



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

Competitive Grants for State Assessment Program

Assistance Listing Number: 84.368A

FY 2026 Grant Competition

Posted April 30, 2026

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Program Information

The purpose of the Competitive Grants for State Assessment (CGSA) program is to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and assessment systems used by States for measuring the academic achievement and growth of elementary and secondary school students.

Assistance Listing Number: 84.368A.

Program Authority: Section 1203(b)(1) of the ESEA ([20 U.S.C. 6363\(b\)\(1\)](#)).

OMB Control Number: 1894–0006.¹

For Further Information: Donald Peasley,
(202) 453-7518,
ESEA.Assessment@ed.gov.

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$16,556,000.

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: \$1,000,000 to \$4,000,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 4 to 6.

Project Period: Up to 48 months.

Application Deadline: June 16, 2026.

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

¹ 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 40 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 and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0006. Note: Please do not return completed applications to this address.

Award Details

ED anticipates making awards for the full project period using available appropriations.

Maximum Award: The maximum award a State may receive is \$4,000,000 for the total project period (up to 48 months).

Minimum Award: The minimum award a State may receive is proportional to the State’s proportion of the school-age children across all States.

To guide State educational agencies’ (SEAs’) planning for this competition, the table below provides the minimum award sizes for each SEA, based on available funds from the FY 2025 and FY 2026 appropriations (\$16,556,000) and FY 2025 SEA school-age child counts. We will not make an award for less than the amount specified below. This requirement comes from section 1203(b)(1)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Minimum Amount for Each SEA	ALABAMA \$253,364	ALASKA \$39,061	ARIZONA \$359,551	ARKANSAS \$157,763
	CALIFORNIA \$1,910,885	COLORADO \$272,107	CONNECTICUT \$164,287	DELAWARE \$47,882
	DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA \$27,284	FLORIDA \$1,009,733	GEORGIA \$574,327	HAWAII \$65,415
	IDAHO \$106,830	ILLINOIS \$614,864	INDIANA \$356,224	IOWA \$164,255
	KANSAS \$156,504	KENTUCKY \$229,082	LOUISIANA \$237,795	MAINE \$56,302
	MARYLAND \$308,653	MASSACHUSETTS \$303,635	MICHIGAN \$477,857	MINNESOTA \$293,770
	MISSISSIPPI \$151,223	MISSOURI \$308,653	MONTANA \$53,156	NEBRASKA \$108,574
	NEVADA \$156,323	NEW HAMPSHIRE \$56,524	NEW JERSEY \$457,683	NEW MEXICO \$102,800
	NEW YORK \$886,935	NORTH CAROLINA \$526,023	NORTH DAKOTA \$41,131	OHIO \$579,175
	OKLAHOMA \$217,950	OREGON \$188,592	PENNSYLVANIA \$593,376	RHODE ISLAND \$45,937
	SOUTH CAROLINA \$258,477	SOUTH DAKOTA \$49,308	TENNESSEE \$352,042	TEXAS \$1,716,766
	UTAH \$212,082	VERMONT \$26,012	VIRGINIA \$422,736	WASHINGTON \$371,350

	WEST VIRGINIA \$79,155	WISCONSIN \$281,652	WYOMING \$29,354	PUERTO RICO \$116,654
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Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

SEAs of the 50 States, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and consortia of such SEAs.

Costs

Cost Sharing or Matching

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

<https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-offices/oho/ocfos-financial-improvement-post-audit-operations>.

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 Uniform Guidance.

Subgrantees

A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to directly carry out project activities described in its application. (34 CFR 75.708(b) and (c))

Other

An application from a consortium of SEAs must designate one SEA as the fiscal agent.

Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Applications Available	April 30, 2026
Intent to Apply Deadline	May 29, 2026
Application Deadline	June 16, 2026
Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	August 17, 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](#).

Notice of Intent to Apply

ED will be able to review grant applications more efficiently if we know the approximate number of applicants that intend to apply. Therefore, we strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of their intent to submit an application. To do so, please email the program contact person listed under **For Further Information** with the subject line “Intent to Apply,” and include the applicant's name and a contact person's name and email address. In the case of consortia applicants, include the SEA that will serve as the fiscal agent for an award. Applicants that do not provide this notification may still apply for funding.

Program Description

Priorities

This notice includes two absolute priorities, three competitive preference priorities (CPPs), and two invitational priorities (IPs). For FY 2026, and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications for this competition, the absolute priorities, CPPs, and IPs are as reflected in this document.

