DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Application for New Awards; Training for Realtime Writers Program

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information

Training for Realtime Writers Program

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2012.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.116K.

DATES:


Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: July 6, 2012.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The objective of this program is to provide grants to institutions of higher education (IHEs) that meet certain qualifications, to promote training and placement of individuals, including individuals who have completed a court reporting training program, as realtime writers in order to meet the requirements for closed captioning of video programming set forth in section 713 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 613) and the regulations prescribed thereunder.

Priorities: This notice contains one absolute priority and three competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), the absolute priority is from section 872(a)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), 20 U.S.C. 1161s(a)(3). The competitive preference priorities are from the notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs published in the Federal Register on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR 27637).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2012 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.

Applicants must: (1) Demonstrate they possess the most substantial capability to increase their capacity to train realtime writers; (2) demonstrate the most promising collaboration with educational institutions, businesses, labor organizations, or other community groups having the potential to train or provide job placement assistance to realtime writers; or (3) propose the most promising and innovative approaches for initiating or expanding training or job placement assistance efforts with respect to realtime writers.

An eligible entity receiving a grant must use the grant funds for purposes relating to the recruitment, training and assistance, and job placement of individuals, including individuals who have completed a court reporting training program, as realtime writers, including: (1) Recruitment; (2) the provision of scholarships (subject to the requirements in section 872(c)(2) of the HEA); (3) distance learning; (4) further developing and implementing both English and Spanish curricula to more effectively train individuals in realtime writing skills, and education in the knowledge necessary for the delivery of high quality closed captioning services; (5) mentoring students to ensure successful completion of the realtime training and providing assistance in job placement; (6) encouraging individuals with disabilities to pursue a career in realtime writing; and (7) the employment and payment of personnel for the purposes described.

Competitive Preference Priorities: Within this absolute priority, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priorities. There are three competitive preference priorities:

Competitive Preference Priority 1—Improving Productivity (1 Additional Point)

Projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making (1 Additional Point)

Projects that are designed to collect (or obtain), analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, including data on program participant outcomes, in accordance with privacy requirements (as defined in this notice), in one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Improving postsecondary student outcomes relating to enrollment, persistence, and completion and leading to career success; and

(b) Providing reliable and comprehensive information on the implementation of Department of Education programs, and participant outcomes in these programs, by using data from State longitudinal data systems or by obtaining data from reliable third-party sources.

Competitive Preference Priority 3—Technology (1 Additional Point)

Projects that are designed to improve student achievement (as defined in this notice) or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Definitions

These definitions are from the notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the Federal Register.
II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: $1,127,684.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2013 from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: $200,000–$300,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: $281,921 for the entire performance period.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding $300,000 for the entire grant period. The Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the Federal Register.

Estimated Number of Awards: 4.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: An IHE that offers a court reporting program that: (1) Has a curriculum capable of training realtime writers qualified to provide captioning services; (2) is accredited by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the Secretary; and (3) is participating in student aid programs under Title IV of the HEA.

2. (a) Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

(b) Supplement-Not-Supplant: This program includes a supplement-not-supplant requirement. Under section 872(c)(4) of the HEA, grant amounts awarded under this program must supplement and not supplant other Federal or non-Federal funds of the grant recipient for purposes of promoting the training and placement of individuals as realtime writers.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: You can obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs).

To obtain a copy via the Internet, use the following address: www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapp/index.html.

To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call the following: ED Pubs, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 22207, Alexandria, VA 22304. Telephone, toll free: 1–877–433–7827. FAX: (703) 605–6794. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call, toll free: 1–877–576–7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: www.EdPubs.gov or at its email address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this program or competition as follows: CFDA number 84.116K.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audi-tape, or compact disc) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

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 program. 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. Any application addressing the competitive preference priorities must address them in the abstract and the narrative. For purposes of determining compliance with the page limit, each page on which there are words will be counted as one full page. You must limit the application narrative to no more than 15 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, except titles, headings, footnotes, endnotes, quotations, references, and captions. Charts, tables, figures, and graphs in the application narrative may be single spaced.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger; or, no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). However, you may use a 10 point font in charts, tables, figures, graphs, footnotes, and endnotes.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) and the Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF 424 Form; the one-page Abstract; the Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524); or Part IV, the Assurances and Certifications. The page...
You should review and follow the
Education Submission Procedures for
submitting an application through
Grants.gov that are included in the
application package for this competition
to ensure that you submit your
application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of
operation.
Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your
application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time
stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC
time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this
section, we will not accept your application if it is received—that is, date
and time stamped by the Grants.gov system—after 4:30 p.m., Washington,
DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application
that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your
application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your
application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system
after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

The amount of time it can take to
upload an application will vary
depending on a variety of factors,
including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection.
Therefore, we strongly recommend that
you do not wait until the application
deadline date to begin the submission
process through Grants.gov.

