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**Katherine Neas,**

*Deputy Assistant Secretary, Delegated the authority to perform the functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Applications for New Awards; Educational Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals With Disabilities Program—Stepping-Up Technology Implementation

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

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2022 for Stepping-up Technology Implementation, Assistance Listing Number 84.327S. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 1820-0028.

**DATES:**

*Applications Available:* February 22, 2022.

*Deadline for Transmittal of Applications:* April 25, 2022.

*Deadline for Intergovernmental Review:* June 22, 2022.

*Pre-Application Webinar Information:* No later than February 28, 2022, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) will post details on pre-recorded informational webinars designed to provide technical assistance (TA) to interested applicants. Links to the webinars may be found at [www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/new-osep-grants.html](http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/osep/new-osep-grants.html).

**ADDRESSES:** For the addresses for obtaining and submitting an application, please refer to our Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on December 27, 2021 (86 FR 73264) and available at [www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979](http://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979). Please note that these Common

Instructions supersede the version published on February 13, 2019, and, in part, describe the transition from the requirement to register in *SAM.gov* a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to the implementation of the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). More information on the phase-out of DUNS numbers is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/fofo/docs/unique-entity-identifier-transition-fact-sheet.pdf>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Richelle Davis, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Room 5025, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-5076. Telephone: (202) 245-7401. Email: [Richelle.Davis@ed.gov](mailto:Richelle.Davis@ed.gov).

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

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Full Text of Announcement**

**I. Funding Opportunity Description**

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

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

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

Administrative Priorities for Discretionary Grant Programs published in the **Federal Register** on March 9, 2020 (85 FR 13640) (Administrative Priorities).

*Absolute Priority:* For FY 2022 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:  
*Supporting Early Childhood and K-12 Educators of English Learners (ELs) with Disabilities and ELs at Risk to Deliver Literacy Instruction Based on the Science of Reading.*

*Background:*

Since 2010, the number of ELs in American public schools has increased by five million students (National Center on Education Statistics, 2020). Data has consistently shown poorer academic outcomes for ELs compared to their non-EL peers, particularly in reading (Mancilla-Martinez, 2020). These poor reading outcomes are even more apparent for ELs with disabilities. For example, a greater proportion of ELs with disabilities (4th grade: 89 percent; 8th grade: 89 percent) scored below the basic level on the 2019 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading, compared to all students with disabilities who scored below the basic level (4th grade: 67 percent; 8th grade: 60 percent) or ELs without disabilities who scored below the basic level (4th grade: 61 percent; 8th grade: 68 percent) (U.S. Department of Education, 2021). This reading achievement gap for ELs has remained static for over a decade. Given EL reading outcomes, increasing equity in educational opportunity and providing supports to improve literacy skills is a pressing educational necessity (Mancilla-Martinez, 2020).

Many educators report using some type of digital learning resource or technologies to provide instruction on a daily or weekly basis to ELs (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Improving the capacity of educators to use the most appropriate and effective technologies in their delivery of literacy instruction that meet their students' needs is important for improving literacy outcomes. Technology that provides a range of support features (e.g., visual, auditory), in multiple languages, is also viewed by educators as critical for supporting ELs' learning of content and building language and literacy skills. Educators are interested in how technologies can be used to individualize and adapt literacy instruction based on the student's

individual needs while considering a student's level of English language proficiency.

Technology alone cannot be effective without the necessary professional learning and coaching to support educators on how to use the technology appropriately and effectively. Professional learning should focus on (1) how technology can improve literacy instruction; (2) how to effectively use the technology; (3) supporting meaningful collaborative learning opportunities with other educators and students; (4) aligning the technology enhanced instruction with existing curricula, State standards, and school initiatives; (5) promoting student motivation and engagement in language learning; and (6) fostering parent-teacher partnerships, including understanding the vital role of EL's families, becoming informed and appreciative of the various language and literacy practices, and building relationships between families and schools by changing instructional practices and outreach.

Professional learning should emphasize the vital role that families play in building early literacy skills of ELs, the value of the relationships and interactions of the home and community, and strategies on how to draw on the unique personal and cultural perspectives that ELs bring to the classroom (Grant et al., 2017).

