DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals With Disabilities—National Center To Improve Faculty Capacity To Use Educational Technology in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Personnel Preparation and Leadership Personnel Preparation Programs

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2020 for Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities—National Center to Improve Faculty Capacity to Use Educational Technology in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Personnel Preparation and Leadership Personnel Preparation Programs, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number 84.327F. This center will identify and disseminate types of educational technologies that can enhance teaching and learning in educator and leader preparation programs in institutions of higher education (IHEs); and support learning networks for IHE faculty on using educational technologies to enhance teaching and learning in educator and leader preparation programs. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 1820–0028.

DATES: *Applications Available:* July 1, 2020.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: August 21, 2020.

Pre-Application Webinar Information: No later than July 6, 2020, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will post a pre-recorded informational webinar designed to provide technical assistance to interested applicants. The webinar may be found at *www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/new-osep-grants.html.*

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768) and available at *www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR–2019–02–13/pdf/2019–02206.pdf.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Celia Rosenquist, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Room 5158, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202–5076. Telephone: (202) 245–7373. Email: *Celia.Rosenquist@ed.gov.*

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program are to (1) improve results for children with disabilities by promoting the development, demonstration, and use of technology; (2) support educational activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom for children with disabilities; (3) provide support for captioning and video description that is appropriate for use in the classroom; and (4) provide accessible educational materials (AEM) to children with disabilities in a timely manner.[1]

Priority: This competition includes one absolute priority. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in sections 674(c)(1)(D) and 681(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); 20 U.S.C. 1474(c)(1)(D) and 1481(d).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2020 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

National Center to Improve Faculty Capacity to Use Educational Technology in Special Education, Early Intervention, and Related Services Personnel Preparation and Leadership Personnel Preparation Programs.

Background:

Educational technology (*e.g.,* adaptive courseware, digital learning environments, learning analytics, virtual learning tools, accessibility technology, communication technologies) in IHEs can potentially be transformative in how it engages, supports, and enables learning and increases opportunities and options for diverse learners (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Faculty at IHEs play a critical role in promoting knowledge and shaping the teaching methods of future special education, early intervention, and related services personnel (referred to as ''educators'' hereafter) and leaders (*e.g.,* IHE faculty; school, program, district, and State administrators). The knowledge and use of educational technology by IHE faculty serve two critical purposes. The first purpose is ensuring that future educators and leaders enrolled in preparation programs are efficiently and effectively acquiring the competencies needed to be successful in their future area of employment in special education, early intervention, or related services. The second purpose is serving as a model for future educators and leaders in how best to use educational technology to support engagement and learning in their own teaching and professional activities (Hughes et al., 2016).

Educational technology will undoubtedly play an increasing role in the future of IHEs (U.S. Department of Education, 2017), but there are variations in how technology is used and specific challenges for IHE faculty. For example, IHE faculty members' content expertise, experiences in course design, and varied technological knowledge and skills for teaching and learning influence their use of educational technology (Hughes et al., 2016). Challenges for IHE faculty include the time commitment needed to change instructional approaches and lack of access to sustained professional development to support the continued use of educational technology. The competencies needed by IHE faculty to prepare future educators and leaders have only recently been proposed and approaches to the acquisition of these competencies need to be explored (Foulger et al., 2017). Institutional barriers to faculty use of educational technology also exist in that incentives (*e.g.,* reduced teaching, financial compensation) are often not offered to IHE faculty for improving their knowledge and use of educational technology (Kolb et al., 2018). Also, educational technology continues to rapidly expand and evolve, which presents challenges for IHE faculty to keep up to date on innovative tools and strategies to best prepare future educators and leaders (U.S. Department

[1] Applicants should note that other laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 *et seq.;* 28 CFR part 35) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR part 104), may require that State educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) provide captioning, video description, and other accessible educational materials to students with disabilities when these materials are necessary to provide equally integrated and equally effective access to the benefits of the educational program or activity, or as part of a ''free appropriate public education'' as defined in 34 CFR 104.33.

of Education, 2017). Finally, the need to build faculty capacity to use educational technology is further necessitated when future educators and leaders are unable to receive, or provide, instruction in a traditional classroom setting. Faculty that have the capacity to deliver instruction utilizing distance technology, and prepare future educators and leaders to utilize such technology, will be better able to handle future disruptions in learning in the event of a natural disaster or emergency. Responses to the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID–19) pandemic at the IHE, State, and local educational agency (LEA) levels demonstrate that faculty need support to maintain continuity of operations in the event of such emergencies.