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including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection.
application in a timely manner to the
Grants.gov system. You can also find the
Education Submission Procedures
pertaining to Grants.gov under News
and Events on the Department’s G5
• You will not receive additional
point value because you submit your
application in electronic format, nor
will we penalize you if you qualify for
an exception to the electronic
submission requirement, as described
elsewhere in this section, and submit
your application in paper format.
• You must submit all documents
electronically, including all information
you typically provide on the following
types: 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 upload any narrative
sections and all other attachments to
your application as files in a PDF
read-only, non-modifiable format. Do not upload an
interactive or fillable PDF file. If you
upload a file type other than a read-
only, non-modifiable PDF 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.
• After you electronically submit
your application, you will receive from
Grants.gov an automatic notification of
receipt that contains a Grants.gov
tracking number. (This notification
indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not
receipt by the Department.) The
Department then will retrieve your
application from Grants.gov and send a
second notification to you by email.
This second notification indicates that
the Department has received your
application and has assigned your
application a PR/Award number (an ED-
specified identifying number unique to
your application).
• We may request that you provide us
original signatures on forms at a later
date.

Application Deadline Date Extension
in Case of Technical Issues with the
Grants.gov System: If you are
experiencing problems submitting your
application through Grants.gov, please
contact the Grants.gov Support Desk,
toll free, at 1–800–518–4726. You must
obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case
Number and must keep a record of it.
If you are prevented from
electronically submitting your
application by the application deadline
date because of technical problems with
the Grants.gov system, we will grant you
an extension until 4:30 p.m.,
Washington, DC time, the following
day to enable you to transmit your
application electronically or by
delivery. You also may mail your
application by following the mailing
instructions described elsewhere in this
notice.
If you submit an application after 4:30
p.m., Washington, DC time, on the
application deadline date, please
contact the person listed under FOR
FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT in
section VII of this notice and provide an
explanation of the technical problem
you experienced with Grants.gov, along
with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case
Number. We will accept your
application if we can confirm that a
technical problem occurred with the
Grants.gov system and that that problem
affected your ability to submit your
application by 4:30 p.m., Washington,
DC time, on the application deadline
date. The Department will contact you
after a determination is made on
whether your application will be
accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in
this section apply only to the unavailability
of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov
system. We will not grant you an extension
if you failed to fully register to submit your
application to Grants.gov before the
application deadline date and time or if the
technical problem you experienced is
unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission
Requirement: You qualify for an
exception to the electronic submission
requirement, and may submit your
application in paper format, if you are
unable to submit an application through
the Grants.gov system because—
• You do not have access to the
Internet; or
• You do not have the capacity to
upload large documents to the
Grants.gov system;
and
• No later than two weeks before the
application deadline date (14 calendar
days or, if the fourteenth calendar
day before the application deadline date
falls on a Federal holiday, the next
business day following the Federal
holiday), you mail or fax a written
statement to the Department, explaining
which of the two grounds for an
exception prevent you from using the
Internet to submit your application.
If you mail your written statement to
the Department, it must be postmarked
no later than two weeks before the
application deadline date. If you fax
your written statement to the
Department, we must receive the faxed
statement no later than two weeks
before the application deadline date.
Address and mail or fax your
statement to: Frederick Winter, Training
for Realtime Writers Program, U.S.
Department of Education, 1990 K Street
NW., Room 6142, Washington, DC
Your paper application must be
submitted in accordance with the mail
or hand delivery instructions described
in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by
Mail
If you qualify for an exception to the
electronic submission requirement, you
may mail (through the U.S. Postal
Service or a commercial carrier) your
application to the Department. 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 84.116K), 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 provide a dated postmark. Before
relying on this method, you should check
with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by
Hand Delivery
If you qualify for an exception to the
electronic submission requirement, you
(or a courier service) may deliver your
paper application to the Department by
hand. You 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 84.116K), 550 12th
Federal Register / Vol. 77, No. 57 / Friday, March 23, 2012 / Notices

Street, SW., Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202–4260.

