

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Postsecondary Education
Washington, DC 20006-8544



Fiscal Year 2010

APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER
CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR VETERAN STUDENT SUCCESS
(CFDA NUMBER: 84.116G)

Form Approved: OMB No. 1894-0006
Expiration Date: 9/30/2011

CLOSING DATE:
[Month Day], 2010
4:30:00 p.m. (Washington, D.C. Time)

Outline of the Application Package

This outline is not the e-Application ****Table of Contents****. It expands one part of that table of contents.

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Dear Applicant Letter

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in applying for a grant through the Department of Education's competition, Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS). The competition, open to institutions of higher education, will fund model programs to support veteran student success in postsecondary education through coordination of services addressing the academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students.

A grant received by an institution of higher education under this program must be used to carry out a model program that provides comprehensive support services for veteran students. Required activities and other authorized activities that may be carried out by an institution receiving a grant under this program are described in this grant Application Package in the section, **Grant Application Highlights**, and in the section, **Instructions for Completing the Application Package**.

Applications for FY 2010 grants must be submitted electronically using the Department's Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) accessible through the e-Grants portal at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>. The requirements for electronic submission are described in detail in this Application Package as well as in the *Federal Register* notice announcing the competition. We urge you to acquaint yourself with the e-Grants system early. The application process can be complicated and time consuming if you have not used it before. Make sure you allow yourself ample time to submit the electronic application by the deadline date. We suggest you submit your application several days before the deadline date.

Applications must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education by 4:30:00 PM, Washington DC time, on **Insert Date**. Applications submitted late will not be accepted, nor will changes or additions to an application be accepted after the deadline date.

You are reminded that the Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards published in the *Federal Register* is the official document describing the requirements for submitting a grant application. A copy is included in this application package. You should not rely upon any information that is inconsistent with guidance contained within the official document.

Sincerely,

/signed/

Ralph Hines
Acting Director
Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education

Grant Competition Highlights

1. The Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success competition is authorized by Section 873 of the Higher Education Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1161t). The program's purpose is to encourage model programs to support veteran student success in postsecondary education by coordinating services to address the academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students. Applicable are the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.
2. Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education applying individually. Consortia and systems are not eligible applicants.
3. Absolute Priority – Required Activities
A model program to support veteran student success proposed by an institution of higher education must include all of the following activities in order to qualify for this grant:
 - Establishing a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success on the campus of the institution to provide a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services for veteran students.
 - Establishing a veteran student support team, including representatives from the offices of the institution responsible for admissions, registration, financial aid, veteran benefits, academic advising, student health, personal or mental health counseling, career advising, disabilities services, and any other office of the institution that provides support to veteran students on campus.
 - Providing a coordinator whose primary responsibility is to coordinate the model program proposed.
 - Monitoring the rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion.
 - Developing a plan to sustain the Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success after the grant period.
4. Other Authorized Activities
An institution of higher education receiving a grant under this program may also use the grant to carry out any of the following activities with respect to veteran students:
 - Outreach and recruitment of such students.
 - Supportive instructional services for such students, which may include –
 - o Personal, academic, and career counseling, as an ongoing part of the program;
 - o Tutoring and academic skill-building instruction assistance, as needed; and
 - o Assistance with special admissions and transfer of credit from previous postsecondary education or experience.
 - Assistance in obtaining student financial aid.
 - Housing support for veteran students living in institutional facilities and commuting veteran students.
 - Cultural events, academic programs, orientation programs, and other activities designed to ease the transition to campus life for veteran students.
 - Support for veteran student organizations and veteran student support groups on campus.

- Coordination of academic advising and admissions counseling with military bases and national guard units in the area.
 - Other support services the institution determines to be necessary to ensure the success of veterans in achieving educational and career goals.
5. Invitational Priority
This competition encourages applications that detail steps that will be taken to recruit, train, and graduate veterans from groups with college completion rates that are below the national average – such as English language speakers and homeless veterans – as well as veterans who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in postsecondary education based on race, color, national origin, gender, or disability. This is an invitational priority. No competitive or absolute preference over other applications will be given to an application that meets this priority.
 6. Please remember to submit your application no later than 4:30:00 p.m. (Washington, D.C. time) on the application deadline date. Late applications will not be accepted. We suggest that you submit your application several days before the deadline to accommodate unanticipated problems applicants sometimes experience (power outages, equipment failures, etc.). The Department is required to enforce the established deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants. For this reason, no changes or additions to an application will be accepted after the deadline date and time.
 7. Electronic submission of applications is required. Read carefully information provided in this application package in the section, **E-Application Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants**. You must submit an electronic application unless you follow the procedures in the *Federal Register* notice inviting applications for new awards for FY 2010 and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirements.
 8. Applicants are required to adhere to the page limit for the Project Design and Management Plan portion of the application. The notice inviting applications for new awards published in the *Federal Register* contains specific information governing page limits and formatting instructions. (See Section IV. 2. of the **Closing Date Notice** in this application package.) The page limit for the Project Design and Management Plan is 15 double-spaced pages.
 9. Several types of information may be included in the Appendix to the application. However, all items in the appendix must be combined into a single file, either Word for Windows (.DOC, not DOCX) or PDF (if the original files are in different formats), and may not exceed 6 MB.

Supplemental Information

The following information supplements that provided in the “Dear Applicant” letter and the Closing Date Notice (CDN) inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year 2010.