The Department therefore intends to fund a cooperative agreement to establish and operate a national center to support faculty at IHEs by improving their knowledge and use of educational technology, and their capacity to sustain its use in special education, early intervention, and related services personnel preparation and leadership personnel preparation programs.

The project must be awarded and operated in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and Federal civil rights laws.

Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to fund a cooperative agreement to establish and operate a national center to improve faculty capacity to use educational technology in special education, early intervention, and related services personnel preparation and leadership personnel preparation programs. To be considered for funding under this priority, applicants, at a minimum, must—

(a) Increase knowledge of faculty at IHEs about the range of educational technologies that can be used for educator or leadership preparation programs;

(b) Increase capacity of faculty at IHEs to use a range of educational technologies in educator or leadership preparation programs; and

(c) Increase capacity of faculty within and across IHEs to sustain professional learning networks related to the use of educational technologies in educator and leadership preparation programs.

In addition to these programmatic requirements, to be considered for funding under this priority, applicants must meet the application and administrative requirements in this priority, which are:

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under ''Significance,'' how the proposed project will—

(1) Address faculty needs at IHEs to identify, select, and use educational technology and how to integrate it into their special education, early intervention, or related services educator and leadership preparation programs. To meet this requirement the applicant must—

(i) Present information on the types of educational technology that can be used in educator and leadership preparation programs, including technologies that support distance learning;

(ii) Present information on the extent to which educator and leadership preparation programs have integrated educational technology into their courses and content; and

(iii) Identify systemic barriers, gaps, or challenges to integrating educational technology in educator and leadership preparation programs.

(b) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under ''Quality of project services,'' how the proposed project will—

(1) Ensure equal access and treatment for members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe how it will—

(i) Identify the needs of the intended recipients for technical assistance (TA) and information; and

(ii) Ensure that services and products meet the needs of the intended recipients of the grant;

(2) Achieve its goals, objectives, and intended outcomes. To meet this requirement, the applicant must provide—

(i) Measurable intended project outcomes; and

(ii) In Appendix A, the logic model [2] by which the proposed project will achieve its intended outcomes that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the proposed project;

(3) Use a conceptual framework (and provide a copy in Appendix A) to develop project plans and activities, describing any underlying concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, or theories, as well as the presumed relationships or linkages among these variables, and any empirical support for this framework;

[2] 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.

Note: The following websites provide more information on logic models and conceptual frameworks: *www.osepideasthatwork.org/logicModel* and *www.osepideasthatwork.org/resources-grantees/program-areas/ta-ta/tad-project-logic-model-and-conceptual-framework.*

(4) Be based on current literature and research on educational technology for educator and leadership preparation programs. To meet this requirement, the applicant must describe—

(i) The current research on educational technology, including technologies that support distance instruction, for educator and leadership preparation programs, the evidence-base related to its effectiveness, and the effective use of such technologies;

(ii) The current literature and research on how to support IHE faculty in the use of educational technology to prepare future educators and leaders;

(iii) The current literature and research on factors associated with the integration of educational technology, including technologies that support distance instruction, into courses and components of educator and leadership preparation programs and how to address those factors;

(iv) How the proposed project will incorporate current literature and research in the development of a framework for IHE faculty's acquisition of competencies to use educational technologies in educator and leader preparation programs;

(v) How the proposed project will identify IHE faculty or programs that have promising approaches and practices for integrating educational technology in its educator and leadership preparation programs and incorporate that information into the development of the framework; and

(vi) How the proposed project will incorporate current literature and research in the development of a framework for increasing the capacity of IHE faculty within and across IHEs to create and sustain professional learning networks related to educational technology and its integration into educator and leadership preparation programs;

(5) Develop products and provide services that are of high quality and sufficient intensity and duration to achieve the intended outcomes of the proposed project. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe—

(i) How it proposes to identify or develop the knowledge base related to educational technology for educator and leadership preparation programs, its effectiveness, and how to use the technologies; and

(ii) How it proposes to engage stakeholders in the development of a framework for—

(A) IHE faculty to acquire needed competencies for integrating educational technology in a current educator and leadership preparation program; and

(B) Increasing capacity of faculty within and across IHEs to create and sustain professional learning networks related to educational technology and its integration in educator and leadership preparation programs;

(iii) Its proposed approach to dissemination, which must identify the intended recipients, including the type and number of recipients, that will receive the products and services under this approach and should include, at a minimum, the following three elements:

(A) A plan to disseminate the knowledge base on the types, use, and effectiveness of educational technologies for educator and leadership preparation programs;

