceptional – 6
(iii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.	6	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-3 Adequate – 4-5 Exceptional – 6
(iv) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including valid	6	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-3 Adequate – 4-5 Exceptional – 6

and reliable information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.		
<b>(d) Adequacy of resources (Up to 10 points):</b> <i>The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:</i>		
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Factor Scoring Guidance</b>
(i) The adequacy of support for the project, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant or the lead applicant organization.	<b>5</b>	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-2 Adequate – 3-4 Exceptional – 5
(ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served, the depth and intensity of services, and the anticipated results and benefits.	<b>5</b>	Not Addressed – 0 Limited – 1-2 Adequate – 3-4 Exceptional – 5