

**U.S. Department of Education
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
Washington, DC 20006**

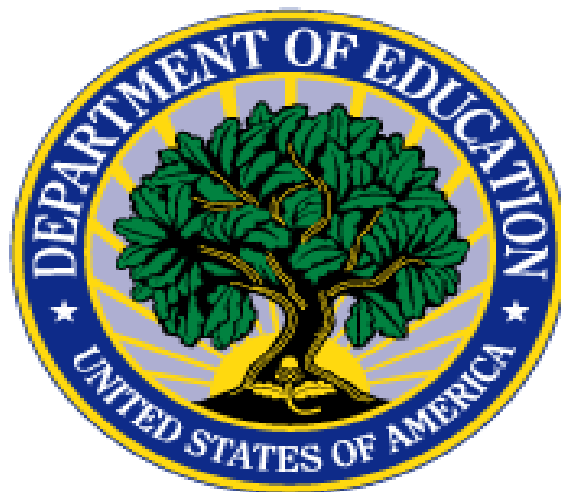
www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html

**FY 2016
APPLICATION FOR GRANTS
UNDER THE
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM**

CFDA NUMBER: 84.066A

FORM APPROVED

OMB No. 1840-0820, Expiration Date: **Month/Date/20XX**



**DATED MATERIAL – OPEN IMMEDIATELY
CLOSING DATE: **MONTH/DATE/2016****

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dear Applicant Letter.....	
Competition Highlights.....	
Overview.....	
Grants.gov Submission Procedures And Tips for Applicants.....	
Application Transmittal Instructions.....	
Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards.....	
Authorizing Legislation.....	
Educational Opportunity Centers Program Regulations.....	
Annual Low-Income Levels.....	
Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.....	
Supplemental Information.....	
EOC Program Profile Form.....	
Part IV—Educational Opportunity Centers Program Assurances.....	
Part V—Prior Experience.....	

INSTRUCTIONS

Instructions for Completing the Application Package.....	
Instructions for Project Narrative.....	
Competitive Preference Priorities.....	
Instructions for Standard Forms.....	
Instructions for SF 424.....	
Instructions for Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424.....	
Definitions for Department of Education Supplemental Information For SF 424.....	
Instructions for ED 524.....	

Instructions for Completion of SF-LLL, Disclosure Of Lobbying Activities.....

General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).....

Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA).....

Instructions for Budget Summary Form & Itemized Budget.....

Application Checklist.....

Paperwork Burden Statement.....



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in applying for a grant under the Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program. The EOC Program provides grants to institutions of higher education, public and private agencies and organizations, community-based organizations with experience in serving disadvantaged youth, combinations of such institutions, agencies and organizations, and secondary schools to operate projects that serve qualified individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. The EOC projects provide information regarding financial and academic assistance available for individuals who desire to pursue a program of postsecondary education, provide assistance to individuals in applying for admission to institutions that offer programs of postsecondary education, including assistance in preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers, and improve the financial and economic literacy of students, including basic personal income, household money management and financial planning skills, and basic economic decision-making skills.

This letter highlights a few items in the fiscal year (FY) 2016 application package that will be important to you in applying for a grant under this program. The “Competition Highlights” section notes some of the requirements for applying for a grant under the FY 2016 EOC Program competition. You should review the entire application package carefully before preparing and submitting your application. Information on the EOC Program is accessible at the U.S. Department of Education (Department) website at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioeoc/index.html>

In the FY 2016 competition, there are two competitive preference priorities: 1. Improving Parent, Family, and Community Engagement; and 2. Supporting Military Families and Veterans.

Applications for FY 2016 grants under the EOC Program must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov system. An applicant who is unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system must submit a written request for a waiver of the electronic submission requirement at least two weeks before the deadline date. Additional information about Grants.gov submission requirements can be found in the Competition Highlights, the Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards (Notice), published in the Federal Register, and in the transmittal instructions, which are included in this package. Grants.gov is accessible through its portal page at <http://www.Grants.gov>.

Also, it is imperative that your application includes a strong evaluation plan. The peer reviewers will be instructed to look closely at the potential of EOC Program applicants to successfully reach their individual project goals, which are driven by the performance indicators for the EOC Program. The evaluation plan should not only include formative and summative measures, but also address the use of appropriate controls and techniques that provide for independent evaluation. The evaluation plan should shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period and provide benchmarks for the monitoring of progress and measurement of that progress throughout the grant award period. You should pay close attention to the information provided in the Instructions for the Project Narrative section of this application regarding the development of your evaluation activities.

For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, please refer to the official Notice published in the Federal Register, and included in this application booklet. You are reminded that the document published in the Federal Register (the Notice) is the official document, and that you should not rely upon any information that is inconsistent with the guidance contained within the official document.

Thank you for your interest in the Educational Opportunity Centers Program. We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

James T. Minor, Ph.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Higher Education Programs

COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program applications for FY 2016 must be submitted electronically using Grants.gov.** You are urged to acquaint yourself with the requirements of Grants.gov early as the registration procedures may require 5 or more days to complete. A more thorough discussion is included later in this application package. Grants.gov is accessible through its portal page at: **<http://www.Grants.gov>**. The requirements for obtaining an exception to the electronic submission requirement have changed and are included in the Notice for FY 2016. If you think you may need an exception, you are urged to review the requirements promptly.
2. It is important to know that the Grants.gov site works differently than the Department's e-Application system, used in past competitions. Grants.gov does not allow applicants to "un-submit" applications. Therefore, if you discover that changes or additions are needed once your application has been accepted and validated by the Department, you must "re-submit" the application. You should know that if the Department receives duplicate applications, we will accept and process the application with the latest "date/time received" validation.
3. Please note that you must submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m. (Washington, D.C. time) on or before the application deadline date. Late applications will not be accepted. **We suggest that you submit your application several days before the deadline.** The Department is required to enforce the established deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants. No changes or additions to an application will be accepted after the deadline date and time.
4. Electronic submission of applications is required; therefore, you must submit an electronic application unless you follow the procedures outlined in the Federal Register Notice for FY 2016 and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement.
5. Applicants are required to adhere to the page limit specified in the Application Narrative Instructions portion of the application. The Notice contains the specific information governing page limits and formatting instructions. **The total page limit for the project narrative portion of the application for the FY 2016 EOC Program competition is 60 pages.** However, any application addressing the competitive preference priorities may include up to four additional pages for each of these priorities (1 and 2), if addressed. A total of eight additional pages can be used to discuss how the application meets the competitive preference priorities. The additional pages allotted to address priorities cannot be used for or transferred to the project narrative or any other section of the application. **Applicants addressing the competitive preference priorities should include them in a separate section for the application submission and discuss how the application meets the competitive preference priorities.**
6. All attachments must be in .PDF format. Other types of files will not be accepted. Please note, once you download an application from Grants.gov, you will be working offline and saving data on your computer. It is important to note where you are saving the Grants.gov file on your computer. You will need to log on to Grants.gov to upload and submit the application. (This is different from e-Application, where you may have previously worked

online and saved data to the Department’s database). You must provide the DUNS number that was used when your organization registered with the System for Award Management (SAM), formerly Central Contractor Registry (CCR).

For Grants.gov-related questions and assistance, please contact:

Support Desk e-Mail: support@Grants.gov
Support Desk Telephone: (800) 518-4726
Contact Telephone Hours: 24 hours, 7 days a week, except Federal holidays
Online Web Site: <http://www.Grants.gov>

Also, refer to the “Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants” section found in this application booklet.

You are reminded that the Notice published in the Federal Register is the official document, and that you should not rely upon any information that is inconsistent with the guidelines contained within the official document.

7. As you develop your application, we ask you to carefully consider the specific content that you will provide in the Objectives section of the application. This part of the application should address the appropriate standardized objectives related to attainment of secondary school diploma, completion of financial aid application, completion of admission application and postsecondary enrollment as stated on the EOC Program Profile Sheet.
8. In the Project Narrative, you must address each of the appropriate objectives, and explain how the objective is ambitious and attainable. Applicants should use comparative data to show why the proposed percentages are ambitious based on information provided in the Need section of the Project Narrative and attainable based on the information provided in the Plan of Operation and the resources available to the project. **Applicants may not modify, amend or delete any of these objectives.**
9. Consistent with the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), applicants may submit multiple EOC Program applications to serve different target areas.
10. In the FY 2016 competition, the Department has established two competitive preference priorities. They are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Improving Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. The Department encourages applicants to propose projects in which they develop a plan or expand upon existing relationships in order to collaborate with and coordinate their activities with the proposed target population, other Federal programs and State-funded programs with similar focus, school-level partners and other community organizations in order to carry out projects that best meet the needs of adult learners.

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting Military Families and Veterans. The Department encourages applicants to design projects that address the needs of Military or Veteran connected students.

Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2 are from the Department's Notice of Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the Federal Register on December 10, 2014 (79 FR 73426).

Applicants must address the competitive preference priorities in a separate section of the application submission to receive up to an additional 2 points per priority, for a total of up to 4 points if both priorities are addressed. Points are awarded based on the extent to which the application contains substantive information regarding the priorities. As stated earlier, applicants may include up to four additional pages to address each priority. These additional pages cannot be used for or transferred to the project narrative. A total of 8 pages can be used to discuss the competitive preference priorities, if both are addressed.

11. All applicants must complete the EOC Program Profile Form. The EOC Program Profile Form contains four standardized objectives. All applicants are required to propose the percentage or number—as indicated on the form—at which each of these objectives will be met. Applicants may not modify, amend or delete any of these objectives. Instructions for submitting the form are included in the Instructions for Completing the Application Package.
12. All applicants must provide a one-page abstract. Complete instructions for submitting the abstract are included in the Instructions for Completing the Application Package in this application. The abstract must be uploaded into the ED Abstract Form in Grants.gov.

Information on the EOC Program is accessible at the Department's website at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioeoc/index.html>

OVERVIEW
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM

Authorization

The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2, Section 402D

Program Regulations

34 CFR part 644 Educational Opportunity Centers Program

What is the Educational Opportunity Centers Program?

The Secretary shall carry out a program to be known as Educational Opportunity Centers which shall be designed:

- (1) to provide information with respect to financial and academic assistance available for individuals desiring to pursue a program of postsecondary education;
- (2) to provide assistance to such persons in applying for admission to institutions at which a program of postsecondary education is offered, including preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers; and
- (3) to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students, including –
 - a. basic personal income, household money management, and financial planning skills; and
 - b. basic economic decision-making skills.

Who is eligible to receive a grant?

The following are eligible to apply for a grant to carry out an EOC Program project:

- (a) Institutions of higher education
- (b) Public or private agencies or organizations, including community-based organizations with experience in serving disadvantaged youth
- (c) Secondary schools
- (d) Combinations of institutions, agencies, and organizations, and secondary schools.

What activities and services does a project provide?

Permissible Services.--Any project assisted under this section may provide services such as—

- (1) Public information campaigns designed to inform the community regarding opportunities for postsecondary education and training;
- (2) Academic advice and assistance in course selection;
- (3) Assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications;
- (4) Assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations;
- (5) Education or counseling services designed to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students;
- (6) Guidance on secondary school reentry or entry to a general educational development (GED) program or other alternative education programs for secondary school dropouts;
- (7) Individualized personal, career, and academic counseling;
- (8) Tutorial services;
- (9) Career workshops and counseling;

(10) Mentoring programs involving elementary or secondary school teachers, faculty members at institutions of higher education, students, or any combination of such persons; and

(11) Programs and activities as described in paragraphs (1) through (10) that are specially designed for students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths, students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students.

IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ FIRST

U.S. Department of Education Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this document includes important 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.