1. Estimated Funding and Project Period

- Estimated Available Funds for FY 2010: \$5,940,000
- Estimated Range of Awards: \$250,000 - \$400,000
- Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$313,000 for 36 months
- Estimated Number of Awards: 19
- Project Period for New Awards: 36 months

The U.S. Department of Education is not bound by these estimates.

2. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs is designed to foster an intergovernmental partnership and to strengthen federalism by relying on state and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed federal financial assistance.

Applicants must contact the appropriate State Single Point of Contact to find out about, and to comply with, the state's process under Executive Order 12372. For the Single Point of Contact for each state, see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/grants/spoc.html>.

3. Applicant Funding

The Department is often unable to award the full amount of funds requested. Applicants should pay close attention to the “Award Information” section of the Closing Date Notice.

4. Narrative – Project Design and Management Plan

NOTE: It is strongly recommended that the Project Design and Management Plan be uploaded as a Word for Windows file. Do not upload a .DOCX file. Instead convert an original .DOCX file to a .DOC file before uploading. If you are using Word 2007, please save your document in a lower version of Word before uploading into e-Application.

Please note for file uploads, we accept .DOC, .RTF, and .PDF files only. However, for the 15-page application narrative, uploading a .DOC file is preferable to a .PDF file because the latter file format may make it difficult to verify that required font sizes and margins have been followed, resulting in the rejection of your narrative and application.

5. Appendix to the Application

The appendix to the application may include the following:

- Project evaluation chart.
- Narrative summaries of the qualifications of key personnel (maximum one page each).
- Short position descriptions for staff to be hired or determined.
- Project timeline chart
- Letters of support from project collaborators and other project beneficiaries (if applicable)
- References cited in the proposal narrative (if applicable)

CAUTIONARY NOTE: All items in the Appendix must be combined into a single file before uploading. This should be a Word for Windows file (.DOC only; no .DOCX files) or a PDF file (if original files are in different formats). Upload the Appendix file as “Other Attachments” in the e-Grants application package. Attempts to upload more than one file will delete any previously uploaded file and replace it with the new one.

6. Evaluation of Applicants for Awards

Three non-federal reviewers will evaluate each application using the selection criteria included in this application package.

7. Selection Criteria

The selection criteria for this program are from EDGAR 34 CFR part 75 section 75.210 and section 873 of the Higher Education Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1161t). They are provided in this application package.

8. Notice to Successful Applicants

The Department’s Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs will inform the Congress regarding applications approved for new Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success grants. Successful applicants will receive award notices by mail shortly after Congress has been notified. No funding information will be released before Congress is notified.

9. Notice to Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

10. Annual Performance Report Requirements

Successful applicants will be expected to report annually on the progress of the project activities, including a description of preliminary or key findings and an explanation of any changes in goals, objectives, methodology, or planned products or publications. This helps program officers determine if a grantee is making substantial progress toward meeting approved project objectives. The annual performance report used for this program can be found at www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

Contact Information

For program questions related to the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success, please contact:

Coordinator: Cassandra Courtney
Address: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, N.W., Room 6166
Washington, D.C. 20006-8544
Telephone: (202) 502-7506
Fax: (202) 502-7877
E-mail Address: cassandra.courtney@ed.gov

For e-Grants-related questions and assistance, please contact:

Support Desk: e-Application Support Desk
Telephone: (888) 336-8930
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 A.M. – 6:00 P.M. Eastern Time

E-Application Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants

U.S. Department of Education
<http://e-grants.ed.gov>

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ FIRST

To facilitate your use of e-Application, this document includes important application preparation and submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the Department of Education. Please read and follow these step-by-step directions to create and submit your application.

ATTENTION

Applicants using the Department of Education's e-Application system will need to register first to access an application package. Forms in an application package are completed on line and narratives are uploaded while logged into the system. Therefore, allow sufficient time to complete your application before the closing date. If you have not used e-Application in the past, you may want to walk through the Demo available on the e-Application homepage. If you encounter difficulties, you may also contact the e-Grants helpdesk on 1-888-336-8930. The following are steps you should follow to successfully complete an application with e-Application.

Step 1 – **Determine** if your program is accepting electronic applications. The *Federal Register* Notice of each program will indicate whether the program is accepting e-Applications as part of the Department's e-Application program. Here is a link to the Department's *Federal Register* notices: <http://www.ed.gov/news/fedregister/announce/index.html>. Additional information on the Department of Education's grant programs can be found at <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/grants/grants.html>.

Step 2 – **Register in e-Application** to access the application package. If you are a new user, you will need to register to use e-Application. From the e-Grants Portal Page <http://e-grants.ed.gov/>, click on the continue button and click the register button on the right side of the next page. Select the e-Application module and click the next button. Please provide the requested information. Your e-Grants password will be sent to the e-mail address you provide. Once you receive the e-mail, enter your username and password and click the login button.

If you already have a username and password for e-Grants, use them to login. If you have access to more than one e-Grants module, you will be directed to select which module you wish to enter. Keep in mind that this username and password will be used for all e-Grants modules. In order to update your registration for additional e-Grants modules, click the appropriate tab on the top of the screen and provide the requested information.

Note the following browser compatibility problems. The site is viewed best in Internet Explorer 5. We currently support IE 5, Netscape 6.2, Firefox 2.2 (along with later versions of IE, Netscape and Firefox). Please make sure that you have **Cookies** and **JavaScript** enabled in your browser.


Step 3 – **Add Application Package to your Start Page**. From your Start Page, click on the "Add" button to see the list of application packages. Click on a specific package link on the

List of Application Packages to apply. The package will now appear on your Start Page. From this point forward, you will access your unique application from your Start Page (not the Packages Page).