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8 a.m. and 4:30 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 to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this 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: 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 also 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 of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Special Conditions: Under 34 CFR 74.14 and 80.12, the Secretary may impose special 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 34 CFR parts 74 or 80, as applicable; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

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 Notice (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 in this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section in 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: (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 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 www.ed.gov/fund/grant/sponsors/grantforms.html.

4. Performance Measures: The Department has established the following Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) performance measure for the Training for Realtime Writers Program: The number and percentage of participants who have completed the program who are employed as realtime writers.

This measure constitutes the Department’s indicator of success for this program. Consequently, we advise an applicant for a grant under this program to give careful consideration to this measure in conceptualizing the approach and evaluation for its proposed project.

If funded, you will be required to collect and report data in your project’s annual performance report (34 CFR 75.590).

5. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.253, the extent to which a grantee has made “substantial progress toward meeting the objectives in its approved application.” This consideration includes the review of a grantee’s progress in meeting the targets and projected outcomes in its approved application, and whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget. In making a continuation grant, 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. Agency Contact


If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the 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 compact disc) on request to the program contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT in section VII of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the Federal Register. Free Internet access to the official edition of the Federal Register and the Code of Federal Regulations is available via the Federal Digital System at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys. 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 Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this 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.
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP)

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information

Strengthening Institutions Program

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2012.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.031A.

Dates:


Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The SIP provides grants to eligible institutions of higher education (IHEs) to help them become self-sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the institution’s academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability.

Priorities: This notice includes one competitive preference priority and three invitational priorities. The competitive preference priority is from the Department’s notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the Federal Register on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR 27637).

Competitive Preference Priority: For FY 2012 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) we award up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

This priority is:

Supporting Programs, Practices, or Strategies for Which There Is Strong or Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness

Projects that are supported by strong or moderate evidence. A project that is supported by strong evidence (as defined in this notice) will receive more points than a project that is supported by moderate evidence (as defined in this notice).

Note: In scoring this priority, applicants determined to have strong evidence will receive the full five points. Applicants determined to have moderate evidence will receive 2.5 points. The Department will screen applicants’ response to this competitive preference priority in accordance with the requirements in this notice and determine which applications have met the evidence standards in the priority.

Invitational Priorities: For FY 2012 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, these priorities are invitational priorities.

These priorities are:

Invitational Priority 1—Increasing Postsecondary Success

Projects that are designed to address the following priority area:

Increasing the number and proportion of high-need students (as defined in this notice) who persist in and complete college or other postsecondary education and training.

Invitational Priority 2—Technology

Projects that are designed to improve student achievement or faculty effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing faculty to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Invitational Priority 3—Improving Productivity

Projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource).

Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, alternative staffing models, competency-based learning, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Definitions: The following definitions are from the notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs published in the Federal Register on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR 27637), and apply to the priorities in this notice:

Carefully matched comparison group design means a type of quasi-experimental study (as defined in this notice) that attempts to approximate an experimental study (as defined in this notice). More specifically, it is a design in which project participants are matched with non-participants based on key characteristics that are thought to be related to the outcome. These characteristics include, but are not limited to:

(1) Prior test scores and other measures of academic achievement (preferably, the same measures that the study will use to evaluate outcomes for the two groups);

(2) Demographic characteristics, such as age, disability, gender, English proficiency, ethnicity, poverty level, parents’ educational attainment, and single- or two-parent family background;

(3) The time period in which the two groups are studied (e.g., the two groups are children entering kindergarten in the same year as opposed to sequential years); and

(4) Methods used to collect outcome data (e.g., the same test of reading skills administered in the same way to both groups).

Note: The examples cited in this definition are indications of the types of comparisons applicants could make when designing a carefully matched comparison group study. Applicants might want to consider comparisons that are proper in the higher education context—such as comparing the same entering cohort of students.

Experimental study means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, schools, or districts to participate in a project being evaluated (treatment group) or not to participate in the project (control group). The effect of the project is the average difference in outcomes between the treatment and control groups.

Note: The types of random assignment mentioned above are provided as examples. Applicants might want to consider random assignment that is relevant in the higher education context.

High-need children and high-need students means children and students at risk of educational failure, such as children and students who are living in poverty, who are English learners, who are far below grade level, or who are not on track to becoming college- or career-ready by graduation, who have left school or college before receiving, respectively, a regular high school diploma or a college degree or...