ATTENTION – Browser Support

Grants.gov is a Custom Java Application that uses standard web-browsers as the client. Grants.gov leverages the latest web technologies such as Ajax which relies extensively on JavaScript, HTML, and CSS. Grants.gov recommends you use the most up-to-date web browser possible for the best User Experience. If you are unsure about which version of the browser you are using, please check the following places:

- **Microsoft IE** – the *About Internet Explorer* setting under Help on your toolbar
- **Firefox** – the *About Firefox* setting under Help on your toolbar
- **Chrome**- the *About Google Chrome* setting under the *Customize and Control Google Chrome* option (located on the far right ☰) in your toolbar options for your browsers.

The table below lists supported Web Browsers:

Web Browser	Support	Comments
Microsoft IE 9/10/11	Supported	
Mozilla Firefox	Supported	Versions change frequently; we recommend you have the latest version. Legacy versions are functional but may experience some issues. It is recommended to upgrade to the latest version.
Google Chrome	Supported	Versions change frequently; we recommend you have the latest version. Legacy versions are functional but may experience some issues. It is recommended to upgrade to the latest version.
Apple Safari	Supported	Versions change frequently; we recommend you have the latest version. Legacy versions are functional but may experience some issues. It is recommended to upgrade to the latest version.

For additional information of updates, please see the Grants.gov Browser Support Page.
<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/browser-support.html>

ATTENTION – Adobe Forms and PDF Files Required

Applications submitted to Grants.gov for the Department of Education will be posted using Adobe forms. Therefore, applicants will need to download the latest version of Adobe reader (at least Adobe Reader 10.1.14). (Please note that in early 2013, Grants.gov discovered an issue with the newest version of Adobe Reader XI but it was subsequently resolved.) Information on computer and operating system compatibility with Adobe and links to download the latest version is available on Grants.gov at this link: [compatibility table](#). We strongly recommend that you review these details on [www.Grants.gov](#) before completing and submitting your application. In addition, applicants should submit their application a day or two in advance of the closing date as detailed below. Also, applicants are required to upload their attachments in .pdf format only. (See details below under “Attaching Files – Additional Tips.”) If you have any questions regarding this matter please email the Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726.

- 1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration on SAM ([www.sam.gov](#)) which may take approximately one week to complete, but could take upwards of several weeks to complete, depending upon the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM database by an applicant. You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the Registration steps are complete. Please note that once your SAM registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov, and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov. For detailed information on the Registration Steps, please go to: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> [Note: Your organization will need to update its SAM registration annually (formerly Central Contractor Registry (CCR).)]

Primary information about SAM is available at [www.sam.gov](#). However, to further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account the Department of Education has prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet which you can find at: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>

- 2) **SUBMIT EARLY** – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it after it is fully uploaded. The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully to Grants.gov before 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time on the deadline date.

Note: To submit successfully, you must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This DUNS number is typically the same number used when your organization registered with the SAM (formerly CCR -Central Contractor Registry). If you do not enter the same DUNS number on your application as the DUNS you registered with, Grants.gov will reject your application.

- 3) **VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK** – You will want to verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time and that it was validated successfully. To see the date/time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, DC time, on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned. Once the Department of Education receives

your application from Grants.gov, an Agency Tracking Number (PR/award number) will be assigned to your application and will be available for viewing on Grants.gov's Track My Application link.

If the date/time received is later than 4:30:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time, on the deadline date, your application is late. If your application has a status of "Received" it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to "Validated" or "Rejected with Errors." If the status is "Rejected with Errors," your application has not been received successfully. Some of the reasons Grants.gov may reject an application can be found on the Grants.gov site: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/grant-application-process/application-statuses.html>. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Error Messages document at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/troubleshooting/encountering-error-messages.html>. If you discover your application is late or has been rejected, please see the instructions below. Note: You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application. Please do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

Submission Problems – What should you do?

If you have problems submitting to Grants.gov before the closing date, please contact Grants.gov Customer Support at 1-800-518-4726 or <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/about/contact-us.html>, or access the Grants.gov Self-Service web portal at: <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>

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.)

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please note, once you download an application from Grants.gov, you will be working offline and saving data on your computer. Please be sure to note where you are saving the Grants.gov file on your computer. You will need to logon to Grants.gov to upload and submit the application. **You must provide the DUNS number on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov.**

Please go to <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/about/contact-us.html> for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Submit Application FAQs found on the Grants.gov <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/general-support/faqs.html>.

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.)

MAC Users

For MAC compatibility information, review the Operating System Platform Compatibility Table at the following Grants.gov link: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/recommended-software.html>. **If electronic submission is required and you are concerned about your ability to submit electronically as a non-windows user, please follow 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, especially the requirement that applicants **only include read-only, non-modifiable .PDF files** in their application:

1. Ensure that you attach **.PDF files only** for any attachments to your application, and they must be in a **read-only, non-modifiable format**. PDF files are the only Education approved file type accepted as detailed in the Federal Register application notice. Applicants must submit individual .PDF files only when attaching files to their application. Specifically, the Department will not accept any attachments that contain files within a file, such as PDF Portfolio files, or an interactive or fillable .PDF file. Any attachments uploaded that are not .PDF files or are password protected files will not be read.
2. Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission. Therefore, each file uploaded to your application package should have a unique file name.
3. When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded files must be less than 50 characters, contain no spaces, no special characters (example: -, &, *, %, /, #, \) including periods (.), blank spaces and accent marks. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to the Department.
4. 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. For reference, the average discretionary grant application package totals 1 to 2 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

2/2015

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:

Applications Submitted Electronically:

You must submit your grant application through the Internet using the software provided on the Grants.gov Web site (<http://www.grants.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 Grants.gov Web site, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement when we receive your application.

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

Submission of Paper Applications by Mail:

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 84.066A
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.

An applicant should note that the U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, an applicant should check with its local post office.

