The views and opinions expressed by the panel do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of the Department.

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Dated: August 9, 2010.
Alexa Posny,
Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Overview Information; Technology and Media Services for Individuals With Disabilities—Video Description Research and Development Center; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.327J.


Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of the Technology and Media Services 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 media services activities designed to be of educational value in the classroom setting to children with disabilities, and (3) provide support for captioning and video description of educational materials that are appropriate for use in the classroom setting. In the context of this notice, educational materials for use in the classroom setting include television programs, videos, and other materials, including programs and materials associated with new and emerging technologies, such as CDs, DVDs, and other forms of multimedia.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute or otherwise authorized in the statute (see sections 674(c) and 681(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), 20 U.S.C. 1474 and 1481(d)).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2011 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants 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: Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities—Video Description Research and Development Center.

Background

To ensure that children who are blind or visually impaired have access to all educational program content, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provides competitive grant funds to support the video description of educational television programs. (See http://publicddb.tadnet.org. Use the keyword search function with the term “video description”.)

However, teachers are increasingly using the Internet and other technological devices (e.g., cell phones, smart phones, digital video cameras) rather than television for instruction. Unfortunately, much of the educational program content provided via the Internet or through other technological devices is not accessible to children who are blind or visually impaired. While progress has been made in accessibility—through video description—for television programming that is appropriate for the classroom setting, there is currently no legal requirement or any OSEP-funded project for providing video description for educational program content delivered via the Internet (e.g., YouTube, YouTube EDU, Second Life, and virtual on-line courses) or through technological devices (e.g., smart phones, cell phones, and digital video cameras). The technology needed to provide description for educational program content delivered via the Internet or through other technological devices is either just beginning to emerge or yet to be developed.

It is essential to develop methods for providing video description that can be used in conjunction with the Internet and other technological devices in order to ensure that all students who are blind or visually impaired have access to educational program content delivered
through those methods. In addition, it is important to explore emerging alternatives to video description that could improve the accessibility of educational program content (e.g., creating description by having sighted viewers verbally describe video content).

**Priority**

The purpose of this priority is to fund a cooperative agreement to support the establishment and operation of the Video Description Research and Development Center (Center). The purpose of the Center is to advance the research and development of video description, as well as alternative approaches to video description, to improve the accessibility of educational program content delivered via the Internet or through other technological devices (other than television) for students who are blind or visually impaired.

To be considered for funding under this absolute priority, applicants must meet the application requirements contained in this priority. Any project funded under this absolute priority also must meet the programmatic and administrative requirements specified in the priority.

**Application Requirements.** An applicant must include in its application the following:

(a) A detailed plan for implementing the activities described in the Project Activities and Leadership and Coordination Activities sections of this priority.

(b) A budget for attendance at the following:

(1) A one and one half-day kick-off meeting to be held in Washington, DC, within four weeks after receipt of the award, and an annual planning meeting held in Washington, DC, with the OSEP Project Officer during each subsequent year of the project period.

(2) A three-day Project Directors’ Conference in Washington, DC, during each year of the project period; and

(3) A two-day technology Project Director’s meeting in Washington, DC, during each year of the project period.

**Project Activities.** To meet the requirements of this priority, the Center, at a minimum, must conduct the following activities:

(a) Complete a systematic review and synthesis of existing research on technology that provides accessibility to educational program content that is delivered via the Internet or through other technological devices for children who are blind or visually impaired.

(b) Develop methods for providing video description that can be used in conjunction with the Internet and other technological devices in order to ensure that students who are blind or visually impaired have access to educational program content delivered through these methods.

(c) Conduct research on emerging alternatives to video description that could improve the accessibility of educational program content (e.g., creating description by having sighted viewers verbally describe video content).

(d) Collaborate with researchers and technology experts to enhance or develop new open source technologies that make educational program content—appropriate for use in the classroom and delivered via the Internet or through other technological devices (e.g., smart phones, cell phones, and digital video cameras)—accessible through video description.

(e) Systematically field-test and evaluate the efficacy of the technologies developed under paragraph (d) of this priority.