Absolute Priority 1 is from the Final Priorities for the CGSA Program (2016 Final Priorities) published in the *Federal Register* on August 8, 2016 ([81 FR 52341](#)). Absolute Priority 2 is from the Secretary’s Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Meaningful Learning Opportunities (Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priority) published in the *Federal Register* on February 12, 2026 ([91 FR 6625](#)). CPP 1 is from the 2016 Final Priorities. CPPs 2 and 3 are from [section 1203\(b\)\(1\)\(A\) of the ESEA](#).

Absolute priorities: ED considers only applications that meet at least one of the absolute priorities.

ED may create two funding slates for CGSA applications, one slate for applications that meet Absolute Priority 1 and a second slate for applications that meet Absolute Priority 2. As a result, we may fund applications out of the overall rank order, but we are not bound to do so.

Competitive preference priorities: An application may receive up to an additional 2 points, depending on how well the application meets one of the three competitive preference

priorities. Each of the three competitive preference priorities is worth 2 points; and an applicant may select **only one of the three** to address in its application. The maximum number of CPP points an application may receive is 2.

Invitational priorities: ED does not give any absolute or competitive preference to applications that address IPs.

Applicants must clearly state in the project abstract and the project narrative section the specific absolute priority(ies) that the proposed project addresses and the specific CPP they wish ED to consider for purposes of earning CPP points.

The priorities for this competition are described in the table below.

Priorities	Required	Priority Language	Points
<i>Absolute Priority 1</i> —Developing Innovative Assessment Item Types and Design Approaches	Yes	<p>Under this priority, SEAs must:</p> <p>(a) Develop, evaluate, and implement new, innovative item types for use in summative assessments in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science;</p> <p>(1) Development of innovative item types under paragraph (a) may include, for example, performance tasks; simulations; or interactive, multi-step, technology-rich items that can support competency-based assessments or portfolio projects;</p> <p>(2) Projects under this priority must be designed to develop new methods for collecting evidence about a student's knowledge and abilities and ensure the quality, validity, reliability, and fairness (such as by incorporating principles of universal design for learning) of the assessment and comparability of student data; or</p> <p>(b) Develop new approaches to transform traditional, end-of-year summative assessment forms with many items into a series of modular assessment forms, each with fewer items than the end-of-year summative assessment.</p>	Not applicable

Priorities	Required	Priority Language	Points
		<p>(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must develop modular assessment approaches which can be used to provide timely feedback to educators and parents as well as be combined to provide a valid, reliable, and fair summative assessment of individual students.</p> <p>(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan to share lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.</p>	
<i>Absolute Priority 2—Meaningful Learning Opportunities</i>	Yes	<p>Projects or proposals that are designed to advance innovative assessment models through one or more of the following priority areas:</p> <p>(a) Supporting the development, implementation, and scaling of new or innovative assessment models that accurately and fairly measure all student's learning and progress, including competency- and mastery-based assessments;</p> <p>(b) Supporting the development, implementation, and scaling of assessment models that provide timely and useful information to educators, students, and families to address student learning needs;</p> <p>(c) Encouraging the use of adaptive technologies for assessments.</p>	Not applicable
<i>CPP 1 — Improving Assessment Scoring and Score Reporting</i>	No	<p>Under this priority, SEAs must:</p> <p>(a) Develop innovative tools that leverage technology to score assessments;</p> <p>(1) To respond to paragraph (a), applicants must propose projects to reduce the time it takes to provide test results to educators, parents, and students and to make it more</p>	Up to 2 points

Priorities	Required	Priority Language	Points
		<p>cost-effective to include non-multiple choice items on assessments. These innovative tools must improve automated scoring of student assessments, in particular non-multiple choice items in reading/language arts, mathematics, or science; or</p> <p>(b) Propose projects, in consultation with organizations representing parents (including parents of English learners and parents of students with disabilities), students, teachers, counselors, and school administrators to address needs related to score reporting and improve the utility of information about student performance included in reports of assessment results and provide better and more timely information to educators and parents;</p> <p>(1) To respond to paragraph (b), applicants must include one or more of the following in their projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Developing enhanced score reporting templates or digital mechanisms for communicating assessment results and their meaning (such as by providing clear and actionable next steps for parents); ii. Improving the assessment literacy of educators and parents to help them interpret test results and to support teaching and learning in the classroom (such as by providing training on test development and interpretation of test scores); and 	

