

**DATES:** Interested persons are invited to submit comments on or before April 1, 2016.

**ADDRESSES:** To access and review all the documents related to the information collection listed in this notice, please use <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching the Docket ID number ED–2015–ICCD–0137. Comments submitted in response to this notice should be submitted electronically through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> by selecting the Docket ID number or via postal mail, commercial delivery, or hand delivery. *Please note that comments submitted by fax or email and those submitted after the comment period will not be accepted.* Written requests for information or comments submitted by postal mail or delivery should be addressed to the Director of the Information Collection Clearance Division, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., LBJ, Room 2E–103, Washington, DC 20202–4537.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For specific questions related to collection activities, please contact Meredith Bachman, 202–219–2014.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Department of Education (ED), in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format. ED is soliciting comments on the proposed information collection request (ICR) that is described below. The Department of Education is especially interested in public comment addressing the following issues: (1) Is this collection necessary to the proper functions of the Department; (2) will this information be processed and used in a timely manner; (3) is the estimate of burden accurate; (4) how might the Department enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (5) how might the Department minimize the burden of this collection on the respondents, including through the use of information technology. Please note that written comments received in response to this notice will be considered public records.

*Title of Collection:* Evaluation of Effectiveness of the Scholarships for

Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Program.

*OMB Control Number:* 1850–0800.

*Type of Review:* An extension of an existing information collection.

*Respondents/Affected Public:* State, Local, and Tribal Governments; Individuals and Households; Private Sector.

*Total Estimated Number of Annual Responses:* 2,131.

*Total Estimated Number of Annual Burden Hours:* 866.

*Abstract:* The foundation of this evaluation is a randomized control trial (RCT) comparing outcomes of eligible applicants (students and their parents) assigned by lottery to receive or not receive a scholarship. This design is consistent with the requirement for a rigorous evaluation as well as the need to fairly allocate the scholarships if the program is oversubscribed. Because the law also specified other kinds of comparisons and analyses, the planned evaluation study includes both quantitative and qualitative components.

In order for the evaluation to have sufficient statistical power to detect policy relevant impacts, the sample consists of 1,771 eligible program applicants in spring 2012 (cohort 1; n = 536), spring 2013 (cohort 2; n = 718), and in spring 2014 (cohort 3, n = 517) (see Part B of this submission). OMB approval was already obtained for this evaluation and this ICR covers follow up data collection for cohorts 2 and 3.

*Data Collection:* Evaluation data will be collected for the three cohorts of program applicants from a variety of sources listed below. Each cohort will have baseline data as well as three years of follow up (post-lottery) data collection; 2013–2015 for cohort 1, 2014–2016 for cohort 2, and 2015–2017 for cohort 3. In addition to estimating program impact, we will use this experimental study to conduct research about interim outcomes.

*Data sources include:*

—Student assessments: The Terra Nova assessment will be administered each spring following the lotteries for 3 years (spring 2013–2015 for the 2012 cohort, spring 2014–2016 for the 2013 cohort, and spring 2015–2017 for the 2014 cohort). The follow up assessments will be administered in students' school and will provide the primary outcome measure for the impact evaluation.

School records Administrative records will be collected from DCPS, the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board and participating private schools in the fall of each year to obtain

data on prior year attendance, persistence, disciplinary actions, and grades for members of the treatment and control groups.

—Parent surveys: Annual surveys of evaluation sample members' parents in each follow up year. These surveys will examine such issues as reasons for continued participation or withdrawal, involvement in school, satisfaction with school choices, and perceptions of school safety, leadership, and offerings. The survey will be mixed mode. (Web with phone or paper follow up).

Student surveys The surveys will be administered to each evaluation sample student in grades four and above in each of the follow up years at the same time (and place) as the student assessments.

—Principal surveys: Surveys to be administered to principals in the DC traditional public school, charter school, and private school systems in 2013–2017. Data from principals of students in the treatment and control groups will provide information about school organization and offerings for descriptive analyses of students' school environments and for use as mediators in the impact analysis. The web-based principal surveys will also be used to examine how aware public and private schools are of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program and whether they are making any changes in response to it. whether they are making any changes in response to it.

Dated: February 26, 2016.

