



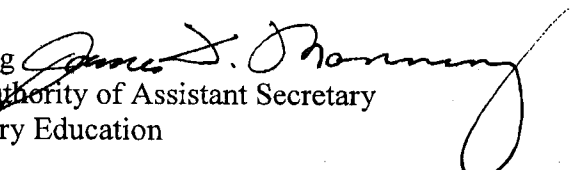
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

DATE: April 30, 2007

TO: Rachel Potter
Desk Officer, U.S. Department of Education
OMB

FROM: James F. Manning 
Delegated the Authority of Assistant Secretary
for Postsecondary Education

SUBJECT: Emergency Clearance for U.S.-Russian Program: Improving Research and Educational Activities in Higher Education

The U.S. Department of Education requests an emergency clearance for the applications package for the new competition, the United States -Russian Program: Improving Research and Educational Activities in Higher Education (U.S.-Russia Program).

The U.S.-Russia Program will be administered cooperatively by the U.S. Department of Education's Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), Office of Postsecondary Education and the Russian Ministry of Education and Science. The U.S. Department of Education and the Russian Ministry of Education and Science will support collaborative projects comprised of partnerships of Russian and American universities and colleges that are to be funded respectively but at the same time. The U.S.-Russia Program emanates from an historic agreement signed by the U.S. Secretary of Education and the Russian Federation Minister of Education and Science on May 31, 2006. The Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries aims to promote understanding between the peoples of the Russian Federation (RF) and the United States (U.S.).

The applications package now being submitted for OMB approval is a critical first step in making that agreement a reality. The program will support consortia comprised of colleges and universities from both the U.S. and the RF – a mutual starting date is necessary for the consortia to function effectively. To that end, the Russian Ministry of Education and Science and the U.S. Department of Education have agreed upon a simultaneous starting date no later than September 28, 2007. To accommodate a starting date of September 28, 2007, a 30-day OMB clearance process is necessary. This will allow the first U.S.-Russia competition to be announced by early-to-mid June 2007, with a deadline for receipt of proposals by both the U.S. and the RF by the end of July 2007. This will allow review by independent experts and joint selection by both governments sometime during the latter part of August 2007, followed by announcement of the first U.S.-Russian consortia in September 2007.

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