Priorities	Required	Priority Language	Points
		<p>iii. Developing mechanisms for secure transmission and individual use of assessment results by teachers, students, and parents.</p> <p>(c) Applicants proposing projects under either paragraph (a) or (b) must provide a dissemination plan for sharing lessons learned and best practices such that their projects can serve as models and resources that can be shared with other States.</p>	
<i>CPP 2—</i> Assessing Student Growth	No	Under this priority, SEAs must develop or improve models to measure and assess student progress or student growth on State assessments under section 1111(b)(2) and other assessments not required under section 1111(b)(2).	Up to 2 points
<i>CPP 3—</i> Comprehensive Academic Assessment Instruments	No	Under this priority, SEAs must evaluate student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments (such as performance and technology-based academic assessments, computer adaptive assessments, projects, or extended performance task assessments) that emphasize the mastery of standards and aligned competencies in a competency-based education model.	Up to 2 points
<i>IP 1—</i> Assessment and Data Literacy	No	Under this priority, SEAs propose projects that are designed to provide training and support for the entire educational field (school leaders, teachers, parents, and the community) regarding how to interpret and use assessment data; to make informed decisions for students, schools, and systems. Projects should (a) include strategies that allow educators to select the appropriate type of assessment; (b) use the data from appropriate assessments to inform instructional design and classroom	Not applicable

Priorities	Required	Priority Language	Points
		practices that meet the needs of students and (c) implement strategies that help parents understand their student’s individual student report to support their student.	
<i>IP 2—</i> Comprehensive Assessment Systems: Aligned Formative, Diagnostic and Interim Assessments	No	Under this priority, SEAs propose projects that establish, revise, or improve formative, diagnostic, or interim assessments that are aligned with the State’s summative assessments and that complement the use and purpose of the summative assessments (i.e., while summative assessments provide an overall evaluation of whether the student has mastered the content for the particular grade and subject, these additional state-level assessments can serve additional purposes, such as providing timely feedback to teachers, educational leaders and parents that guide instructional decisions during the school year). These assessment instruments should be available to districts in the State, and the SEA should describe its plan to encourage districts to replace their existing tools with these aligned instruments.	Not applicable

Application Requirements

For FY 2026 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, applicants must demonstrate in their application that their proposed uses of funds for CGSA would be to carry out one or more of the following activities:

- (a) Developing or improving assessments for English learners, including assessments of English language proficiency as required under section 1111(b)(2)(G) of the ESEA and academic assessments in languages other than English to meet the State's obligations under section 1111(b)(2)(F) of the ESEA.
- (b) Developing or improving models to measure and assess student progress or student growth on State assessments under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA and other assessments not required under section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.
- (c) Developing or improving assessments for children with disabilities, including alternate assessments aligned to alternate academic achievement standards for students with

the most significant cognitive disabilities described in section 1111(b)(2)(D) of the ESEA, and using the principles of universal design for learning.

- (d) Allowing for collaboration with institutions of higher education, other research institutions, or other organizations to improve the quality, validity, and reliability of State academic assessments beyond the requirements for such assessments described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA.
- (e) Measuring student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.
- (f) Evaluating student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments (such as performance and technology-based academic assessments, computer adaptive assessments, projects, or extended performance task assessments) that emphasize the mastery of standards and aligned competencies in a competency-based education model.

This application requirement is from section 1203(b)(1)(B) of the ESEA, which refers to section 1201(a)(2)(C) and (H)-(L) of the ESEA)

Selection Criteria

Selection criteria outline how the application will be scored. The maximum possible score an application can receive for addressing the selection criteria is 100 points. The maximum possible score for addressing each criterion is indicated in parentheses following the criterion. Each criterion also includes the factors that reviewers will consider in determining the extent to which an applicant meets the criterion. The selection criteria for this competition are from [34 CFR 75.210](#).

- (a) *Quality of the project design (up to 60 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. (up to 10 points)
 - (2) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in this notice) that is aligned with the purposes of the grant program. (up to 5 points)
 - (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project

implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to enable successful achievement of project objectives. (up to 5 points)

- (4) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to meaningful improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous and relevant standards. (up to 10 points)
- (5) The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls, continuous improvement efforts, and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products. (up to 10 points)
- (6) The extent to which there is a plan to incorporate the project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the applicant beyond the end of the project period. (up to 10 points)
- (7) 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. (up to 10 points)

(b) *Quality of the management plan (up to 15 pts)*. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- (1) The feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (up to 5 points)
- (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. (up to 10 points)

(c) *Adequacy of resources (up to 10 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 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 10 points)

(d) *Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building (up to 15 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 extent to which the methods of evaluation or other

evidence-building are thorough, feasible, relevant, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. (up to 15 points)

Performance Measures

ED has developed performance measures for the purposes of reporting to ED under [34 CFR 75.110](#).