#### Priority:

The purpose of this priority is to fund three cooperative agreements to establish and operate projects that achieve, at a minimum, the following expected outcomes:

(a) Proven strategies to effectively implement and integrate an existing accessible technology-based tool or approach, based on at least promising evidence,<sup>2</sup> to deliver and improve

<sup>2</sup> Promising evidence means that there is evidence of the effectiveness of a key project component in improving a relevant outcome, based on a relevant finding from one of the following: (a) A practice guide prepared by the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) reporting a "strong evidence base" or "moderate evidence base" for the corresponding practice recommendation; (b) an intervention report prepared by the WWC reporting a "positive effect" or "potentially positive effect" on a relevant outcome with no reporting of a "negative effect" or "potentially negative effect" on a relevant outcome; or (c) a single study assessed by the Department, as appropriate, that is an experimental study, a quasi-experimental design study, or a well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias (e.g., a study using regression methods to account for differences between a treatment group and a comparison group); and includes at least one statistically significant and positive (i.e., favorable) effect on a relevant outcome. See 34 CFR 77.1 for definitions of "promising evidence," "experimental study," "moderate evidence," "quasi-experimental design study," "relevant outcome," and "strong evidence."

reading instruction for ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities;

(b) Increased educators' use and knowledge of technology to deliver effective reading instruction for ELs with, or at risk for, disabilities through professional learning and coaching;

(c) Increased educator collaboration and professional learning opportunities to use technology to improve reading outcomes of ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities and to engage families to support their child's learning in the classroom and at home; and

(d) Improved engagement in reading instruction and self-regulated learning opportunities leading to improved reading achievement for ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities.

To be considered for funding under this priority, in the application, applicants must describe how they will—

(a) Build partnerships with early childhood programs or local educational agencies (LEAs), at least one of which is in a rural site,<sup>4</sup> to support educators in the understanding, use, and delivery of a technology-based tool or approach<sup>5</sup> to deliver reading instruction for ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities in PK–12 instructional settings, including classrooms and remote learning environments;

(b) Increase the capacity of educators and families to effectively use and deliver a technology-based tool or approach that supports PK–12 instructional settings, including classrooms and remote learning environments for instruction and professional growth;

(c) Develop an implementation package of accessible products and resources that will help educators and families to effectively use a technology-based tool or approach; and

(d) Evaluate whether the technology-based tool or approach meets the project goals and targeted outcomes.

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this priority, "educators" include teachers, early childhood providers, administrators, paraprofessionals, and speech-language pathologists.

<sup>4</sup> "Rural site" is based on the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) revised definitions of school locale types that can be found at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ruraled/definitions.asp>. Rural can be considered as "fringe, less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster"; "distant, more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster"; or "remote, more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster."

<sup>5</sup> "Technology-based tool or approach" refers to the technology the applicant is proposing that is supported, at a minimum, by "promising evidence" with the population intended.

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

(a) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Significance," how the proposed project will address the need for a technology-based tool or approach and identify specific gaps and challenges, infrastructure, or opportunities to support educators' development. To meet this requirement the applicant must—

(1) Identify a fully developed technology-based tool or approach that is based on at least promising evidence;

(2) Identify how the technology-based tool or approach will improve educators' pedagogy and their capacity to deliver reading instruction or services for ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities in PK–12 instructional settings, including classrooms and remote learning environments;

(3) Present applicable national, State, regional, or local data demonstrating the need for the identified technology-based tool or approach to support ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities in PK–12 instructional settings, including classrooms and remote learning environments;

(4) Identify current policies, procedures, and practices used by educators that effectively incorporate technology-based tools or approaches to support reading outcomes for ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities;

(5) Identify systemic barriers, gaps, or challenges, including challenges to using the identified technology-based tool or approach; and

(6) Describe the potential impact of the identified technology-based tool or approach on educators, families, and children with disabilities.

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

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

(i) Identify the needs of the intended recipients for ongoing professional learning and coaching supports; and

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

(2) Achieve its goals, objectives, and intended outcomes. To meet this

requirement, the applicant must provide measurable intended project outcomes;

(3) Be based on current research. To meet this requirement, the applicant must—

(i) Describe how the proposed project will align with current research, policies, and practices related to the benefits, services, or opportunities that are available using the technology-based tool or approach;

(ii) Describe how the proposed project will incorporate current and sound research and practices to guide the development and delivery of its products and resources, including accessibility and usability; and

(iii) Document that the technology tool used by the project is fully developed, has been tested and shown to have promising evidence, and addresses, at a minimum, the following principles of universal design for learning (UDL):