Step 4 – Begin the Application. Click on the underlined Application Package Title on your Start Page. This brings you to a page where you will see all of the application's forms and narratives listed as underlined links.

Step 5 – Fill out Forms. Enter a form by clicking on the underlined form title in order to enter data. Remember to click the "Save" button at the bottom of the form and check the "Form Completed" box for each form as you complete it.

Step 6 – Upload File(s) for Narrative Responses. Click on an underlined narrative form title for the e-Application. Enter the title of the document, and click on the "Browse" button to locate your file. Remember to click the "Save" button after you upload the document and check the "Form Completed" box when you finish uploading your file(s). Please note for file uploads, we accept .DOC, .RTF, and .PDF files only. If you are using Word 2007, please save your document in a lower version of Word before uploading into e-Application.

Step 7 – Verify Information/Print Application. Verify your information is complete and correct on all required forms and narratives. You have the option to print each form at any time by clicking on the print/view icon  next to the appropriate form. After submission of the forms and narratives, you have the option to print a complete e-Application package in PDF by clicking on the "Request Complete Package in PDF" on the e-Application PR/Award page. A second window will open informing you that your request has been received and that you will be notified via email once it is available. This process can take anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours. Once you receive the email, click on the link in the text of the message and enter your username and password in the new window. This will open the PDF file from which you can view/print the entire package. In addition, a blank complete package in PDF will be accessible from the package page in e-Application.

Step 8 – Submit your Application. Only authorized individuals for your organization can submit an application. Please check with your certifying official or sponsored research office before submission. Click on the "Ready to submit" button at the bottom of your application. Enter and verify the Authorizing Representative information. Click the "Submit" button. You will receive an e-mail to confirm that your application was received, and it will include a unique application number. Please print and keep this e-mail for your records. [Reminder: applications must be submitted before 4:30:00 pm, Washington, D.C. time, on the deadline date for applications. e-Application will not accept your application if you try to submit it after 4:30:00 on the deadline date.]

Step 9 – Fax the signed SF 424 Cover Page (or Program Specific Cover Page). Write your unique application number (received in step 8) on the upper right corner of your printed SF 424 Cover Page (or Program Specific Cover Page), and fax it to the Application Control Center (202) 245-6272 within 3 business days of submitting your e-Application.

NOTE: For more detailed information on submitting an e-Application, please see the e-Grants **User Guide**. In addition, please try practicing with our e-Application Demo site by clicking on the Demo button found on the upper left corner of the e-Application Home Page. Both the User Guide and Demo can be found at <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

Other Submission Tips

- 1) **SUBMIT EARLY – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application.** The time it takes to upload the narratives for your application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the files and the speed of your Internet connection. If you try to submit your application after 4:30:00 p.m. on the deadline date, the e-Application system will not accept it.
- 2) If electronic submission is optional and you have problems that you are unable to resolve before the deadline date and time for electronic applications, please follow the transmittal instructions for hard copy applications in the *Federal Register* notice and get a hard copy application postmarked by midnight on the deadline date. If electronic submission is required, you must submit an electronic application before 4:30:00 p.m., unless you follow the procedures in the *Federal Register* notice and 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. (See the *Federal Register* notice for detailed instructions.)
- 3) **Dial-Up Internet Connections** - When using a dial up connection to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g. cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial-up connection. If you do not have access to a high-speed connection and electronic submission is required, you may want to consider following the instructions in the *Federal Register* notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. (See the *Federal Register* notice for detailed instructions.)

Attaching Files – Additional Tips

Please note the following tips related to attaching files to your application:

1. Ensure that you only attach the Education approved file types detailed in the *Federal Register* application notice (.DOC, .PDF or .RTF). If using Word 2007, save your file to a lower version of Word before uploading. Do not save it as a Word .DOCX. Also, do not upload any password protected files to your application.
2. When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend you keep your file names to less than 50 characters. In addition, applicants should avoid including special characters in their file names (for example, %, *, /, etc.). Both of these conditions (lengthy file names and/or special characters including in the file names) could result in difficulties opening and processing a submitted application.
3. Applicants should limit the size of their file attachments. Documents submitted that contain graphics and/or scanned material often greatly increase the size of the file attachments and can result in difficulties opening the files. Please note that each file attachment in e-Application has a file size limitation which is anywhere from 2 to 8

MB and the limitation will be indicated on the individual screen when you upload a file. For reference, however, the average discretionary grant application package totals 1 to 2 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the size of your attachments before uploading them into e-Application.

Application Transmittal Instructions

ATTENTION ELECTRONIC APPLICANTS: Please note that you must follow the Application Procedures as described in the *Federal Register* notice announcing the grant competition.

This program requires the electronic submission of applications; specific requirements and waiver instructions can be found in the *Federal Register* notice.

According to the instructions found in the *Federal Register* notice, those requesting and qualifying for an exception to the electronic submission requirement may submit an application by mail, commercial carrier or by hand delivery.

If you want to apply for a grant and be considered for funding, you must meet the following deadline requirements:

Submission of Applications Electronically:

This is required for all applications—unless the applicant secures an official exception. See Closing Date Notice Section IV Item 7.

You must submit your grant application through the Internet using the software provided on the e-Application Web site (<http://e-grants.ed.gov>) by 4:30:00 p.m. (Washington, D.C. time) on or before the deadline date.

If you submit your application through the Internet via the Department's e-Application system, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement when we receive your application.