Special Note: Due to potential disruption to normal mail delivery, the Department encourages you to consider using an alternative delivery method (for example, a commercial carrier, such as Federal Express or United Parcel Service; U.S. Postal Service Express Mail; or a courier service) to transmit your application for this competition to the Department. If you use an alternative delivery method, please obtain the appropriate proof of mailing under “Applications Delivered by Mail,” and then follow the instructions for “Applications Delivered by Hand.”

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 84.066A
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260**

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

1. You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and
2. The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

Application Control Center Hours of Operation

The Application Control Center accepts application deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Washington, D.C. time) except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Late Applications

If your application is late, we will notify you that we will not consider the application.

Inviting Applications for New Awards

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Educational Opportunity Centers
Program

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of
Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

Educational Opportunity Centers Program (EOC Program)

Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY)
2016

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.066A.

Dates:

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

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS
AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 120 DAYS
AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The purposes of the EOC Program are to: provide information regarding financial and academic assistance available for qualified adults who want to enter or continue to pursue a program of postsecondary education; provide assistance to those individuals in applying for admission to institutions at which a program of postsecondary education is offered, including preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers; and assist in improving the financial and economic literacy of program participants.

An Educational Opportunity Centers project may provide the following services:

(1) Public information campaigns designed to inform the community regarding opportunities for postsecondary education and training;

(2) Academic advice and assistance in course selection;

(3) Assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications;

(4) Assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations;

(5) Education or counseling services designed to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students;

(6) Guidance on secondary school reentry or entry to a general educational development (GED) program or other alternative education program for secondary school dropouts;

- (7) Individualized personal, career, and academic counseling;
- (8) Tutorial services;
- (9) Career workshops and counseling;
- (10) Mentoring programs involving elementary or secondary school teachers, faculty members at institutions of higher education (IHEs), students, or any combination of such persons; and

(11) Programs and activities as described in items (1) through (10) that are specially designed for students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths, students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students.

Note: Consistent with 34 CFR 75.209, the Secretary will use the selection criteria outlined in 34 CFR 644.21 to evaluate the applications submitted for new grants under this program. In addition, consistent with the Department's increasing emphasis on promoting evidence-based practices through our grant competitions, the Secretary will also evaluate applications on the extent to which the components of the proposed project are supported by a logic model that meets the evidence standard of "strong theory" (as defined in this notice). We encourage

applicants to read carefully the Selection Criteria section of this notice. Resources to assist applicants in creating a logic model can be found here:

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014007.pdf

Priorities: This notice contains two competitive preference priorities. The competitive preference priorities are from the notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the Federal Register on December 10, 2014 (79 FR 73425) (Supplemental Priorities).

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award an application up to two additional points for each priority, for a total of up to four additional points, depending on how well the application meets each of these priorities.

The competitive preference priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Improving Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (up to 2 additional points).

The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to improve student outcomes through implementing initiatives that improve community engagement (as defined in this notice), the relationships between parents or families and school or program

staff by cultivating sustained partnerships (as defined in this notice).

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting Military Families and Veterans (up to 2 additional points).

The Secretary gives priority to projects that are designed to address the needs of military- or veteran-connected students (as defined in this notice).

Note: Applicants must include, in the one-page abstract submitted with the application, a statement indicating which, if any, of the competitive preference priorities are addressed. If the applicant has addressed the competitive preference priorities, this information must also be listed in the application package on the EOC Program Profile Form. __

Definitions:

These definitions are from the Supplemental Priorities and 34 CFR 77.1.

Community engagement means the systematic inclusion of community organizations as partners with State educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs), or other educational institutions, or their school or program staff to accomplish activities that may include developing a shared community vision, establishing a shared accountability agreement, participating in shared data collection and analysis, or establishing community networks that are focused on shared

community-level outcomes. These organizations may include faith- and community-based organizations, IHEs (including minority-serving institutions eligible to receive aid under title III or title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)), businesses and industries, labor organizations, State and local government entities, or Federal entities other than the Department.

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

Military- or veteran-connected student means (a) A child participating in an early learning and development program, a student enrolled in preschool through grade 12, or a student enrolled in postsecondary education or career and technical training who has a parent or guardian who is a member of the uniformed services (as defined by 37 U.S.C. 101, in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or Public Health Service); (b) A student who is a member of the uniformed services, a veteran of the uniformed services, or the spouse of a service member or veteran; or (c) A child participating in an

early learning and development program or a student enrolled in preschool through grade 12 who has a parent or guardian who is a veteran of the uniformed services (as defined by 37 U.S.C. 101).

Note: For the purpose of this competition, only subpart (b) of this definition is applicable, and the term “students” in this definition includes prospective students.

Parent and family engagement means the systematic inclusion of parents and families, working in partnership with SEAs, State lead agencies (under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or the State’s race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant), LEAs, or other educational institutions, or their staff, in their child’s education, which may include strengthening the ability of (a) parents and families to support their child’s education; and (b) school or program staff to work with parents and families.

Strong theory means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.

Sustained partnership means a relationship that has demonstrably adequate resources and other support to continue beyond the funding period and that consists of community organizations as partners with an LEA and one or more of its schools. These organizations may include faith- and community-based organizations, IHEs (including minority-serving institutions eligible to receive aid under title III or title V

of the HEA), businesses and industries, labor organizations, State and local government entities, or Federal entities other than the Department. Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75 (except for 75.215 through 75.221), 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Education Department debarment and suspension regulations as adopted in 2 CFR part 3485 and the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards as adopted in 2 CFR part 3474. (c) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 644. (d) The Supplemental Priorities.

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

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$859,752,000 for the Federal TRIO Programs for FY 2016, of which we intend to use an estimated \$46,925,156 for the EOC Program. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress

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

Estimated Range of Awards: \$230,000 - \$1,172,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$377,661.