(A) Multiple means of presentation so that information can be delivered in more than one way (e.g., specialized software and websites, screen readers that include features such as text-to-speech, changeable color contrast, alterable text size, or selection of different reading levels);

(B) Multiple means of expression that allow knowledge to be exhibited through options such as writing, online concept mapping, or speech-to-text programs, where appropriate; and

(C) Multiple means of engagement to stimulate interest in and motivation for learning (e.g., options among several different learning activities or content for a particular competency or skill and providing opportunities for increased collaboration consistent with UDL principles); and

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

(i) Provide a plan for recruiting and selecting a wide range of settings where ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities are served, which must include the following:

(A) Three development sites.<sup>6</sup> Development sites are the sites in which iterative development of the products and resources intended to support the implementation of the technology-based tool or approach will occur. The project must start implementing the technology tool with one development site in year

one of the project period and two additional development sites in year two.

(B) Four pilot sites. Pilot sites are the sites in which try-out, formative evaluation, and refinement of the products and resources will occur. The project must work with the four pilot sites during years three and four of the project period.

(C) Ten dissemination sites. Dissemination/scale-up sites will be selected if the project is extended for a fifth year. Dissemination/scale-up sites will be used to (1) refine the products for use by educators and students, and (2) evaluate the performance of the technology tool on educators' pedagogy and students' reading outcomes. Dissemination/scale-up sites will receive less TA from the project than development and pilot sites. Also, dissemination/scale-up sites will extend the benefits of the technology tool to additional students. To be selected as a dissemination/scale-up site, eligible sites must commit to working with the project to implement the technology tool.

*Note:* The following website provides more information about implementation research: <https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/national-implementation-research-network>.

(D) A site may not serve in more than one category (i.e., development, pilot, dissemination/scale-up).

(E) A minimum of two of the seven development and pilot sites must include rural sites. A minimum of four of the 10 dissemination/scale-up sites must include rural sites.

(i) Provide information on the development and pilot sites, including student demographics and other pertinent data (e.g., whether the settings are schools identified for comprehensive or targeted support and improvement in accordance with section 1111(c)(4)(C)(iii), (c)(4)(D), or (d)(2)(C)–(D) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended);

(ii) Provide a plan for dissemination, which must address how the project will systematically distribute information, products, and services to varied intended audiences, using a variety of dissemination strategies, to promote awareness and use of the project's products and resources that goes beyond conference presentations and research articles;

(iii) Provide its plan for how the project will sustain project activities that go beyond conference presentations and research articles after funding ends; and

(v) Provide assurances that the final products disseminated to help sites effectively implement the technology-based tool or approach will be both open educational resources (OER) and licensed through an open access licensing authority.

(c) In the narrative section of the application under "Quality of the project evaluation," include an evaluation plan for the project as described in the following paragraphs. The evaluation plan must describe measures of progress in implementation, including the criteria for determining the extent to which the project's products and resources have met the goals for reaching the project's target population; measures of intended outcomes or results of the project's activities to evaluate those activities; and how the project will assess whether the goals or objectives of the proposed project, as described in its logic model,<sup>7</sup> have been met.

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

(1) Provide a logic model or conceptual framework that depicts, at a minimum, the goals, activities, project evaluation, methods, performance measures, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project;

(2) Provide a plan to implement the activities described in this priority;

(3) Provide a plan, linked to the proposed project's logic model or conceptual framework, for a formative evaluation of the proposed project's activities. The plan must describe how the formative evaluation will use clear performance objectives to ensure continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project, including objective measures of progress in implementing the project and ensuring the quality of products and resources;

(4) Describe a plan or method for assessing—

(i) The development and pilot sites' current educator training use and needs, any current technology investments, and the knowledge and availability of dedicated on-site technology training personnel;

(ii) The readiness of development and pilot sites to pilot or try-out the technology-based tool or approach, including, at a minimum, their current

<sup>7</sup> Logic model (34 CFR 77.1) (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

<sup>6</sup> For this priority, a "site" is a school building or early childhood program within the local educational agency (LEA) or early childhood agency (ECA).

infrastructure, available resources, and ability to build capacity;

(iii) Whether the technology-based tool or approach has achieved its intended outcomes for PK–12 educators, families, and EL students with, and at risk for, disabilities; and

(iv) The ongoing professional learning needs of educators to implement with fidelity;

(5) Collect formative and summative data from the professional learning and coaching to refine and evaluate the products;