For more information on using e-Application, please refer to the "Notice Inviting Applications" that was published in the *Federal Register* or visit <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

Submission of Paper Applications by Mail:

Electronic submission is required for all applications—unless the applicant secures an official exception. Submission of paper applications by mail is allowed only when you have secured an official exception from the electronic submission requirements. See Closing Date Notice Section IV Item 7 for details.

If you submit your application in paper format by mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier), you must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.116G)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4260

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

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

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

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will **not** consider your application.

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

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 84.116G)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, D.C. 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 (84.116G), including the suffix letter, 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.

Closing Date Notice

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Postsecondary Education

Overview Information

Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2010.

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

Dates:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF THE PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purpose of this program is to encourage institutions of higher education (IHEs) to develop model programs to support veteran student success in postsecondary education by

coordinating services to address the academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students.

Priorities: This notice contains one absolute priority and one invitational priority. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2) (iv), the absolute priority is from section 873 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. 1161t).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2010 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:

Projects that include the following required activities:

establishing a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success on the campus of the institution to provide a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services for veteran students; establishing a veteran student support team, including representatives from the offices of the institution responsible for admissions, registration, financial aid, veterans benefits, academic advising, student health, personal or mental health counseling, career advising, disabilities services, and any other office of the institution that provides support to veteran students on campus; providing a coordinator whose primary responsibility is to coordinate the model program; monitoring the

rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion; and developing a plan to sustain the Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success after the grant period.

Invitational Priority: Under this competition we are particularly interested in applications that address the following 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 detail specific steps that will be taken to recruit, retain, and graduate veterans from groups with college completion rates that are below the national average -- such as English language learners and homeless veterans -- as well as veterans who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in postsecondary education based on race, color, national origin, gender, or disability.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1161t.

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

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$5,940,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$250,000 to \$400,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$313,000 for 36 months.

Estimated Number of Awards: 19.

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

Project Period: 36 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: Institutions of higher education.
2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: ED Pubs, U.S. Department of Education, P.O. Box 22207, Alexandria, VA 22304. Telephone, toll free: 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (703) 605-6794. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), call, toll free: 1-877-576-7734.

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

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

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large

print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the person or team listed under Accessible Format in Section VIII of this notice.

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

Page Limit: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the application narrative to no more than 15 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, except titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures and graphs.

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

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; the table of contents; the one page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography or citation list, letters of partners' or other collaborators' commitment, or letters from institutional administrators that document the applicant's current activities to support veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion.

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

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application) accessible through the Department's e-Grants site. 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 Section IV. 7. Other Submission Requirements of this notice.

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

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

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 90 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

4. 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 program.

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

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and Central Contractor Registry: To do business with the Department of Education, (1) you must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer

Identification Number (TIN); (2) you must register both of those numbers with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), the Government's primary registrant database; and (3) you must provide those same numbers on your application.

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

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

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

7. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this 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 Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success Program--CFDA Number 84.116G must be submitted electronically using e-Application, accessible through the Department's e-Grants Web site at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

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.

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

Please note the following:

- You must complete the electronic submission of your grant application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. E-Application will not accept an application for this competition after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process.

- The hours of operation of the e-Grants Web site are 6:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Wednesday; and 6:00 a.m. Thursday until 8:00 p.m. Sunday, Washington, DC time. Please note that, because of maintenance, the system is unavailable between 8:00 p.m. on Sundays and 6:00 a.m. on Mondays, and between 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and 6:00 a.m. on Thursdays, Washington, DC time. Any modifications to these hours are posted on the e-Grants Web site.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you 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 attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a .DOC (document), .RTF (rich text), or .PDF (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than the three file types specified in this paragraph or submit a password protected file, we will not review that material.

- Your electronic application must comply with any word limit requirements described in this notice.

- Prior to submitting your electronic application, you may wish to print a copy of it for your records.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgment that will include a PR/Award number (an identifying number unique to your application).

- Within three working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the SF 424 to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

- (1) Print SF 424 from e-Application.

- (2) The applicant's Authorizing Representative must sign this form.

- (3) Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard-copy signature page of the SF 424.

- (4) Fax the signed SF 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 245-6272.

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on other forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of e-Application

Unavailability: If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because e-Application is unavailable, we will grant you an

extension of one business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery. We will grant this extension if--

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

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

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

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

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 e-Application because--

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to e-Application;

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: Cassandra Courtney, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., room 6166, Washington, DC 20006-8544. FAX: (202) 502-7877.

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 84.116G)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

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

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

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

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

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

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application, by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.116G)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

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

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number,

including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

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

V. Application Review Information

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this program are from 34 CFR 75.210 and section 873 of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1161t) and are listed in the application package.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may notify you informally, also.

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

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of

this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

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

4. Performance Measures: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the following performance measures will be used by the Department in assessing the success of the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success Program: The extent to which funded projects increase enrollment of, and persistence and completion by, veteran students in postsecondary education.

If funded, you will be asked to collect and report data on these measures in your project's annual performance report (34 CFR 75.590).

VII. Agency Contact

For Further Information Contact: Cassandra Courtney, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., room 6166, Washington, DC 20006-8544. Telephone: (202) 502-7506.

If you use a TDD, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the program contact person listed under For Further Information Contact in Section VII of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: You can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the Federal Register, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF), on the Internet at the following site:

www.ed.gov/news/fedregister.

To use PDF, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site.

Note: 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 on GPO Access at:
www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html.

Delegation of Authority: The Secretary of Education has delegated authority to Daniel T. Madzellan, Director, Forecasting and Policy Analysis for the Office of Postsecondary Education, to perform the functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.