Maximum Award:

- For an applicant that is not currently receiving an EOC Program grant, the maximum award amount is \$230,000, based upon a per-participant cost of no more than \$230 and a minimum of 1,000 participants.

- For an applicant that is currently receiving an EOC Program grant, the maximum award amount is the greater of (a) \$230,000 or (b) an amount equal to 100 percent of the applicant's base award amount for FY 2015. The minimum number of participants an applicant proposes to serve must be 1,000. For an applicant that is currently operating an EOC project that is serving more than 1,000 participants, the applicant is encouraged to continue to serve its current number of participants.

However, if the applicant proposes to reduce the number of participants to be served, the proposed number must be at least 1,000 participants and must be based on a per-participant cost that does not exceed \$300 per-participant. For example, to be

eligible for a \$360,000 grant, the applicant must propose to serve at least 1,200 participants.

We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding the applicable maximum amount listed above for a single budget period of 12 months. We will also reject any application that proposes a budget to serve fewer than 1,000 participants, or any application that proposes a budget that exceeds the maximum per-participant cost of \$300.

Estimated Number of Awards: 126.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: IHEs, public and private agencies and organizations including community-based organizations with experience in serving disadvantaged youth; combinations of such institutions, agencies, and organizations; and secondary schools.

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

3. Other: An applicant may submit more than one application for an EOC Program grant so long as each application describes a project that serves a different target area (34 CFR 644.10(a)). The term "target area" is defined as a geographic area served by a project (34 CFR 644.7(b)).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: Rachael Couch, Ed.D., U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., room 7000, Washington, DC 20006-8510. Telephone: (202) 502-7600 or by email: TRIO@ed.gov.

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

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program.

- **Page Limit:** The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit the application narrative, which includes the budget narrative, to no more than 60 pages using the following standards. However, any application addressing the competitive preference priorities may include up to 4 additional pages for each of the priorities that is addressed. Those additional pages

must be used to discuss how the application meets the competitive preference priorities.

- 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.

- Each page on which there is text or graphics will be counted as one full page.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative.

- Titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in figures, charts, and graphs, may be single-spaced.

- 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 and Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit does not apply to Part I--the Application for Federal Assistance Face Sheet (SF 424); Part II--the Budget Information Summary form (ED Form 524); Part III--the EOC Program Profile form; Part III--the one-page Project Abstract form; and Part IV--the Assurances and Certifications. The page limit also does not apply to a table of contents, which you should include

in the application narrative. If you include any attachments or appendices, these items will be counted as part of Part III--the application narrative for purpose of the page-limit requirement. You must include your complete response to the selection criteria in Part III--the application narrative.

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 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

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

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

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the program contact person listed under For Further

Information Contact in section VII in 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 120 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

4. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

5. Funding Restrictions: We specify unallowable costs in 34 CFR 644.31. We reference additional regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

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

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

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 EOC Program, CFDA number 84.066A, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

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

You may access the electronic grant application for the EOC Program at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable application package for this program by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.066, not 84.066A).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received--that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system--after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this program to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at www.G5.gov. In addition, for specific guidance and procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov, please refer to the Grants.gov Web site at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

- 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: Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-only, non-

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

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

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department. Grants.gov will also notify you automatically by email if your application met all the Grants.gov validation requirements or if there were any errors (such as submission of your application by someone other than a registered Authorized Organization Representative, or inclusion of an attachment with a file name that contains special characters). You will be given

an opportunity to correct any errors and resubmit, but you must still meet the deadline for submission of applications.

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

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

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

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You

must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, D.C. time, on the application deadline date, please contact the program contact person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will contact you after we determine whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the

Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through Grants.gov because--

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

the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Gaby Watts, OPE, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Room 7E311, Washington, DC 20202. Fax: (202) 205-0063.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.066A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

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

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

(4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

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

(1) A private metered postmark.

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

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

We will not consider applications postmarked after the deadline date.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

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

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.066A)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

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

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

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this 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

1. Selection Criteria: The following selection criteria for this competition total 105 points and are from 34 CFR 644.21 and 34 CFR 75.210:

(a) Need for the project (24 points). The Secretary evaluates the need for an EOC project in the proposed target area on the basis of the extent to which the application contains clear evidence of--

(1) A high number or percentage, or both, of low-income families residing in the target area;

(2) A high number or percentage, or both, of individuals residing in the target area with education completion levels below the baccalaureate level;

(3) A high need on the part of residents of the target area for further education and training from programs of postsecondary education in order to meet changing employment trends; and

(4) Other indicators of need for an EOC project, including the presence of unaddressed educational or socio-economic problems of adult residents in the target area.

(b) Objectives (8 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the applicant's objectives and proposed targets (percentages) in the following areas on the basis of the extent to which they are both ambitious, as related to the need data provided under paragraph (a) of this section, and attainable, given the project's plan of operation, budget, and other resources--

(1) Secondary school diploma or equivalent (2 points).

(2) Postsecondary enrollment (3 points).

(3) Financial aid applications (1.5 points).

(4) College admission applications (1.5 points).

(c) Plan of operation (30 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the applicant's plan of operation on the basis of the following--

(1) The plan to inform the residents, schools, and community organizations in the target area of the goals, objectives, and services of the project and the eligibility requirements for participation in the project (4 points);

(2) The plan to identify and select eligible participants and ensure their participation without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, or disability (4 points);

(3) The plan to assess each participant's need for services provided by the project (2 points);

(4) The plan to provide services that meet the participants' needs and achieve the objectives of the project (12 points); and

(5) The management plan to ensure the proper and efficient administration of the project including, but not limited to, the project's organizational structure, the time committed to the project by the project director and other personnel, and, where appropriate, its coordination with other projects for disadvantaged students (8 points).

(d) Applicant and community support (16 points). The Secretary evaluates the applicant and community support for the proposed project on the basis of the extent to which the

applicant has made provision for resources to supplement the grant and enhance the project's services, including--

(1) Facilities, equipment, supplies, personnel, and other resources committed by the applicant (8 points); and

(2) Resources secured through written commitments from schools, community organizations, and others (8 points).