(f) Ensure that all technology developed under paragraph (d) will be available as open source materials (i.e., the source codes for the developed technology are freely available to the public).

(g) Develop and implement—upon review and approval from OSEP—a strategy for disseminating research and development findings, in open source format, to key stakeholders including educators, technology developers, vendors, researchers, and federally-funded technical assistance and dissemination projects (e.g., the National Center on Technology and Innovation and the Family Center on Technology and Disability).

**Leadership and Coordination Activities**

(a) Establish and maintain an advisory committee to review the activities and outcomes of the project and to provide programmatic support and advice throughout the project period. The committee membership must include technology experts, technical assistance providers, representatives of entities providing video description, educators, individuals with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, and individuals from communities representing rural, low-income, urban, and English language learner populations. The names of proposed members of the advisory committee must be submitted to OSEP for approval within four weeks after receipt of the award.

(b) Conduct a summative evaluation of the Center in collaboration with the Center to Improve Project Performance (CIPP) as described in the following paragraphs. This summative evaluation must examine the outcomes or impact of the Center’s activities in order to assess the effectiveness of those activities, specifically the degree to which the Center’s activities contribute to changed practice and improved implementation of technologies that provide educational program content delivered via the Internet and through other technological devices accessible to children who are blind or visually impaired.

**Note:** The major tasks of CIPP are to guide, coordinate, and oversee the summative evaluations conducted by selected Technical Assistance, Personnel Development, Parent Training and Information Center, and Technology projects that individually receive $500,000 or more funding from OSEP annually. The efforts of CIPP are expected to enhance individual project evaluations by providing expert and unbiased assistance in designing evaluations, conducting analyses, and interpreting data.

To fulfill the requirements of the summative evaluation to be conducted under the guidance of CIPP, the Center must—

(1) Hire or designate, with the approval of the OSEP Project Officer, a project liaison staff person with sufficient dedicated time and knowledge of the Center to work with CIPP on the following tasks—

(i) Planning for the Center’s summative evaluation (e.g., selecting evaluation questions, developing a timeline for the evaluation, and locating sources of relevant data);

(ii) Developing the summative evaluation design and instrumentation (e.g., determining quantitative or qualitative data collection strategies, selecting respondent samples, and pilot testing instruments);

(iii) Coordinating the evaluation timeline with the implementation of the Center’s activities;

(iv) Collecting summative data; and

(v) Writing reports of summative evaluation findings;

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

(3) Dedicate $55,000.00 per year of the annual budget request for this project to cover the costs of carrying out the tasks described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this section and of implementing the Center’s formative evaluation.

(c) Maintain ongoing communication with the OSEP Project Officer through regular teleconferences and e-mail communication.

**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 and requirements. 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(d).

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

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 institutions of higher education (IHEs) only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants. Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested $41,223,000 for the Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities program for FY 2011, of which we intend to use an estimated $1,000,000 for the competition announced in this notice. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2012 from this competition.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding $1,000,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the Federal Register. Estimated Number of Awards: 1.

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

Project Period: Up to 24 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies (SEAs); local educational agencies (LEAs); public charter schools that are LEAs under State law; IHEs; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; outlying areas; freely associated States; Indian tribes or tribal organizations; and for-profit organizations.

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

3. Other: General Requirements—(a) The projects funded under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1405)).

(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this competition must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26 in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA (20 U.S.C. 1482(a)(1)(A))).

IV. Application and Submission Information


You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: http://www.edpubs.gsa.gov or at its e-mail address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application package from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA number 84.327.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the person or team listed under Accessible Format in section VIII of this notice.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission: Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition.

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. You must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using 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, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

• Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

The 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 one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, the references, or the letters of support.

However, the page limit does apply to all of the application narrative section (Part III).

We will reject your application if you exceed the page limit; or if you apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.


Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically using the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) accessible through the Department’s e-Grants site, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery. For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery, please refer to section IV. 7. Other Submission Requirements of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual’s application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.


4. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

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

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and Central Contractor Registry: To do business with the Department of Education, (1) you must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN); (2) you must register both of those numbers with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), the Government’s primary
registrant database; and (3) you must provide those same numbers on your application.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet. A DUNS number can be created within one business day.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow 2–5 weeks for your TIN to become active.