Dated:

Daniel T. Madzellan,
Director,
Forecasting and Policy Analysis.

Authorizing Legislation

Section 873 of the Higher Education Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1161t)

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE FOR VETERAN STUDENT SUCCESS: MODEL PROGRAMS

(a) **PURPOSE.**—It is the purpose of this section to encourage model programs to support veteran student success in postsecondary education by coordinating services to address the academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students.

(b) **GRANTS AUTHORIZED.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to the availability of appropriations under subsection (f), the Secretary shall award grants to institutions of higher education to develop model programs to support veteran student success in postsecondary education.

(2) **GRANT PERIOD.**—A grant awarded under this section shall be awarded for a period of three years.

(c) **USE OF GRANTS.**—

(1) **REQUIRED ACTIVITIES.**—An institution of higher education receiving a grant under this section shall use such grant to carry out a model program that includes—

(A) establishing a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success on the campus of the institution to provide a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services for veteran students;

(B) establishing a veteran student support team, including representatives from the offices of the institution responsible for admissions, registration, financial aid, veterans benefits, academic advising, student health, personal or mental health counseling, career advising, disabilities services, and any other office of the institution that provides support to veteran students on campus;

(C) providing a coordinator whose primary responsibility is to coordinate the model program carried out under this section;

(D) monitoring the rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion; and

(E) developing a plan to sustain the Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success after the grant period.

(2) **OTHER AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.**—An institution of higher education receiving a grant under this section may use such grant to carry out any of the following activities with respect to veteran students:

(A) Outreach and recruitment of such students.

(B) Supportive instructional services for such students, which may include—

(i) personal, academic, and career counseling, as an ongoing part of the program;

(ii) tutoring and academic skill-building instruction assistance, as needed; and

(iii) assistance with special admissions and transfer of credit from previous

postsecondary education or experience.

(C) Assistance in obtaining student financial aid.

(D) Housing support for veteran students living in institutional facilities and commuting veteran students.

- (E) Cultural events, academic programs, orientation programs, and other activities designed to ease the transition to campus life for veteran students.
- (F) Support for veteran student organizations and veteran student support groups on campus.
- (G) Coordination of academic advising and admissions counseling with military bases and national guard units in the area.
- (H) Other support services the institution determines to be necessary to ensure the success of veterans in achieving educational and career goals.

(d) APPLICATION; SELECTION.—

(1) **APPLICATION.**—To be considered for a grant under this section, an institution of higher education shall submit to the Secretary an application at such time, in such manner, and accompanied by such information as the Secretary may require.

(2) **SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS.**—In awarding grants under this section, the Secretary shall consider—

- (A) the number of veteran students enrolled at an institution of higher education; and
- (B) the need for model programs to address the needs of veteran students at a wide range of institutions of higher education, including the need to provide—
 - (i) an equitable distribution of such grants to institutions of higher education of various types and sizes;
 - (ii) an equitable geographic distribution of such grants; and
 - (iii) an equitable distribution of such grants among rural and urban areas.

(e) EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN.—The Secretary shall develop an evaluation and accountability plan for model programs funded under this section to objectively measure the impact of such programs, including a measure of whether postsecondary education enrollment, persistence, and completion for veterans increases as a result of such programs.

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to strengthen federalism – the distribution of responsibility between localities, States, and the Federal government – by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This includes supporting processes that State or local governments have devised for coordinating and reviewing proposed Federal financial grant applications.

The process of doing this requires that grant applicants contact State Single Points of Contact for information on how this works. Multi-state applicants should follow procedures specific to each state.

Further information about the State Single Point of Contact process and a list of names by State can be found at:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.pdf>

Absent specific State review programs, applicants may submit comments directly to the Department. All recommendations and comments must be mailed or hand-delivered by the date indicated in the actual application notice to the following address: The Secretary, EO 12372—CFDA# 84.116G, U.S. Department of Education, room 7E200, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202.

Proof of mailing will be determined on the same basis as applications (see 34 CFR §75.102). Recommendations or comments may be hand-delivered until 4:30 p.m. (Eastern Time) on the closing date indicated in this notice.

Important note: The above address is not the same address as the one to which the applicant submits its completed applications. **Do not send applications to the above address.**

General Education Provisions Act (GEPA), Section 427

Section 427 of GEPA requires all applicants for new awards to include in their applications a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally-assisted programs for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. The provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: *gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age*.

A general statement of an applicant's nondiscriminatory hiring policy is not sufficient to meet this requirement. Applicants must identify potential barriers and explain steps they will take to overcome these barriers.

NOTES:

- **Applicants for new awards must include information in their applications to address this provision in order to receive funding under this program.**
- **Applicants are required to address this provision by following instructions for GEPA 427 and attaching a statement to the ED GEPA 427 Form that must be downloaded from e-Grants.**

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)

What is GPRA?

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) is a straightforward statute that requires all federal agencies to manage their activities with attention to the consequences of those activities. Each agency is to state clearly what it intends to accomplish, identify the resources required, and periodically report their progress to the Congress. In so doing, it is expected that the GPRA will contribute to improvements in accountability for the expenditures of public funds, improve congressional decision-making through more objective information on the effectiveness of federal programs, and promote a new government focus on results, service delivery, and customer satisfaction.

How has the Department of Education responded to the GPRA requirements?

As required by GPRA, the Department of Education has prepared a strategic plan for 2007-2012. This plan reflects the Department's priorities and integrates them with its mission and program authorities and describes how the Department will work to improve education for all children and adults in the United States. The purpose of the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success is consistent with the following Department goal:

Goal 3: Ensure the accessibility, affordability, and accountability of higher education, and better prepare students and adults for employment and future learning.