(e) Quality of personnel (9 points). (1) The Secretary evaluates the quality of the personnel the applicant plans to use in the project on the basis of the following--

(i) The qualifications required of the project director.

(ii) The qualifications required of each of the other personnel to be used in the project.

(iii) The plan to employ personnel who have succeeded in overcoming disadvantages or circumstances like those of the population of the target area.

(2) In evaluating the qualifications of a person, the Secretary considers his or her experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project.

(f) Budget (5 points). The Secretary evaluates the extent to which the project budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and adequate to support the project.

(g) Evaluation plan (8 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the evaluation plan for the project on the basis of the extent to which the applicant's methods of evaluation--

(1) Are appropriate to the project's objectives;

(2) Provide for the applicant to determine, using specific and quantifiable measures, the success of the project in--

(i) Making progress toward achieving its objectives (a formative evaluation); and

(ii) Achieving its objectives at the end of the project period (a summative evaluation); and

(3) Provide for the disclosure of unanticipated project outcomes, using quantifiable measures if appropriate.

(h) Quality of the project design (5 points). The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in this notice).

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

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

For this competition, a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria in 34 CFR 644.21 and 34 CFR 75.210. The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process. Additionally, in accordance with 34 CFR 644.22, the Secretary will award prior experience points to applicants that conducted an EOC Program project during budget periods 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15, based on their documented experience. Prior experience points, if any, will be added to the application's averaged reader score to determine the total score for each application.

If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, the Secretary will choose among the tied applications so as to serve geographic areas and eligible populations that have been underserved by the EOC Program.

3. Risk Assessment and Special Conditions: Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the

Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

VI. Award Administration Information

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

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

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

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in

the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

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

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a 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.

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

4. Performance Measures: The success of the EOC Program will be measured by the EOC Program participants' success in completing a secondary school diploma or its equivalent,

completion of applications for student financial aid, submission of applications for postsecondary admission, and postsecondary enrollment. All EOC Program grantees will be required to submit annual performance reports.

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

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

VII. Agency Contacts

For Further Information Contact: Rachael Couch, Ed.D., U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., room 7000, Washington, DC 20006-8510. Telephone: (202) 502-7600 or by email: TRIO@ed.gov

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

VIII. Other Information

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

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

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

DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY: The Secretary of Education has delegated authority to Jamienne S. Studley, Deputy Under

Secretary, to perform the functions and the duties of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.

Dated:

Jamienne S. Studley,
Deputy Under Secretary.

TITLE IV, Part A, Subpart 2, Section 402D of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended

CHAPTER I-FEDERAL TRIO PROGRAMS

SEC. 402A. [20 U.S.C.I070a-11] PROGRAM AUTHORITY; AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) GRANTS AND CONTRACTS AUTHORIZED.-The Secretary shall, in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, carry out a program of making grants and contracts designed to identify qualified individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, to prepare them for a program of postsecondary education, to provide support services for such students who are pursuing programs of postsecondary education, to motivate and prepare students for doctoral programs, and to train individuals serving or preparing for service in programs and projects so designed.

(b) RECIPIENTS, DURATION, AND SIZE.

(1) RECIPIENTS.-For the purposes described in subsection (a), the Secretary is authorized, without regard to section 3709 of the Revised Statutes (41 U.S.C. 5), to make grants to, and contracts with, institutions of higher education, public and private agencies and organizations including community-based organizations with experience in serving disadvantaged youth, combinations of such institutions, agencies and organizations, and, as appropriate to the purposes of the program, secondary schools, for planning, developing, or carrying out one or more of the services assisted under this chapter.

(2) DURATION.-Grants or contracts made under this chapter shall be awarded for a period of 5 years, except that

(A) in order to synchronize the awarding of grants for programs under this chapter, the Secretary may, under such terms as are consistent with the purposes of this chapter, provide a one-time, limited extension of the length of such an award;

(B) grants made under section 402G shall be awarded for a period of 2 years; and

(C) grants under section 402H shall be awarded for a period determined by the Secretary.

(3) MINIMUM GRANTS.-Unless the institution or agency requests a smaller amount, an individual grant authorized under this chapter shall be awarded in an amount that is not less than \$200,000, except that an individual grant authorized under section 402G shall be awarded in an amount that is not less than \$170,000.

(c) PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.

(1) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.-An eligible entity that desires to receive a grant or contract under this chapter shall submit an application to the Secretary in such manner and form, and containing such information and assurances, as the Secretary may reasonably require.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.

(A) PRIOR EXPERIENCE.-In making grants under this chapter, the Secretary shall consider each applicant's prior experience of high quality service delivery, as determined under subsection (f), under the particular program for which funds are sought. The level of consideration given the factor of prior experience shall not vary from the level of consideration given such factor during fiscal years 1994 through 1997, except that grants made under section 402H shall not be given prior experience consideration.

(B) PARTICIPANT NEED.-In making grants under this chapter, the Secretary shall consider the number, percentages, and needs of eligible participants in the area, institution of higher education, or secondary school to be served to aid such participants in preparing for, enrolling in, or succeeding in postsecondary education, as appropriate to the particular program for which the eligible entity is applying.

(3) ORDER OF AWARDS; PROGRAM FRAUD.- (A) Except with respect to grants made under sections 402G and 402H and as provided in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall award grants and contracts under this chapter in the order of the scores received by the application for such grant or contract in the peer review process required under paragraph (4) and adjusted for prior experience in accordance with paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(B) The Secretary shall not provide assistance to a program otherwise eligible for assistance under this chapter, if the Secretary has determined that such program has involved the fraudulent use of funds under this chapter.

(4) PEER REVIEW PROCESS.- (A) The Secretary shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, members of groups underrepresented in higher education, including African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, and Native American Pacific Islanders (including Native Hawaiians), are represented as readers of applications submitted under this chapter. The Secretary shall also ensure that persons from urban and rural backgrounds are represented as readers.