**Kate Mullan,**

*Acting Director, Information Collection Clearance Division, Office of the Chief Privacy Officer, Office of Management.*

[FR Doc. 2016–04536 Filed 3–1–16; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000–01–P**

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Applications for New Awards; Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions Program

**AGENCY:** Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

**ACTION:** Notice.

*Overview Information:*  
Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (NASNTI) Program.  
Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2016.  
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.382C.

**DATES:**

*Applications Available:* March 2, 2016.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* May 2, 2016.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* June 30, 2016.

## Full Text of Announcement

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* The NASNTI Program provides grants to eligible institutions of higher education (IHEs) that have an undergraduate enrollment of at least 10 percent Native American students to assist such institutions to plan, develop, undertake, and carry out activities to improve and expand such institutions' capacity to serve Native American and low-income individuals. The program is authorized under section 371 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

*Priorities:* This notice contains one absolute priority, two competitive preference priorities, and one invitational priority. The absolute priority is from the Department's notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs (Supplemental Priorities), published in the **Federal Register** on December 10, 2014 (79 FR 73425). In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii), the competitive preference priorities are from 34 CFR 75.226.

*Absolute Priority:* For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority.

This priority is:

*Supporting High-Need Students.*

(a) Projects that are designed to improve:

- (i) Academic outcomes;
- (ii) Learning environments; or
- (iii) Both,

(b) For one or more of the following groups of students:

- (i) High-need students.
- (ii) Students with disabilities.
- (iii) English learners.
- (iv) Disconnected youth or migrant youth.
- (v) Low-skilled adults.
- (vi) Students who are members of federally recognized Indian tribes.

*Competitive Preference Priorities:* For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award one additional point to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 1 and three additional points to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 2. Applicants may address only one of the competitive preference priorities and must clearly indicate in their application which

competitive preference priority they are addressing. Applicants that apply under Competitive Preference Priority 2, but whose applications do not meet the moderate evidence of effectiveness standard, may still be considered under Competitive Preference Priority 1 to determine whether their applications meet the evidence of promise standard.

These priorities are:

*Competitive Preference Priority 1* (One additional point) Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of "evidence of promise."

*Competitive Preference Priority 2* (Three additional points) Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of "moderate evidence of effectiveness."

*Invitational Priority:* For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an invitational priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1), we do not give an application that meets this invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

This priority is:

Projects that support activities that strengthen Native American language preservation and revitalization.

*Definitions:* The following definitions are from 34 CFR 77.1 and the Supplemental Priorities.

*Disconnected youth* means low-income individuals, ages 14–24, who are homeless, are in foster care, are involved in the justice system, or are not working or enrolled in (or at risk of dropping out of) an educational institution.

*Evidence of promise* means there is empirical evidence to support the theoretical linkage(s) between at least one critical component and at least one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice.

Specifically, evidence of promise means the conditions in both paragraphs (i) and (ii) of this definition are met:

- (i) There is at least one study that is a—
  - (A) Correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias;
  - (B) Quasi-experimental design study that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations; or
  - (C) Randomized controlled trial that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with or without reservations.
- (ii) The study referenced in paragraph (i) of this definition found a statistically

significant or substantively important (defined as a difference of 0.25 standard deviations or larger) favorable association between at least one critical component and one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice.

*High-minority school* means a school as that term is defined by a local educational agency (LEA), which must define the term in a manner consistent with its State's Teacher Equity Plan, as required by section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). The applicant must provide the definition(s) of high-minority schools used in its application.

*High-need students* means students who are at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools, who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English learners.

*Large sample* means an analytic sample of 350 or more students (or other single analysis units), or 50 or more groups (such as classrooms or schools) that contain 10 or more students (or other single analysis units).

*Logic model* (also referred to as theory of action) means a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice (*i.e.*, the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally.

*Low-skilled adult* means an adult with low literacy and numeracy skills.

*Moderate evidence of effectiveness* means one of the following conditions is met:

- (i) There is at least one study of the effectiveness of the process, product, strategy, or practice being proposed that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations, found a statistically significant favorable impact on a relevant outcome (with no statistically significant and overriding unfavorable impacts on that outcome for relevant populations in the study or in other studies of the intervention reviewed by and reported on by the What Works Clearinghouse), and includes a sample that overlaps with the populations or

settings proposed to receive the process, product, strategy, or practice.