(6) If the project is extended to a fifth year—

(i) Provide the implementation package of products and resources developed for the technology-based tool or approach to no fewer than 10 additional school sites, four of which must be rural, in year five; and

(ii) Collect summative data about the success of the project's products and resources in supporting implementation of the technology-based tool or approach for educators and families of ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities; and

(7) By the end of the project period, provide—

(i) Information on the products and resources, as supported by the project evaluation, including accessibility features, that will enable other sites to implement and sustain implementation of the technology-based tool or approach;

(ii) Information in the project's Implementation Report, including data on how intended users (e.g., educators, families, and students) utilized the technology-based tool or approach, how the technology-based tool or approach was implemented with fidelity, and how effective the technology-based tool or approach was in improving reading outcomes for ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities;

(iii) Data on how the technology-based tool or approach changed educators' practices; and

(iv) A plan for disseminating or scaling up the technology-based tool or approach and accompanying products beyond the sites directly involved in the project.

(d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under "Adequacy of resources and quality of project personnel," how—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(2) Key project personnel and any consultants and subcontractors will be allocated and how these allocations are appropriate and adequate to achieve the project's intended outcomes;

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

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

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

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

(2) In Appendix A, the logic model or conceptual framework by which the proposed project will develop project plans and activities and achieve its intended outcomes. The logic model or conceptual framework must include a description of any underlying concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, or theories, as well as the presumed relationships or linkages among these variables, and any empirical support for this framework and depict, at a minimum, the goals, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes of the proposed project.

*Note:* The following websites provide more information on logic models and conceptual frameworks: [www.osepideastthatwork.org/logicModel](http://www.osepideastthatwork.org/logicModel) and [www.osepideastthatwork.org/](http://www.osepideastthatwork.org/)

*resources-grantees/program-areas/ta-ta-tad-project-logic-model-and-conceptual-framework;* and

(3) In the budget, attendance at the following:

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

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

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

(iii) Two annual two-day trips, or virtually, to attend Department briefings, Department-sponsored conferences, and other meetings, as requested by OSEP.

(iv) A one-day intensive, virtual OSEP review meeting during the last half of the second year of the project period.

*Cohort Collaboration and Support* OSEP project officer(s) will provide coordination support among the projects. Each project funded under this priority must—

(a) Participate in monthly conference-call discussions to share and collaborate on implementation and project issues; and

(b) Provide information annually using a template that captures descriptive data on project site selection and the processes for implementation and use of the technology-based tool or approach.

#### *Fifth Year of Project*

The Secretary may extend a project one year beyond the initial 48 months to work with dissemination/scale-up sites if the grantee is substantially achieving the intended outcomes of the project (as demonstrated by data gathered as part of the project evaluation) and making a positive contribution to the implementation of a technology-based tool or approach based on at least promising evidence in the development and pilot sites. Each applicant must include in its application a plan for the full 60-month period. In deciding whether to continue funding the project for the fifth year, the Secretary will consider the requirements of 34 CFR 75.253(a), including—

(a) The recommendations of a review team consisting of the OSEP project officer and other experts who have experience and knowledge in

technology implementation for personnel serving children with disabilities. This review will be held during the last half of the second year of the project period;

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

(c) The degree to which the project's activities have changed practices and improved outcomes for PK–12 educators, and ELs with, and at risk for, disabilities.

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

**Competitive Preference Priority:** For FY 2022, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award an additional three points to an application that meets the competitive preference priority. Applicants should indicate in the abstract if the competitive preference priority is addressed and must address the competitive preference priority in the narrative section.

This priority is:

*Applications from New Potential Grantees (0 or 3 points).*

(a) Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the applicant has not had an active discretionary grant under the 84.327S program from which it seeks funds, including through membership in a group application submitted in accordance with 34 CFR 75.127–75.129, five years before the deadline date for submission of applications under the program.

(b) For the purpose of this priority, a grant or contract is active until the end of the grant's or contract's project or funding period, including any extensions of those periods that extend the grantee's or contractor's authority to obligate funds.

#### References

- Grant, L., Bell, A. B., Yoo, M., Jimenez, C., & Frye, B. (2017). Professional development for educators to promote literacy development of English learners: Valuing home connections. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, 56 (4). [https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading\\_horizons/vol56/iss4/2](https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/reading_horizons/vol56/iss4/2).
- Mancilla-Martinez, J. (2020). Understanding and supporting literacy development among English learners: A deep dive into the role of language comprehension.