(B) The Secretary shall ensure that each application submitted under this chapter is read by at least three readers who are not employees of the Federal Government (other than as readers of applications).

(5) NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.-The Secretary shall not limit the number of applications submitted by an entity under any program authorized under this chapter if the additional applications describe programs serving different populations or different campuses.

(6) COORDINATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS.-

The Secretary shall encourage coordination of programs assisted under this chapter with other programs for disadvantaged students operated by the sponsoring institution or agency, regardless of the funding source of such programs. The Secretary shall not limit an entity's eligibility to receive funds under this chapter because such entity sponsors a program similar to the program to be assisted under this chapter, regardless of the funding source of such program. The Secretary shall permit the Director of a program receiving funds under this chapter to administer one or more additional programs for disadvantaged students operated by the sponsoring institution or agency, regardless of the funding sources of such programs. The Secretary shall, as appropriate, require each applicant for funds under the programs authorized by this chapter to identify and make available services under such program, including mentoring, tutoring, and other services provided by such program, to foster care youth (including youth in foster care and youth who have left foster care after reaching age 13) or to homeless children and youths as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

(7) APPLICATION STATUS.-The Secretary shall inform each entity operating programs under this chapter regarding the status of their application for continued funding at least 8 months prior to the expiration of the grant or contract. The Secretary, in the case of an entity that is continuing to operate a successful program under this chapter, shall ensure that the start-up date for a new grant or contract for such program immediately follows the termination of the preceding grant or contract so that no interruption of funding occurs for such successful reapplicants. The Secretary shall inform each entity requesting assistance under this chapter for a new program regarding the status of their application at least 8 months prior to the proposed startup date of such program.

(8) REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION BY THE SECRETARY.

(A) GUIDANCE.-Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, the Secretary shall issue non-regulatory guidance regarding the rights and responsibilities of applicants with respect to the application and evaluation process for programs and projects assisted under this chapter, including applicant access to peer review comments. The guidance shall describe the procedures for the submission, processing, and scoring of applications for grants under this chapter, including

(i) the responsibility of applicants to submit materials in a timely manner and in accordance with the processes established by the Secretary under the authority of the General Education Provisions Act;

(ii) steps the Secretary will take to ensure that the materials submitted by applicants are processed in a proper and timely manner;

(iii) steps the Secretary will take to ensure that prior experience points for high quality service delivery are awarded in an accurate and transparent manner

(iv) steps the Secretary will take to ensure the quality and integrity of the peer review process, including assurances that peer reviewers will consider applications for grants under this chapter in a thorough and complete manner consistent with applicable Federal law; and

(v) steps the Secretary will take to ensure that the final score of an application, including prior experience points for high quality service delivery and points awarded through the peer review process, is determined in an accurate and transparent manner.

(B) UPDATED GUIDANCE.-Not later than 45 days before the date of the commencement of each competition for a grant under this chapter that is held after the expiration of the 180-day period described in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall update and publish the guidance described in such subparagraph.

(C) REVIEW.

(i) IN GENERAL.-With respect to any competition for a grant under this chapter, an applicant may request a review by the Secretary if the applicant

(I) has evidence of a specific technical, administrative, or scoring error made by the Department, an agent of the Department, or a peer reviewer, with respect to the scoring or processing of a submitted application; and

(II) has otherwise met all of the requirements for submission of the application.

(ii) TECHNICAL OR ADMINISTRATIVE ERROR.-In the case of evidence of a technical or administrative error listed in clause (i)(I), the Secretary shall review such evidence and provide a timely response to the applicant. If the Secretary determines that a technical or administrative error was made by the Department or an agent of the Department, the application of the applicant shall be reconsidered in the peer review process for the applicable grant competition.

(iii) SCORING ERROR.-In the case of evidence of a scoring error listed in clause (i)(I), when the error relates to either prior experience points for high quality service delivery or to the final score of an application, the Secretary shall

(I) review such evidence and provide a timely response to the applicant; and

(II) if the Secretary determines that a scoring error was made by the Department or a peer reviewer, adjust the prior experience points or final score of the application appropriately and quickly, so as not to interfere with the timely awarding of grants for the applicable grant competition.

(iv) ERROR IN PEER REVIEW PROCESS.

(I) REFERRAL TO SECONDARY REVIEW.-In the case of a peer review process error listed in clause (i)(I), if the Secretary determines that points were withheld for criteria not required in Federal statute, regulation, or guidance governing a program assisted under this chapter or the application for a grant for such program, or determines that information pertaining to selection

criteria was wrongly determined missing from an application by a peer reviewer, then the Secretary shall refer the application to a secondary review panel.

(II) **TIMELY REVIEW; REPLACEMENT SCORE.** The secondary review panel described in subclause (I) shall conduct a secondary review in a timely fashion, and the score resulting from the secondary review shall replace the score from the initial peer review.

(III) **COMPOSITION OF SECONDARY REVIEW PANEL.** -The secondary review panel shall be composed of reviewers each of whom

(aa) did not review the application in the original peer review;

(bb) is a member of the cohort of peer reviewers for the grant program that is the subject of such secondary review; and

(cc) to extent practicable, has conducted peer reviews in not less than two previous competitions for the grant program that is the subject of such secondary review.

(IV) **FINAL SCORE.** -The final peer review score of an application subject to a secondary review under this clause shall be adjusted appropriately and quickly using the score awarded by the secondary review panel, so as not to interfere with the timely awarding of grants for the applicable grant competition.

(V) **QUALIFICATION FOR SECONDARY REVIEW.** To qualify for a secondary review under this clause, an applicant shall have evidence of a scoring error and demonstrate that-

(aa) points were withheld for criteria not required in statute, regulation, or guidance governing the Federal TRIO programs or the application for a grant for such programs; or

(bb) information pertaining to selection criteria was wrongly determined to be missing from the application.