(B) A plan to disseminate the frameworks developed under paragraph (b)(5)(ii) of this priority and develop professional learning support or activities for faculty at IHEs to enhance their understanding and implementation of the frameworks; and

(C) A plan to identify and disseminate other relevant resources, including exemplar faculty and programs that have promising approaches and practices for integrating educational technology;

(iv) Its proposed approach to supporting faculty at IHEs in implementing the frameworks for integrating technology in preparation programs and professional learning networks and sustaining professional learning networks, which must identify—

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

(B) Its proposed approach to measure the readiness of potential recipients to work with the project, assessing, at a minimum, their current use of educational technology in the delivery of coursework, technology resources, and ability to build capacity at the institutional level; and

(6) Develop products and implement services that maximize efficiency. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe—

(i) How the proposed project will use technology to achieve the intended project outcomes;

(ii) With whom the proposed project will collaborate and the intended outcomes of this collaboration; and

(iii) How the proposed project will use non-project resources to achieve the intended project outcomes.

(c) In the narrative section of the application under ''Quality of the evaluation plan,'' include an evaluation plan for the project as described in the following paragraphs. The evaluation plan must describe: measures of progress in implementation, including the criteria for determining the extent to which the project's products and services have met the goals for reaching its target population; measures of intended outcomes or results of the project's activities in order to evaluate those activities; and how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project, as described in its logic model, have been met.

The applicant must provide an assurance that, in designing the evaluation plan, it will—

(1) Designate, with the approval of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) project officer, a project liaison staff person with sufficient dedicated time, experience in evaluation, and knowledge of the project to work in collaboration with the Center to Improve Program and Project Performance (CIPP [3]), the project director, and the OSEP project officer on the following tasks:

(i) Revise, as needed, the logic model submitted in the application to provide for a more comprehensive measurement of implementation and outcomes and to reflect any changes or clarifications to the model discussed at the kick-off meeting;

(ii) Refine the evaluation design and instrumentation proposed in the application consistent with the logic model (*e.g.,* prepare evaluation questions about significant program processes and outcomes; develop quantitative or qualitative data collections that permit both the collection of progress data, including fidelity of implementation, as appropriate, and the assessment of project outcomes; and identify analytic strategies); and

(iii) Revise, as needed, the evaluation plan submitted in the application such that it clearly—

(A) Specifies the measures and associated instruments or sources for data appropriate to the evaluation questions, suggests analytic strategies for those data, provides a timeline for conducting the evaluation, and includes staff assignments for completing the plan;

(B) Delineates the data expected to be available by the end of the second project year for use during the project's evaluation (3+2 review) for continued funding described under the heading *Fourth and Fifth Years of the Project;* and

(C) Can be used to assist the project director and the OSEP project officer, with the assistance of CIPP, as needed, to specify the performance measures to be addressed in the project's annual performance report.

(2) Cooperate with CIPP staff in order to accomplish the tasks described in paragraph (1) of this section; and

(3) Dedicate sufficient funds in each budget year to cover the costs of carrying out the tasks described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this section and implementing the evaluation plan.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under ''Adequacy of resources,'' how—

(1) The proposed project will encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability, as appropriate;

(2) The proposed key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors have the qualifications and experience to carry out the proposed activities and achieve the project's intended outcomes;

(3) The applicant and any key partners have adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities; and

(4) The proposed costs are reasonable in relation to the anticipated results and benefits.

(e) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under ''Quality of the management plan,'' how—

(1) The proposed management plan will ensure that the project's intended outcomes will be achieved on time and within budget. To address this requirement, the applicant must describe—

(i) Clearly defined responsibilities for key project personnel, consultants, and subcontractors, as applicable; and

(ii) Timelines and milestones for accomplishing the project tasks;

(2) Key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors will be allocated and how these allocations are

[3] The major tasks of CIPP are to guide, coordinate, and oversee the design of formative evaluations for every large discretionary investment (*i.e.,* those awarded $500,000 or more per year and required to participate in the 3+2 process) in OSEP's Technical Assistance and Dissemination; Personnel Development; Parent Training and Information Centers; and Educational Technology, Media, and Materials programs. The efforts of CIPP are expected to enhance individual project evaluation plans by providing expert and unbiased TA in designing the evaluations with due consideration of the project's budget. CIPP does not function as a third-party evaluator.

appropriate and adequate to achieve the project's intended outcomes;

(3) The proposed management plan will ensure that the products and services provided are of high quality, relevant, and useful to recipients; and

(4) The proposed project will benefit from a diversity of perspectives, including those of families, educators, TA providers, researchers, and policy makers, among others, in its development and operation.