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U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Condition of Education: English Language Learners in Public Schools* [Annual report]. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cgf>.

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U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service. (2019). *Supporting English learners through technology: What districts and teachers say about digital learning resources for English learners. Volume I: Final Report*. National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources. <https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/title-iii/180414.pdf>.

#### Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking:

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

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

**Note:** Projects will be awarded and must be operated in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination requirements contained in Federal civil rights laws.

**Applicable Regulations:** (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) Administrative Priorities.

**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:** Cooperative agreements.

**Estimated Available Funds:** The Administration has requested \$29,547,000 for the Educational

Technology, Media, and Materials for Individuals with Disabilities program for FY 2022, of which we intend to use an estimated \$1,500,000 for this competition. 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 2023 from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

**Estimated Range of Awards:** \$450,000 to \$500,000 per year.

**Estimated Average Size of Awards:** \$475,000 per year.

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

**Estimated Number of Awards:** 3.

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

**Project Period:** Up to 60 months.

#### III. Eligibility Information

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

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

b. **Indirect Cost Rate Information:** This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html).

c. **Administrative Cost Limitation:** This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to the Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

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

4. **Other General Requirements:**

a. Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment

qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

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

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

##### 1. Application Submission

*Instructions:* Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the **Federal Register** on December 27, 2021 (86 FR 73264) and available at [www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979](http://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-27979), which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. Please note that these Common Instructions supersede the version published on February 13, 2019, and, in part, describe the transition from the requirement to register in SAM.gov a DUNS number to the implementation of the UEI. More information on the phase-out of DUNS numbers is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/fof/docs/unique-entity-identifier-transition-fact-sheet.pdf>.

2. *Intergovernmental Review:* This competition 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.

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

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

- A “page” is 8.5” x 11”, on one side only, with 1” margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double-space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.

- Use a font that is 12 point or larger.

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

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

#### V. Application Review Information

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

- (a) *Significance (15 points).*
- (1) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
- (i) The significance of the problem or issue to be addressed by the proposed project;
- (ii) The 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;
- (iii) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies; and
- (iv) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

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

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

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

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

- (i) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project

reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice;

(ii) The extent to which the professional learning and coaching services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(2) In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented

based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(ii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project;

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

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

2. *Review and Selection Process:* We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also

consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary requires various assurances, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

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

4. *Risk Assessment and Specific Conditions:* Consistent with 2 CFR 200.206, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 200.208, the Secretary may impose specific conditions, and under 2 CFR 3474.10, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

5. *Integrity and Performance System:* If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.206(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards—that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant—before we make

an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

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

6. *In General:* In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with—

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. 115—232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(d) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

## VI. Award Administration Information

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

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

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify

administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

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

3. *Open Licensing Requirements:* Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to pre-existing works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works.

Additionally, a grantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

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

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

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

5. *Performance Measures:* For the purposes of reporting under 34 CFR 75.110, we have established a set of performance measures, including long-term measures, that are designed to yield information on various aspects of the effectiveness and quality of the Educational Technology, Media, and Materials (ETechM2) for Individuals with Disabilities program. These measures are:

- *Program Performance Measure 1:* The percentage of ETechM2 program products and services judged to be of high quality by an independent review panel of experts qualified to review the substantial content of the products and services.

- *Program Performance Measure 2:* The percentage of ETechM2 program products and services judged to be of high relevance to improving outcomes for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.

- *Program Performance Measure 3:* The percentage of ETechM2 program products and services judged to be useful in improving results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities.

- *Program Performance Measure 4.1:* The Federal cost per unit of accessible educational materials funded by the ETechM2 program.

- *Program Performance Measure 4.2:* The Federal cost per unit of accessible educational materials from the National Instructional Materials Access Center funded by the ETechM2 program.

- *Program Performance Measure 4.3:* The Federal cost per unit of video description funded by the ETechM2 program.

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

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

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

In making a continuation award, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

## VII. Other Information

*Accessible Format:* On request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format.

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

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

### Katherine Neas,

*Deputy Assistant Secretary. Delegated the authority to perform the functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.*

[FR Doc. 2022-03679 Filed 2-18-22; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. ID-9395-000]

### Killamsetty, Pradeep; Notice of Filing

Take notice that on February 11, 2022, Pradeep Killamsetty submitted for filing, application for authority to hold interlocking positions, pursuant to