

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA Nos. 84.339A; 84.339B]

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education—Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnerships (LAAP) (Preapplications and Applications); Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 1999

Purpose of Program: To provide grants or enter into contracts or cooperative agreements to enhance the delivery, quality, and accountability of postsecondary education and career-oriented lifelong learning through technology and related innovations.

For fiscal year (FY) 1999, the Secretary encourages applicants to design projects that focus on the invitational priorities summarized in the invitational priorities section of this application notice.

Eligible Applicants: Partnerships consisting of two or more independent agencies, organizations, or institutions, including institutions of higher education, community organizations, and other public and private institutions, agencies, and organizations.

Note: A nonprofit organization must serve as the fiscal agent for a funded partnership.

Applications Available: January 26, 1999.

Deadline for Transmittal of Preapplications: April 2, 1999.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: June 18, 1999.

Note: All applicants must submit a preapplication to be eligible to submit a final application.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: August 17, 1999.

Available Funds: \$10,000,000.

Note: Federal funds available under this competition provide not more than 50 percent of the cost of a project. The non-Federal share of project costs may be in cash or in kind, fairly evaluated, including services, supplies, or equipment.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$100,000 to \$500,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$333,333 per year.

Estimated Number of Awards: 25–30.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 85, and 86.

Authorized Activities

Funds awarded to an eligible partnership must be used to conduct one or more of the following activities:

(a) Develop and assess model distance learning programs or innovative educational software.

(b) Develop methodologies for the identification and measurement of skill competencies.

(c) Develop and assess innovative student support services.

(d) Support other activities consistent with the statutory purpose of this program.

Invitational Priorities

The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that meet one or more of the following invitational priorities. However, an application that meets one or more of these invitational priorities does not receive competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Invitational Priority 1—Projects to address the need to ensure that significant development costs can be justified by wide-scale applicability and long-term sustainability of technology-mediated distance education, and the need to find new ways to overcome the barriers that may inhibit faculty across institutions from working collectively.

Invitational Priority 2—Projects to address the proper balance of interactivity, flexibility, and cost in order to ensure that educational opportunities are as convenient as possible but still instructionally effective and affordable.

Invitational Priority 3—Projects to develop high quality, interactive courseware that can be implemented to achieve the scale necessary to recoup large investments, but is modular and sufficiently flexible for faculty to shape and modify academic content.

Invitational Priority 4—Projects to package courses and programs to assist students who wish to draw from the offerings of multiple providers and to assist institutions to cooperate and share resources.

Invitational Priority 5—Projects to use skill competencies and learning outcomes in order to measure student progress and achievement in technology-mediated distance learning programs.

Invitational Priority 6—Projects to improve quality and accountability of technology-mediated distance education to ensure that credentials are meaningful, that educational providers are accountable, and that courses meet high standards.

Invitational Priority 7—Projects to create new technology-mediated

education opportunities for underserved learners, especially those who have not always been well served by traditional campus-based education or common forms of distance education, including: individuals with disabilities; individuals who have lost their jobs; individuals making the transition from welfare to the workforce; and individuals seeking basic or technical skills or their first postsecondary education experience.

Invitational Priority 8—Projects to improve support services for students seeking technology-mediated distance education to ensure that they have complete and convenient access to needed services such as registration, financial aid, advising, assessment, counseling, libraries, and many others.

Selection Criteria

The Secretary selects from the criteria in 34 CFR 75.210 to evaluate preapplications and applications for this competition. Under 34 CFR 75.201, the Secretary announces in the application package the selection criteria and factors, if any, for this competition and the maximum weight assigned to each criterion.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR APPLICATIONS:

The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 3100, ROB-3, Washington, DC 20202-5175. Telephone: (202) 358-3041 to order applications; or (202) 708-5750, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday, for information. Individuals may also request applications by submitting the name of the competition, their name, and postal mailing address to the e-mail address LAAP@ED.GOV. Individuals may obtain the application text from Internet address <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/FIPSE/>. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339, between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternate format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact office listed in the preceding paragraph.

Electronic Access to This Document

Anyone may view this document, as well as all other Department of Education documents published in the **Federal Register**, in text or portable document format (pdf) via Internet at either of the following sites:

<http://ocfo.ed.gov/fedreg.htm>
<http://www.ed.gov/news.html>

To use the pdf you must have the Adobe Acrobat Reader Program with Search, which is available free at either of the previous sites. If you have questions about using the pdf, call the U.S. Government Printing Office at (202)

512-1530 or, toll free, at 1-888-293-6498.

Anyone may also view these documents in text copy only on an electronic bulletin board of the Department. Telephone: (202) 219-1511 or, toll free, 1-800-222-4922. The documents are located under Option G—Files/Announcements, Bulletins and Press Releases.

Note: The official version of a document is the document published in the **Federal Register**.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070f *et seq.*
Dated: January 20, 1999.

David A. Longanecker,
Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.

[FR Doc. 99-1720 Filed 1-25-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P