(f) Address the following application requirements. The applicant must—

(1) Include, in Appendix A, personnel-loading charts and timelines, as applicable, to illustrate the management plan described in the narrative;

(2) Include, in the budget, attendance at the following:

(i) A one and one-half day kick-off meeting in Washington, DC, after receipt of the award, and an annual planning meeting in Washington, DC, with the OSEP project officer and other relevant staff during each subsequent year of the project period.

Note: Within 30 days of receipt of the award, a post-award teleconference must be held between the OSEP project officer and the grantee's project director or other authorized representative;

(ii) A two and one-half day project directors' conference in Washington, DC, during each year of the project period;

(iii) One annual two-day trip to attend Department briefings, Department-sponsored conferences, and other meetings, as requested by OSEP; and

(iv) A one-day intensive 3+2 review meeting in Washington, DC, during the last half of the second year of the project period;

(3) Maintain a high-quality website, with an easy-to-navigate design, that meets government or industry-recognized standards for accessibility;

(4) Ensure that annual progress toward meeting project goals is posted on the project website; and

(5) Include, in Appendix A, an assurance to assist OSEP with the transfer of pertinent resources and products and to maintain the continuity of services to States during the transition to this new award period and at the end of this award period, as appropriate.

Fourth and Fifth Years of the Project:

In deciding whether to continue funding the project for the fourth and fifth years, the Secretary will consider the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253(a), as well as—

(a) The recommendation of a 3+2 review team consisting of experts selected by the Secretary. This review will be conducted during a one-day intensive meeting that will be held during the last half of the second year of the project period;

(b) The timeliness with which, and how well, the requirements of the negotiated cooperative agreement have been or are being met by the project; and

(c) The quality, relevance, and usefulness of the project's products and services and the extent to which the project's products and services are aligned with the project's objectives and likely to result in the project achieving its intended outcomes.

Under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary may reduce continuation awards or discontinue awards in any year of the project period for excessive carryover balances or a failure to make substantial progress. The Department intends to closely monitor unobligated balances and substantial progress under this program and may reduce or discontinue funding accordingly.

References

Foulger, T.S., Graziano, K.J., Schmidt-Crawford, D. & Slykhuis, D.A. (2017). Teacher Educator Technology Competencies. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education, 25*(4), 413–448. Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education. *www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/181966/.*

Hughes, J.E., Liu, S. & Lim, M. (2016). Technological modeling: Faculty use of technologies in preservice teacher education from 2004 to 2012. *Contemporary Issues in Technology & Teacher Education, 16*(2), 184–207. *www.citejournal.org/volume-16/issue-2–16/current-practice/technological-modeling-faculty-use-of-technologies-in-preservice-teacher-education-from-2004-to-2012.*

Kolb, L., Kashef, F., Roberts, C., Terry, C., & Borthwick, A. (2018, March 1–3). *Challenges to creating and sustaining effective technology integration in teacher education programs* [Paper presentation]. American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Annual Conference, Baltimore, MD, United States.

U.S. Department of Education. (2017). Office of Educational Technology. Reimagining the role of technology in higher education: A supplement to the National Education Technology Plan. *https://tech.ed.gov/files/2017/01/Higher-Ed-NETP.pdf.*

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking: Under the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. Section 681(d) of IDEA, however, makes the public comment requirements of the APA inapplicable to the priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1474 and 1481.

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 (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian Tribes.

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

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative agreement.

Estimated Available Funds: $500,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2021 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

Maximum Award: We will not make an award exceeding $2,500,000 for the 60-month project period.

Estimated Number of Awards: 1.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* State educational agencies (SEAs); LEAs, including public charter schools that operate as LEAs under State law; IHEs; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; freely associated States and outlying areas; Indian Tribes or Tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

3. *Subgrantees:* A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application. Under 34 CFR 75.708(e), a grantee may contract for supplies, equipment, and other services in accordance with 2 CFR part 200.

4. *Other General Requirements:* (a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

(b) Each applicant for, and recipient of, funding must, with respect to the

aspects of their proposed project relating to the absolute priority, involve individuals with disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Application Submission Instructions:* Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768), and available at *www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf* which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

2. *Intergovernmental Review:* This competition is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. However, under 34 CFR 79.8(a), we waive intergovernmental review in order to make awards by the end of FY 2020.