(ii) There is at least one study of the effectiveness of the process, product, strategy, or practice being proposed that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations, found a statistically significant favorable impact on a relevant outcome (with no statistically significant and overriding unfavorable impacts on that outcome for relevant populations in the study or in other studies of the intervention reviewed by and reported on by the What Works Clearinghouse), includes a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive the process, product, strategy, or practice, and includes a large sample and a multi-site sample. **Note:** multiple studies can cumulatively meet the large and multi-site sample requirements as long as each study meets the other requirements in this paragraph.

*Multi-site sample* means more than one site, where site can be defined as an LEA, locality, or State.

*Quasi-experimental design study* means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental design by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (but not What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations).

*Randomized controlled trial* means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, schools, or districts to receive the intervention being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the intervention (the control group). The estimated effectiveness of the intervention is the difference between the average outcome for the treatment group and for the control group. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

*Regular high school diploma* means the standard high school diploma that is awarded to students in the State and that is fully aligned with the State's academic content standards or a higher diploma and does not include a General Education Development (GED) credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award.

*Relevant outcome* means the student outcome(s) (or the ultimate outcome if not related to students) the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice is designed to improve; consistent with the specific goals of a program.

*State* means any of the 50 States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

*What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards* means the standards set forth in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0, March 2014), which can be found at the following link: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19>.

*Program Authority:* 20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)(7) and (b)(2)(D)(iv).

*Applicable Regulations:* (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 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 in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The Supplemental Priorities.

## II. Award Information

*Type of Award:* Discretionary grants.  
*Estimated Available Funds:* \$4,635,000.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2017 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

*Estimated Range of Awards:* \$300,000–\$350,000 per year.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* \$325,000 per year.

*Maximum Award:* We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$350,000 for a single budget period of 12 months.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 11.

**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 is eligible to receive funds under the NASNTI Program if it qualifies as a Native American-Serving Nontribal Institution. At the time of application, IHEs applying for funds under the NASNTI Program must have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 10 percent Native American, as defined as follows:

*Native American* means a person who is of a tribe, people, or culture that is indigenous to the United States.

At the time of submission of their applications, applicants must certify their total undergraduate headcount enrollment and that 10 percent of the IHE's enrollment is Native American. An assurance form, which is included in the application materials for this competition, must be signed by an official for the applicant and submitted.

To qualify as an eligible institution under the NASNTI Program, an institution must also be—

(a) Accredited or pre-accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association that the Secretary has determined to be a reliable authority as to the quality of education or training offered;

(b) Legally authorized by the State in which it is located to be a community college or to provide an educational program for which it awards a bachelor's degree; and

(c) Designated as an "eligible institution" by demonstrating that it has: (i) An enrollment of needy students as described in 34 CFR 607.3; and (ii) low average educational and general expenditures per full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student as described in 34 CFR 607.4.

**Note:** The notice announcing the FY 2016 process for designation of eligible institutions, and inviting applications for waiver of eligibility requirements, was published in the **Federal Register** on November 19, 2015 (80 FR 72422). Only institutions that the Department determines are eligible, or which are granted a waiver, may apply for a grant in this program.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This program does not require cost sharing or matching unless funds are used for an endowment.

## IV. Application and Submission Information

### 1. Address to Request Application Package:

Don Crews, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 7E311, Washington, DC 20202. You may contact these individuals at the following email addresses or telephone numbers: [Don.Crews@ed.gov](mailto:Don.Crews@ed.gov); (202) 453-7920.

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.

You can obtain an application via the Internet using the following address: [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotope, or compact disc)

by contacting one of the program contact people 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 is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria, the absolute priority, the competitive preference priorities, and the invitational priority that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We have established mandatory page limits. You must limit the section of the application narrative that addresses:

- The selection criteria to no more than 50 pages.
- The absolute priority to no more than three pages.
- A competitive preference priority, to no more than three pages, if you address one.
- The invitational priority to no more than two pages, if you address it.

Accordingly, under no circumstances may the application narrative exceed 58 pages. Include a separate heading for each priority that you address.