The CCR registration process may take five or more business days to complete. If you are currently registered with the CCR, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your CCR registration on an annual basis. This may take three or more business days to complete.

7. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition may be submitted electronically or in paper format by mail or hand delivery.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

If you choose to submit your application to us electronically, you must use e-Application, accessible through the Department’s e-Grants Web site at: http://e-grants.ed.gov.

While completing your electronic application, you will be entering data online that will be saved into a database. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

Please note the following:

- Your participation in e-Application is voluntary.
- You must complete the electronic submission of your grant application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.
- E-Application will not accept an application for this competition after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process.

- The hours of operation of the e-Grants Web site are 6:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Wednesday; and 6:00 a.m. Thursday until 6:00 p.m. Sunday, Washington, DC time. Please note that, because of maintenance, the system is unavailable between 8:00 p.m. on Sunday and 6:00 a.m. on Mondays, and between 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and 6:00 a.m. on Thursdays, Washington, DC time. Any modifications to these hours are posted on the e-Grants Web site.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit your application in paper format.
- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- You must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified in this paragraph or submit a password protected file, we will not review that material.
- Your electronic application must comply with any page limit requirements described in this notice.
- Prior to submitting your electronic application, you may wish to print a copy of it for your records.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment that will include a PR/Award number (an identifying number unique to your application).
- Within three working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the SF 424 to the Application Control Center after following these steps:
  (1) Print SF 424 from e-Application.
  (2) The applicant’s Authorizing Representative must sign this form.
  (3) Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard-copy signature page of the SF 424.
  (4) Fax the signed SF 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 245–6272.
- We may request that you provide us original signatures on other forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of System Unavailability: If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because e-Application is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery. We will grant this extension if—

- (1) You are a registered user of e-Application and you have initiated an electronic application for this competition; and

(2) (a) E-Application is unavailable for 60 minutes or more between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date; or

(b) E-Application is unavailable for any period of time between 3:30 p.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

We must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension or to confirm our acknowledgment of any system unavailability, you may contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under For Further Information Contact (see VII. Agency Contact) or (2) the e-Grants help desk at 1–888–336–8930. If e-Application is unavailable due to technical problems with the system and, therefore, the application deadline is extended, an e-mail will be sent to all registered users who have initiated an e-Application.

Extensions referred to in this section apply only to the unavailability of e-Application. If e-Application is available, and, for any reason, you are unable to submit your application electronically or you do not receive an automatic acknowledgment of your submission, you may submit your application in paper format by mail or hand delivery in accordance with the instructions in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you submit your application in paper format by mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier), you must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: [CFDA Number 84.327J] LBJ Basement Level 1, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202–4260.

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

(1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.

(2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.

(3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

(4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

(1) A private metered postmark.

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.
If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly place postmarks. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you submit your application in paper format by hand delivery, you (or a courier service) must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.327J) 550 12th Street, SW., Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202–4260. The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department—

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and—if not provided by the Department—in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this grant notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245–6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this program are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are listed in the application package.

2. Review and Selection Process: 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 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. However, if the Department decides to select an equal number of applications in each group for funding, this may result in different cut-off points for fundable applications in each group.

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). 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. Reporting: 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 multi-year 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 http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

4. Performance Measures: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), 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 Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities program. These measures focus on the extent to which projects are of high quality, are relevant to improving outcomes of children with disabilities, and contribute to improving outcomes for children with disabilities. We will collect data on these measures from the projects funded under this competition.

Grantees will be required to report information on their projects’ performance in their annual performance reports to the Department (34 CFR 75.90).

VII. Agency Contact


If you use a TDD, call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

VIII. 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 computer diskette) by contacting the Grants and Contracts Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 5075, PCP, Washington, DC 20202–2550. Telephone: (202) 245–7363. If you use a TDD, call the FRS, toll free, at 1–800–877–8339.

Electronic Access to This Document: You can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister. To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site.


Dated: August 9, 2010.
Alexa Posny,
Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.