

84.224

Section 6 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended

(3) STATE TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE-

(A) TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE EFFORTS- The Secretary shall award a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement to an entity to support a training and technical assistance program that--

(i) addresses State-specific information requests concerning assistive technology from entities funded under this Act and public entities not funded under this Act, including--

(I) requests for information on effective approaches to Federal-State coordination of programs for individuals with disabilities, related to improving funding for or access to assistive technology devices and assistive technology services for individuals with disabilities of all ages;

(II) requests for state-of-the-art, or model, Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, policies, practices, procedures, and organizational structures, that facilitate, and overcome barriers to, funding for, and access to, assistive technology devices and assistive technology services;

(III) requests for information on effective approaches to developing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining activities described in sections 4 and 5 and related to improving funding for or access to assistive technology devices and assistive technology services for individuals with disabilities of all ages, and requests for assistance in developing corrective action plans;

(IV) requests for examples of policies, practices, procedures, regulations, or judicial decisions that have enhanced or may enhance access to funding for assistive technology devices and assistive technology services for individuals with disabilities;

(V) requests for information on effective approaches to the development of consumer-controlled systems that increase access to, funding for, and awareness of, assistive technology devices and assistive technology services; and

(VI) other requests for training and technical assistance from entities funded under this Act and public and private entities not funded under this Act;

(ii) assists targeted individuals and entities by disseminating information about--

(I) Federal, State, and local laws, regulations, policies, practices, procedures, and organizational structures, that facilitate, and overcome barriers to, funding for, and access to, assistive technology devices and assistive technology services, to promote fuller independence, productivity, and inclusion in society for individuals with disabilities of all ages; and

(II) technical assistance activities undertaken under clause (i);

(iii) provides State-specific, regional, and national training and technical assistance concerning assistive technology to entities funded under this Act, other entities funded under this Act, and public and private entities not funded under this Act, including--

(I) annually providing a forum for exchanging information concerning, and promoting program and policy improvements in, required activities of the State assistive technology programs;

(II) facilitating onsite and electronic information sharing using state-of-the-art Internet technologies such as real-time online discussions, multipoint video conferencing, and web-based audio/video broadcasts, on emerging topics that affect State assistive technology programs;

(III) convening experts from State assistive technology programs to discuss and make recommendations with regard to national emerging issues of importance to individuals with

assistive technology needs;

(IV) sharing best practice and evidence-based practices among State assistive technology programs;

(V) maintaining an accessible website that includes a link to State assistive technology programs, appropriate Federal departments and agencies, and private associations and developing a national toll-free number that links callers from a State with the State assistive technology program in their State;

(VI) developing or utilizing existing (as of the date of the award involved) model cooperative volume-purchasing mechanisms designed to reduce the financial costs of purchasing assistive technology for required and discretionary activities identified in section 4, and reducing duplication of activities among State assistive technology programs; and

(VII) providing access to experts in the areas of banking, microlending, and finance, for entities funded under this Act, through site visits, teleconferences, and other means, to ensure access to information for entities that are carrying out new programs or programs that are not making progress in achieving the objectives of the programs; and

(iv) includes such other activities as the Secretary may require.

(B) ELIGIBLE ENTITIES- To be eligible to receive a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this paragraph, an entity shall have (directly or through grant or contract)--

(i) experience and expertise in administering programs, including developing, implementing, and administering the required and discretionary activities described in sections 4 and 5, and providing technical assistance; and

(ii) documented experience in and knowledge about banking, finance, and microlending.

(C) COLLABORATION- In developing and providing training and technical assistance under this paragraph, including activities identified as priorities, a recipient of a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement under this paragraph shall collaborate with other organizations, in particular--

(i) organizations representing individuals with disabilities;

(ii) national organizations representing State assistive technology programs;

(iii) organizations representing State officials and agencies engaged in the delivery of assistive technology;

(iv) the data-collection and reporting providers described in paragraph (5); and

(v) other providers of national programs or programs of national significance funded under this Act.

Selection Criteria for Applications for 84.224 Assistive Technology Programs

The Secretary uses the following selection criteria to evaluate applications for new grants under this competition. The maximum score for all of these criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses. Because no points are assigned to the selected factors, the Secretary evaluates each factor within each criterion equally.

The criteria are--

(a) Quality of the project design. (20 points)

- (1) The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.
 - (ii) 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.
 - (iii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.
 - (iv) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication of project activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.
 - (v) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
 - (vi) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.
 - (vii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition.
 - (viii) The extent to which the proposed project will be coordinated with similar or related efforts, and with other appropriate community, State, and Federal resources.
 - (ix) The extent to which the proposed project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population.
 - (x) The extent to which the proposed project encourages consumer involvement.
 - (xi) The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.
 - (xii) The quality of the methodology to be employed in the proposed project.

(b) Quality of project services. (20 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 are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services.
- (ii) The extent to which entities that are to be served by the proposed technical assistance project demonstrate support for the project.
- (iii) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.
- (iv) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services.
- (v) The extent to which the training or professional development 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.
- (ix) 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.
- (x) The extent to which the technical assistance services to be provided by the proposed project involve the use of efficient strategies, including the use of technology, as appropriate, and the leveraging of non-project resources.
- (xi) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs.

(c) Quality of project personnel. (10 points)

- (1) The Secretary considers 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 the project director or principal investigator.
 - (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.
 - (iii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

(d) Adequacy of resources. (10 points)

- (1) The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project.
- (2) In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.
 - (ii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.
 - (iii) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

(e) Quality of the management plan. (20 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 adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

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

(iv) 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.

(v) 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.

(f) 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 are appropriate to the context within which the project operates.

(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 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.

(v) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

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