For the purpose of determining compliance with the page limits, each page on which there are words will be counted as one full page. Applicants must 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. Page numbers and an identifier may be within the 1" margins.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, except titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions and all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs. These items may be single-spaced. Charts, tables, figures, and graphs in the application narrative count toward the page limits.
- 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 the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424); the Supplemental Information for SF 424 Form; the Budget Information Summary Form (ED Form 524) and Budget Narrative; and the assurances and certifications. The page limit also does not apply to the table of contents,

the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, the letters of support, program profile, or the studies. If you include any attachments or appendices, these items will be counted as part of the application narrative for purposes of the page-limit requirement. You must include your complete response to the selection criteria and priorities in the application narrative.

We will reject your application if you exceed the page limits.

**3. Submission Dates and Times:**

**Applications Available:** March 2, 2016.

**Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:** May 2, 2016.

Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to *Other Submission Requirements* in section IV 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 one of the program contact people 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.

**Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:** June 30, 2016.

**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 program.

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

**6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management:** To do business with the Department of Education, you must—

- a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

- b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM) (formerly the Central Contractor Registry), the Government's primary registrant database;

- c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

- d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet at the following Web site: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. A DUNS number can be created within one to two business days.

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 two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

**Note:** Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24 to 48 hours before you can access the information in, and submit an application through, Grants.gov.

If you are currently registered with SAM, 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 registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

Information about SAM is available at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). To further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, we have prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: [www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html).

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined at the following

Grants.gov Web page: [www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html).

7. *Other Submission Requirements:* Applications for grants under the NASNTI Program must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. *Electronic Submission of Applications.*

Applications for grants under the NASNTI Program, CFDA number 84.382C, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under *Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement*.

You may access the electronic grant application for the NASNTI Program at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). You must search for the downloadable application package for this program competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.382, not 84.382C).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an 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 4:30:00 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 4:30:00 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 4:30:00 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.

- 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 program to ensure that you submit your 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 system home page at [www.G5.gov](http://www.G5.gov). In addition, for specific guidance and procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov, please refer to the Grants.gov Web site at: [www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html](http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html).

- 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 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 upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-only, non-modifiable Portable Document Format (PDF). Do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable PDF (e.g., Word, Excel, WordPerfect, etc.) or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material. Please note that this could result in your application not being considered for funding because the material in question—for example, the project narrative—is critical to a meaningful review of your proposal. For that reason it is important to allow yourself adequate time to upload all material as PDF files. The Department

will not convert material from other formats to PDF.

- 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. Grants.gov will also notify you automatically by email if your application met all the Grants.gov validation requirements or if there were any errors (such as submission of your application by someone other than a registered Authorized Organization Representative, or inclusion of an attachment with a file name that contains special characters). You will be given an opportunity to correct any errors and resubmit, but you must still meet the deadline for submission of applications.

Once your application is successfully validated by Grants.gov, the Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you an email with a unique PR/Award number for your application.

These emails do not mean that your application is without any disqualifying errors. While your application may have been successfully validated by Grants.gov, it must also meet the Department's application requirements as specified in this notice and in the application instructions. Disqualifying errors could include, for instance, failure to upload attachments in a read-only, non-modifiable PDF; failure to submit a required part of the application; or failure to meet applicant eligibility requirements. It is your responsibility to ensure that your submitted application has met all of the Department's requirements.

- 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 on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit

your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact one of the program contact people 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 the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will contact you after we determine 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 prevents 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: Don Crews, U.S.

Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 7E311, Washington, DC 20202. FAX: (202) 205-0063.

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 84.382C) 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.

**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.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date.

**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 84.382C) 550 12th Street SW., Room 7039, 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 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. We will award up to 100 points to an application under the selection criteria; the total possible points for each selection criterion are noted in parentheses.

a. **Need for project.** (Maximum 25 points) The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

1. The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project. (10 points)

2. The extent to which the proposed project will focus on serving or otherwise addressing the needs of disadvantaged individuals. (10 points)

3. 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. (5 points)

b. **Quality of the project design.** (Maximum 20 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

1. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (10 points)

2. The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (10 points)

c. **Quality of project services.** (Maximum 10 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. 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. In addition, the Secretary considers:

1. 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. (5 points)

2. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (5 points)

d. *Quality of project personnel.* (Maximum 10 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. 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.

In addition, the Secretary considers:

1. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator. (5 points)

2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (5 points)

e. *Adequacy of resources.* (Maximum 5 points) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

1. The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project. (3 points)

2. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (2 points)

f. *Quality of the management plan.* (Maximum 15 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

1. The 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. (10 points)

2. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (2.5 points)

3. The adequacy of mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project. (2.5 points)

g. *Quality of the project evaluation.* (Maximum 15 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers:

1. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. (5 points)

2. 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. (5 points)

3. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

2. *Review and Selection Process:* Awards will be made in rank order according to the average score received from a panel of three readers.