3. *Funding Restrictions:* We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

4. *Recommended Page Limit:* The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 50 pages and (2) use the following standards:

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

The recommended page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the abstract (follow the guidance provided in the application package for completing the abstract), the table of contents, the list of priority requirements, the resumes, the reference list, the letters of support, or the appendices. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative, including all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

(a) Significance (15 Points).

(1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The significance of the problem or issue to be addressed by the proposed project;

(ii) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project;

(iii) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses;

(iv) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies; and

(v) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

(b) *Quality of project services (30 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice;

(ii) 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;

(iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services;

(iv) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services; and

(v) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services.

(c) *Quality of the project evaluation (20 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible;

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies;

(iv) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes; and

(v) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.

(d) *Adequacy of resources and quality of project personnel (20 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project and the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(3) In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator;

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel;

(iii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors;

(iv) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization;

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

(vi) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

(e) *Quality of the management plan (15 points).*

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;

(ii) 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;

(iii) The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project;

(iv) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives is brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate; and

(v) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

2. *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(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

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 the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. *Additional Review and Selection Process Factors:* In the past, the Department has had difficulty finding peer reviewers for certain competitions because so many individuals who are eligible to serve as peer reviewers have conflicts of interest. The standing panel requirements under section 682(b) of IDEA also have placed additional constraints on the availability of reviewers. Therefore, the Department has determined that for some discretionary grant competitions, applications may be separated into two or more groups and ranked and selected for funding within specific groups. This procedure will make it easier for the Department to find peer reviewers by ensuring that greater numbers of individuals who are eligible to serve as reviewers for any particular group of applicants will not have conflicts of interest. It also will increase the quality, independence, and fairness of the review process, while permitting panel members to review applications under discretionary grant competitions for which they also have submitted applications.

4. *Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:* Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose specific conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

5. *Integrity and Performance System:* If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently $250,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards—that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant—before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through SAM. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds $10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed $10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Open Licensing Requirements:* Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open

licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. *Reporting:* (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to *www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.*

(c) Under 34 CFR 75.250(b), the Secretary may provide a grantee with additional funding for data collection analysis and reporting. In this case the Secretary establishes a data collection period.

5. *Performance Measures:* Under the Government Performance Results Modernization Act of 2010, the Department has established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities Program. These measures are—

- *Program Performance Measure 1:* The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program products and services judged to be of high quality by an outside independent review panel of experts in the field that is arranged by OSEP and qualified to review the substantial content of the products and services.
- *Program Performance Measure 2:* The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program products and services judged by an outside independent review panel of experts in the field that is arranged by OSEP to be of high relevance to improving outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.
- *Program Performance Measure 3:* The percentage of Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program products and services judged by an outside independent review panel of experts in the field that is arranged by OSEP to be useful in improving results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.
- *Program Performance Measure 4.1:* The Federal cost per unit of AEM funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program.
- *Program Performance Measure 4.2:* The Federal cost per unit of AEM from the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program.
- *Program Performance Measure 4.3:* The Federal cost per unit of video description funded by the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials Program.

These measures apply to projects funded under this competition, and grantees are required to submit data on these measures as directed by OSEP.

Grantees will be required to report information on their project's performance in annual performance reports and additional performance data to the Department (34 CFR 75.590 and 75.591).

6. *Continuation Awards:* In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: Whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Secretary 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 the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (*e.g.,* braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register.** You may access the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations at *www.govinfo.gov.* At this site you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register,** in text or Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at *www.federalregister.gov.* Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Mark Schultz,

Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Delegated the authority to perform the functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Notice of Request for Information on Battery Critical Materials Supply Chain R&D

AGENCY: Advanced Manufacturing Office (AMO), Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Extension of public comment period.

SUMMARY: On June 16, 2020, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) published a notice of Request for Information (RFI) on Battery Critical Materials Supply Chain. The notice provided an opportunity for submitting electronic, written responses to the RFI by July 16, 2020. The RFI will be posted on EERE Exchange on June 29, 2020. DOE is extending the public comment period for submitting comments to the RFI by 15 days until July 31, 2020.

DATES: The comment period for the RFI published on June 16, 2020 (85 FR 36394) is extended. DOE will accept responses regarding this request for information received no later than July 31, 2020.

ADDRESSES: Interested parties are to submit comments electronically to *BatteryCriticalMaterialsRFI@ee.doe.gov.* Include Battery Critical Materials Supply Chain R&D in the subject of the title. Only electronic responses will be accepted. The complete RFI document is located at *https://eere-exchange.energy.gov/.*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Question may be addressed to Helena Khazdozian at 202–586–9236 or