What are the performance indicators for this competition?

This performance indicator will be used to measure the success of the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success competition:

The extent to which funded projects increase enrollment of, and persistence and completion by, veteran students in postsecondary education.

If funded, you will be asked to collect and report data from your project on steps taken toward achieving this goal. Applicants to this competition are advised to include the performance indicator in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of the proposed project. This indicator is related to some of the review criteria discussed below, and it is, therefore, important to the success of your application that you address it. The assessment of this performance indicator, along with measures of goals and objectives specific to your project design, are to be a part of the project evaluation plan.

How does the Department of Education determine whether performance goals have been met?

An applicant that receives a grant award will be required to submit annual progress reports and a final report as a condition of the award. The reports will document the extent to which project goals and objectives are met.

The Department of Education's Grant Performance Report Form (ED 524B) can be viewed at <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.

Instructions for Completing the Application Package

This application consists of two components – forms and project narratives – each consisting of several items. In preparing your application, please comply with the following instructions as well as those that accompany specific standard forms. Also follow carefully the instructions for e-Application provided in this application package in the section, **E-Application Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants**.

REQUIRED FORMS

Seven forms are required. After completing each form, remember to click the “Save” button at the bottom of the form, and check the “Form Completed” box.

Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)

This form must be completed first. Information provided in the SF 424 is automatically transferred to other sections of the e-Grants application package.

Item 12 of SF 424 asks for the Funding Opportunity Number for the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success competition. Enter this number:

See instructions for this form in e-Application under “Documents and Instructions.”.

Do not attach anything to this form – no narratives, supporting files, or other application components. Instructions for attachments are provided below under Project Narratives.

Department of Education Standard Budget Sheet (ED 524)

Use the e-Application tab labeled “Part 1” to complete Section A of the budget sheet and the “Part 2” tab to complete Section B.

Be sure your Business Office responds to questions in Section A concerning indirect cost. Applicants requesting reimbursement of indirect costs must complete the “Indirect Cost Information” section of this form. For information on reimbursement of indirect costs, see instructions for Section A of ED 524 in e-Application under “Documents and Instructions.”.

This grant competition does not require cost sharing or matching funds. However, institutions proposing model Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success will seek to build capacity to serve veteran students and work toward successful efforts designed to continue beyond the period of grant support. Applicants may contribute some of their own resources toward this end (to be shown in the Budget Summary Form, ED 524, Section B). This will not always be the case, however, since individual circumstances and the resources available to participating institutions vary.

Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)

Complete information at the bottom of this form after reviewing the applicable assurances.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

See instructions for this form in e-Application under “Documents and Instructions.”.

Certification Regarding Lobbying (ED 80-0013)

Complete information at the bottom of this form after reviewing the required certification.

GEPA Section 427

Read the instructions that accompany this form and upload a narrative response describing specific steps your campus will take to ensure equitable access to and participation in your project by students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. Applicants for new awards must include information to address this provision in order to receive funding.

Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF424

See instructions for this form in e-Application under “Documents and Instructions.”.

PROJECT NARRATIVES

Four project narratives must be attached as part of your application package.

Project Narrative: Project Abstract

Project Narrative: Project Design and Management Plan

Project Narrative: Budget Narrative

Project Narrative: Other Attachments (the Appendix)

Project Abstract

Upload a one-page Abstract as a Word document (.DOC, not DOCX). The Abstract provides a concise description of the proposed project objectives, activities, and intended outcomes.

Project Design and Management Plan

Your Project Design and Management Plan must be described in 15 double-spaced pages, preferably numbered. Please note that the 15-page limit for the Project Design and Management Plan does not apply to the application cover page (the Application for Federal Assistance SF-424), the Abstract, your table of contents, budget information (including the narrative budget justification), the Appendix, or the forms for assurances and certifications. It applies only to the Project Design and Management Plan project narrative.

For the purpose of this narrative, 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” margin. Double-space all text in the application, including titles and headings. Only text in charts, tables, graphs, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions may be single-spaced. Applicants may use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial only. Applications submitted in any other font will not be accepted. Do not use anything

smaller than a 12-point font.

Please refer to the *Federal Register* **Closing Date Notice** section of this application package for more details on formatting requirements. Read carefully the information on Content and Form of Application Submission (Section IV. 2.). Applications that exceed the page limit and/or fail to conform to required formats will be rejected.

Regarding the content of your Project Design and Management Plan narrative, applications from institutions of higher education proposing model programs to support veteran students must address the Absolute Priority, which includes the following activities:

- Establishing a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success on the campus of the institution to provide a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services for veteran students.
- Establishing a veteran student support team, including representatives from the offices of the institution responsible for admissions, registration, financial aid, veteran benefits, academic advising, student health, personal or mental health counseling, career advising, disabilities services, and any other office of the institution that provides support to veteran students on campus.
- Providing a coordinator whose primary responsibility is to coordinate the model program proposed.
- Monitoring the rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion.
- Developing a plan to sustain the Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success after the grant period.

An institution conducting the required activities above may, in addition, carry out the following authorized activities with respect to veteran students:

- Outreach and recruitment of such students.
- Supportive instructional services for such students, which may include –
 - o Personal, academic, and career counseling, as an ongoing part of the program;
 - o Tutoring and academic skill-building instruction assistance, as needed; and
 - o Assistance with special admissions and transfer of credit from previous postsecondary education or experience.
- Assistance in obtaining student financial aid.
- Housing support for veteran students living in institutional facilities and commuting veteran students.
- Cultural events, academic programs, orientation programs, and other activities designed to ease the transition to campus life for veteran students.
- Support for veteran student organizations and veteran student support groups on campus.
- Coordination of academic advising and admissions counseling with military bases and national guard units in the area.
- Other support services the institution determines to be necessary to ensure the success of veterans in achieving educational and career goals.