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 of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. *Tie-breaker for Grants.* To resolve ties in the reader scores of applications for grants, the Department will award one additional point to an application from an IHE that has an endowment fund for which the current market value, per FTE enrolled student, is less than the average current market value of the endowment funds, per FTE enrolled student, at comparable institutions that offer similar instruction. In addition, to resolve ties in the reader scores of applications for grants, the Department will award one additional point to an application from an IHE that has

expenditures for library materials per FTE enrolled student that are less than the average expenditures for library materials per FTE enrolled student at comparable institutions that offer similar instruction. We also will add one additional point to an application from an IHE that proposes to carry out one or more of the following activities—

- Faculty development;
- Funds and administrative management;
- Development and improvement of academic programs;
- Acquisition of equipment for use in strengthening management and academic programs;
- Joint use of facilities; and
- Student services.

For the purpose of these funding considerations, we will use the most recent complete data available (e.g., for FY 2016, we will use 2013–2014 data).

If a tie remains after applying the tie-breaker mechanism above, priority will be given to applicants that have the lowest endowment values per FTE enrolled student.

4. *Risk Assessment and Special 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 special 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.

## 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. *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](http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

4. *Performance Measures:* The Secretary has established the following key performance measures for assessing the effectiveness of the NASNTI Program:

a. The percentage change, over a five-year period, of the number of full-time, degree-seeking undergraduates enrolling at NASNTIs. Note that this is a long-term measure, which will be used to periodically gauge performance;

b. The percentage of first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students at four-year NASNTIs who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year at the same NASNTI;

c. The percentage of first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students at two-year NASNTIs who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year at the same NASNTI;

d. The percentage of first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at four-year NASNTIs who graduate within six years of enrollment; and

e. The percentage of first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at two-year NASNTIs who graduate within three years of enrollment.

5. *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. Agency Contacts

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Don Crews, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Room 7E311, Washington, DC 20202. You may contact this individual at the following email address or telephone number: [Don.Crews@ed.gov](mailto:Don.Crews@ed.gov); (202) 453-7920. 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, audiotope, or compact disc) on request to the program contact persons 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](http://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 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](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: February 26, 2016.

**Lynn Mahaffie,**

*Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning and Innovation Delegated the Duties of Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.*

[FR Doc. 2016-04593 Filed 3-1-16; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4000-01-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Request for Information: Clean Energy Investment Center

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy (DOE).

**ACTION:** Request for Information (RFI).

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE or the Department) Clean Energy Investment Center (CEIC), a component of the Office of Technology Transitions, is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to gain public input on its efforts to expand and facilitate public access to the Department's resources and to mobilize investment in U.S. clean energy technology. The CEIC also is seeking information through this RFI to further define the scope and priorities of the services it provides to the general public, specifically to mission-driven investors, as well as the investment community more broadly. The information collected may be used for internal CEIC planning and decision-making to ensure that future activities maximize public benefit while advancing the Administration's goals for leading the world in building a competitive, clean energy economy; securing America's energy future; reducing carbon pollution; and creating domestic jobs.

**DATES:** Written comments and information are requested on or before March 31, 2016.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments must be submitted electronically to [CEIC@hq.doe.gov](mailto:CEIC@hq.doe.gov). Responses must be provided as a Microsoft Word (.doc) or (.docx) attachment to the email with no more than 3 pages in length for each category section listed in the RFI. Only electronic responses will be accepted.

*Response Guidance:* Please identify your answers by responding to a specific question or topic if possible. Respondents may answer as many or as few questions as they wish.

The CEIC will not respond to individual submissions or publish a public compendium of responses. A response to this RFI will not be viewed as a binding commitment to develop or pursue the project or ideas discussed.

Respondents are requested to provide the following information at the start of their response to this RFI:

- Company/institution name;
- Company/institution contact;
- Contact's address, phone number, and email address.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Requests for additional information may be submitted electronically to Marcos Gonzales Harsha at [CEIC@hq.doe.gov](mailto:CEIC@hq.doe.gov) or by contacting the Department of Energy at 202-586-5000.