Applications must describe:

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

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

Program Measure	Description
Program Performance Measure 1	The percentage of grantees, for each grant cycle, that demonstrate significant progress towards improving, developing, or implementing a new model for measuring the achievement or growth of students.
Program Performance Measure 2	The percentage of grantees, for each grant cycle, that demonstrate collaboration with institutions of higher education, other research institutions, or other organizations to develop or improve State assessments
Program Performance Measure 3	The percentage of grantees that, at least three times during the period of their grants, make available to SEA staff in non-participating States and to assessment researchers information on findings resulting from the CGSA program through presentations at national conferences, publications in refereed journals, or other products disseminated to the assessment community.

In addition to providing performance measure information in applications, all grantees must submit an interim and final performance report with information that is responsive to these performance measures, as well as the accomplishments of their projects.

Definitions

For FY 2026, and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, the following definitions apply.

<i>Defined Term</i>	Source	Definition
Demonstrates a rationale	34 CFR 77.1(c)	means that there is a key project component included in the project's logic model that is supported by citations of high-quality research or evaluation findings that suggest that the project component is likely to significantly improve relevant outcomes.
Evaluation	34 CFR 77.1(c)	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-building	34 CFR 77.1(c)	means a systematic plan for identifying and answering questions relevant to programs and policies through performance measurement, exploratory studies, or program evaluation.
Project component	34 CFR 77.1(c)	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).
Logic model	34 CFR 77.1(c)	(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.
Relevant outcome	34 CFR 77.1(c)	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.
State educational agency	8101 of the ESEA	means the agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of public elementary schools and secondary schools.

Application Submission Information

Competition Resources

ED will hold a pre-application meeting via webinar for prospective applicants. For information about the pre-application webinar, visit the CGSA website at <https://www.ed.gov/grants-and-programs/grants-birth-grade-12/school-and-community-improvement-grants/competitive-grants-state-assessments#applicant-information-and-eligibility>.

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 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](#) page 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. 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—

- (1) Relevant to a criterion, priority, or other requirement that applies to the selection of applications for new grants;
- (2) Concerning the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous award under any ED program; and
- (3) 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](#).

When scoring applications, reviewers will be provided with and may consider the following the following optional scoring rubric:

Criteria	Maximum Points	Weak	Adequate	Strong
<i>Quality of Project Design</i>	60	0-20	21-44	45-60
<i>Quality of Management Plan</i>	15	0-5	6-11	12-15
<i>Adequacy of Resources</i>	10	0-3	4-7	8-10
<i>Quality of Project Evaluation</i>	15	0-5	6-11	12-15

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. To the extent that a grantee uses grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED may take appropriate enforcement action including the potential recovery of funds or may pursue termination or non-continuation.

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

Such activities may risk violating federal civil rights laws and may jeopardize federal funding. This includes any discriminatory equity ideology in violation of a Federal anti-discrimination law. A definition of “discriminatory equity ideology” is contained in Section 2(b) of Executive Order 14190. To the extent that any entity receiving grant funds under this grant uses those grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED reserves the right to take appropriate enforcement actions, including the recovery of grant funds or may pursue termination or non-continuation. The Grant Award Notification document accompanying your award may contain further terms and conditions, as necessary, to ensure grantee compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative priorities.

Applicable Regulations

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in [34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99](#). (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement) in [2 CFR part 180](#), as adopted and amended as ED regulations 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 ED regulations in [2 CFR part 3474](#). (d) the 2016 Final Priorities. (e) the Meaningful Learning Opportunities Supplemental Priority.

Note: The regulations in [34 CFR part 86](#) apply to institutions of higher education (IHEs) only.

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

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

3. ED Abstract Form

- Project Abstract

4. Project Narrative

- Application Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form)

5. Budget Narrative

- 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 ([Instructions](#))

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 (Example 84.368A).

- *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

- *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):* Indicate the applicant's approved indirect cost rate, per 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 (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 1st 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 1st 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 15% 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

The project abstract should not exceed two double spaced pages and should include a concise description of the following information:

- Proposed project objectives and activities
- Absolute Priority(ies)
- Competitive preference priority(ies), if applicable
- Proposed project outcomes
- Proposed project partners, if applicable

Part 4: Project Narrative

This section should be attached as a single document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form and should be organized in the following manner and include the following parts in order to expedite the review process.

Ensure that you only attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#). When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names.

- **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 65 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 project abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the recommended page limit does apply to the **Project Narrative**.

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 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements For Federal Awards.

Part 6: Other Attachment Forms

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

Ensure that you only attach the ED approved file types detailed in the [2025 Common Instructions](#).

Suggested order:

- Resumes/Vitae
- Letters
- Supplementary Information
- Other Appendices

Part 7: Assurances and Certifications

Be certain to complete all required assurances and certifications 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
- 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 files in Portable Document Format (PDF). ED recommends applicants submit all documents as read-only flattened 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 for review.
- 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.