Also encouraged are applications that detail steps that will be taken to recruit, train, and graduate veterans from groups with college completion rates that are below the national average – such as English language speakers and homeless veterans – as well as veterans who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented in postsecondary education based on race, color, national origin, gender, or disability. This is an invitational priority. No competitive or absolute preference over other applications will be given to an application that meets this priority.

The information above provides a general outline of activities for a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success. However, the application from your institution must describe in detail the rationale for the particular model you propose, which includes the need for the activities proposed, the specific objectives of your project (beyond the general goal of supporting veteran student success), the intended outcomes for your project, and how those outcomes will be measured. Your application will likely compete for funding with a few hundred other institutions. This means your application narrative must make a strong case for the model you propose at your institution. In so doing, it must convincingly address the selection criteria listed below as well as the GPRA performance indicator for the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated according to specific selection criteria identified below. Reviewers of your application will use these criteria to rate your proposal, and the overall assessment of your proposal will be based on the extent to which it satisfies the selection criteria. However you choose to organize your narrative, once it has been completed, make sure the information provided addresses each of these criteria.

The criteria are presented in bold, annotated with discussion of how each applies to the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success competition.

1) The need for the project, as determined by the following factors (10 points)

- a) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project.
- b) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

Provide information to support the need for a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success on your campus. How many veteran students are enrolled at your institution? What data do you have regarding the rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion on your campus? How effectively is your institution serving veteran students currently? What improvements do you propose to serve them better – to ease veterans' transition to campus life, to reduce their attrition, and to improve their chances of achieving educational and career goals?

2) The significance of the project, as determined by the following factors (10 points)

- a) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.
- b) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project.

The first criterion above focuses on the problem and the need for a solution. This second criterion calls for discussion of solutions. For example, what improvements in your capacity to serve veteran students will be made possible by a grant award? What will your institution do differently? How are outcomes for veteran students likely to improve as a result of the changes you propose? Just how much difference will the changes you propose make?

3) The quality of the project design, as determined by the following factors (30 points)

- a) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.
- b) 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.
- c) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

This criterion requires details about how your project will be carried out. Identify goals and specific objectives of your project. How will they be measured? (You will find more about evaluation under Criterion #6.) Is the implementation plan proposed for the project consistent with your institution's stated goals and objectives for serving veteran students? Who will do what when? What will be done to establish an effective veteran student support team that includes representatives from various offices of your institution? Is the project designed to strengthen the institution's capacity to provide continuing support to veteran students?

4) The quality of project personnel, as determined by the following factors (15 points)

- a) 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.
- b) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.
- c) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

A proposed Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success must have a coordinator whose primary responsibility is to coordinate comprehensive support services for veteran students. The application must describe the qualifications of this individual, members of the veteran student support team, and any other individuals who will help carry out the proposed project. Expanding on information in the Project Design and Management Plan narrative, the Appendix (see Other Attachments below) should include narrative summaries of the qualifications of key personnel (maximum one page each) and/or short position descriptions for staff to be hired or determined. The Budget Narrative must indicate the percentage of time the grant project director will devote to the project – even if the grant does not pay the project director's salary. (The grant project director may or may not be the coordinator of the Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success.)

5) The adequacy of resources, as determined by the following factors (20 points)

- a) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.
- b) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits.
- c) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support.

A budget summary and budget narrative attached to your proposal (see Budget Summary below) should itemize the support you are requesting through the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success Program. It must be clear from the proposal narrative how your budget request relates to attainment of your goals and objectives. The appropriateness of costs will be judged in relation to the scope of the project and the requirements for achieving its objectives. Also important will be information indicating how the project will be designed to increase the likelihood that successful efforts will continue beyond the period of grant support.

6) The quality of project evaluation, as determined by the following factors (15 points)

- a) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.
- b) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.
- c) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

A strong evaluation plan should be included in the application and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and also outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. More specifically, the plan should identify the individual and/or organization that has agreed to serve as evaluator for the project and describe the qualifications of that evaluator. The plan should describe the evaluation design, indicating: (1) what types of data will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) what methods will be used; (4) what instruments will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information about project success. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources for project evaluation.

Performance Indicator – Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)

As required by GPRA, the evaluation plan for your project must also address this performance indicator, which will be used to measure the success of the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success Program:

The extent to which funded projects increase enrollment of, and persistence and completion by, veteran students in postsecondary education.

If funded, you will be asked to collect and report data from your project on steps taken toward achieving this objective. Applicants are advised to include the performance indicator in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of the proposed project. The indicator is related to some of the selection criteria discussed above, so it is important that you address it.

Budget Narrative

The Budget Narrative includes two parts – a detailed line item budget and an accompanying explanatory narrative for each year of the three-year project. The line item budget expands on the ED 524 Budget Summary, breaking down costs in each budget category into their component parts. The narrative section of the Budget Narrative provides information about the applicant's financial plan for conducting the project and should be consistent with activities described in the Project Description and Management Plan. The entire Budget Narrative is limited to 10 pages.

It is suggested that applicants organize their budgets using either two columns or categories to include funding streams as follows: 1) federal funds requested; 2) funding from other public or private United States sources. Applicants should describe how all costs support project activities.

For each line item, provide detailed costs and narrative justification to support your request. Please check all figures and combined totals, comparing your line item budget figures to those on ED Form 524 for both Sections A and B.

Among the costs that may be supported with grant funds are:

1. Personnel: Enter only the project personnel salaries and wages for employees of the grantee organization. [Fees and expenses for consultants should be included on line 6 – “Contractual.”] For salaries covered by the grant, the line item budget should indicate (a) whose salaries are included, (b) at what percentage of their time, (c) the base annual salary, (d) the amount of salary to be charged to the grant, and (e) any other relevant information. Occasionally, specific time commitments (in hours, days, or months) may be used instead, but percentage of full-time salary is the standard.

Whether the salary of the project director is paid for by the grant or not, the percentage of time the project director will devote to the project must be noted in the budget narrative. The Department of Education requires information on the level of effort of all individuals directing federal grant projects.

2. Fringe Benefits: Enter the amount of fringe benefits. The grantee’s normal fringe benefit contribution may be charged to the project. Leave this blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect costs. In the budget, include an explanation and appropriate justification if the normal fringe benefit contribution exceeds 20 percent of salaries.
3. Travel: Provide the costs for project personnel. [Consultants’ travel should be included on line 8 – “Other”] Indicate the number of people traveling, whether they are faculty or administrative personnel, their destination, and a breakdown of travel costs. Transportation costs should not exceed economy airfare. Per diem costs are allowable for project-related travel, in accordance with OMB Circular A-21, J.48c.
4. Equipment: Provide the cost for property charged to the grant having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.
5. Supplies: Supply costs include materials necessary for conducting, developing, or implementing the project, such as library resources, conference materials, software, computers, general office supplies, and equipment that is less than \$5000 per unit.
6. Contractual: Include the costs for contractors/consultants/evaluators and other individuals or companies that provide project services to the applicant for a fee or on an hourly or daily basis. Applicants may also include professional services fees for conference speakers, auditors, etc.; travel expenses for non-project personnel; and per diem for non-project personnel. Provide a detailed breakdown of the costs, such as the number of days for the per diem being requested; number of days and costs

for consultant or evaluator services. Please note that professional services fees should not exceed amounts permitted under comparable institutional policies.

7. Construction: Not applicable. Leave blank.
8. Other: Other miscellaneous costs may be requested in this category. Examples of allowable costs include: printing costs for newsletters and publications; telephone expenses; equipment rental; ground transportation costs, etc.
9. Total Direct Costs: Enter the total direct costs (items 1-8) being requested.
10. Indirect Costs: If you are charging indirect costs to the grant, you must respond to the questions at the bottom of Section A of the Budget Summary form (SF 524).
11. Training Stipends: Not applicable. Leave blank.
12. Total Costs: Enter the total the applicant is requesting (items 9-11).

Please note that the Budget Narrative (detailed line item budget and explanation) does not count toward your 15-page Project Design and Management Plan narrative. The Budget Narrative attachment is by itself, however, limited to 10 pages.

Other Attachments

“Other Attachments” is used to upload the application Appendix. The Appendix supports and supplements information in other parts of the application package. Several types of information may be included. However, all items in the Appendix must be combined into a single file, either Word for Windows (.DOC, not DOCX) or PDF (if the original files are in different formats). The file may not exceed 6 MB. Attempts to upload more than one Appendix file will delete any previously uploaded file and replace it with the new one.

The Appendix may include only the following:

- Project evaluation chart
- Narrative summaries of the qualifications of key personnel (maximum one page each)
- Short position descriptions for staff to be hired or determined
- Project timeline chart
- Letters of support from project collaborators and other project beneficiaries (if applicable)
- References cited in the proposal narrative (if applicable)

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist while preparing your application package. When you are done, the items on the checklist below should be complete. Also, each part of your e-Application should show a checkmark indicating “Completed”:

REQUIRED FORMS:

- ___ **Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)** Enter for Item 12:
- ___ **Department of Education Standard Budget Sheet (ED 524)**
Part 1 (Section A) and Part 2 (Section B)
- ___ **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)**
- ___ **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)**
- ___ **Certification Regarding Lobbying (ED 80-0013)**
- ___ **GEPA Section 427**
- ___ **Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424**

REQUIRED PROJECT NARRATIVES:

- ___ **Project Abstract**
Upload a one-page abstract as a Word document (.DOC, not DOCX.).
- ___ **Project Design and Management Plan**
This project narrative must not exceed 15 double-spaced pages. The page limit does not include the application cover page (the Application for Federal Assistance SF 424), the Abstract, your table of contents, budget information (including the narrative budget justification), the Appendix, or the forms for assurances and certifications.

Make sure this narrative addresses all application requirements – the competition’s selection criteria and activities that must be part of a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success.
- ___ **Budget Narrative**
This is the line item budget detail and supporting narrative. It is limited to 10 pages. Be sure to include the percentage of time the project director will devote to the project.
- ___ **Other Attachments**
This is the Appendix to the Project Design and Management Plan. It is limited to a single file containing only the following, which may not exceed 6 MB.
 - Project evaluation chart
 - Narratives on the qualifications of key personnel (maximum one page each)
 - Short position descriptions for staff to be hired or determined
 - Project timeline chart
 - Letters of support from project collaborators and other project beneficiaries (if applicable)
 - References cited in the proposal narrative (if applicable)

PAPERWORK BURDEN STATEMENT

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1894-0006. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 20 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U. S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, N.W., Room 6166, Washington, D.C. 20006-8544.