(v) **FINALITY.**

(I) **IN GENERAL.** -A determination by the Secretary under clause (i), (ii), or (iii) shall not be reviewable by any officer or employee of the Department.

(II) **SCORING.** -The score awarded by a secondary review panel under clause (iv) shall not be reviewable by any officer or employee of the Department other than the Secretary.

(vi) **FUNDING OF APPLICATIONS WITH CERTAIN ADJUSTED SCORES.** -To the extent feasible based on the availability of appropriations, the Secretary shall fund applications with scores that are adjusted upward under clauses (ii), (iii), and (iv) to equal or exceed the minimum cut off score for the applicable grant competition.

(d) **OUTREACH.**

(1) **IN GENERAL.** -The Secretary shall conduct outreach activities to ensure that entities eligible for assistance under this chapter submit applications proposing programs that serve geographic areas and eligible populations which have been underserved by the programs assisted under this chapter.

(2) NOTICE.-In carrying out the provisions of paragraph (1), the Secretary shall notify the entities described in subsection (b) of the availability of assistance under this subsection not less than 120 days prior to the deadline for submission of applications under this chapter and shall consult national, State, and regional organizations about candidates for notification.

(3) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.-The Secretary shall provide technical training to applicants for projects and programs authorized under this chapter. The Secretary shall give priority to serving programs and projects that serve geographic areas and eligible populations which have been underserved by the programs assisted under this chapter. Technical training activities shall include the provision of information on authorizing legislation, goals and objectives of the program, required activities, eligibility requirements, the application process and application deadlines, and assistance in the development of program proposals and the completion of program applications. Such training shall be furnished at conferences, seminars, and workshops to be conducted at not less than 10 sites throughout the United States to ensure that all areas of the United States with large concentrations of eligible participants are served.

(4) SPECIAL RULE.-The Secretary may contract with eligible entities to conduct the outreach activities described in this subsection.

(e) DOCUMENTATION OF STATUS AS A LOW INCOME INDIVIDUAL.- (I) Except in the case of an independent student, as defined in section 480(d), documentation of an individual's status pursuant to subsection (h)(4) shall be made by providing the Secretary with

(A) a signed statement from the individual's parent or legal guardian;

(B) verification from another governmental source;

(C) a signed financial aid application; or

(D) a signed United States or Puerto Rico income tax return.

(2) In the case of an independent student, as defined in section 480(d), documentation of an individual's status pursuant to subsection (h)(4) shall be made by providing the Secretary with

(A) a signed statement from the individual;

(B) verification from another governmental source;

(C) a signed financial aid application; or

(D) a signed United States or Puerto Rico income tax return.

(3) Notwithstanding this subsection and subsection (h)(4), individuals who are foster care youth (including youth in foster care and youth who have left foster care after reaching age 13), or homeless children and youths' as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless

Assistance Act, shall be eligible to participate in programs under sections 402B, 402C, 402D, and 402F.

(f) OUTCOME CRITERIA -

(1) USE FOR PRIOR EXPERIENCE DETERMINATION- For competitions for grants under this chapter that begin on or after January 1, 2009, the Secretary shall determine an eligible entity's prior experience of high quality service delivery, as required under subsection (c)(2), based on the outcome criteria described in paragraphs (2) and (3).

(2) DISAGGREGATION OF RELEVANT DATA- The outcome criteria under this subsection shall be disaggregated by low-income students, first generation college students, and individuals with disabilities, in the schools and institutions of higher education served by the program to be evaluated.

(3) CONTENTS OF OUTCOME CRITERIA- The outcome criteria under this subsection shall measure, annually and for longer periods, the quality and effectiveness of programs authorized under this chapter and shall include the following:

(E) For programs authorized under section 402F, the extent to which the entity met or exceeded the entity's objectives for such program regarding-

- (i) the enrollment of students without a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, who were served by the program, in programs leading to such diploma or equivalent;
- (ii) the enrollment of secondary school graduates who were served by the program in programs of postsecondary education;
- (iii) the delivery of service to a total number of students served by the program, as agreed upon by the entity and the Secretary for the period; and
- (iv) the provision of assistance to students served by the program in completing financial aid applications and college admission applications.

(4) MEASUREMENT OF PROGRESS-In order to determine the extent to which each outcome criterion described in paragraph (2) or (3) is met or exceeded. The Secretary shall compare the agreed upon target for the criterion, as established in the eligible entity's application approved by the Secretary with the results for the criterion, measured as the last day of the applicable time period for the determination for the outcome criterion.

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.-For the purpose of making grants and contracts under this chapter, there are authorized to be appropriated \$900,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the five succeeding fiscal years. Of the amount appropriated under this chapter, the Secretary may use no more than 1/2 of 1 percent of such amount to obtain additional qualified readers and additional staff to review applications, to increase the level of oversight monitoring, to support impact studies, program assessments and reviews, and to provide technical assistance to potential applicants and current grantees. In expending these funds, the Secretary shall give priority to the additional administrative

requirements provided in the Higher Education Amendments of 1992, to outreach activities, and to obtaining additional readers.

(h) DEFINITIONS.-For the purpose of this chapter:

(1) DIFFERENT POPULATION.-The term "different population" means a group of individuals that an eligible entity desires to serve through an application for a grant under this chapter, and that

(A) is separate and distinct from any other population that the entity has applied for a grant under this chapter to serve; or

(B) while sharing some of the same needs as another population that the eligible entity has applied for a grant under this chapter to serve, has distinct needs for specialized services.

(2) FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENT.-The term "first-generation college student" means-

(A) An individual both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree; or

(B) In the case of any individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent, an individual whose only such parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree.

(3) LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUAL.-The term "low-income individual" means an individual from a family whose taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.

(4) FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC LITERACY. -The term "financial and economic literacy" means knowledge about personal financial decision-making, including but not limited to knowledge about -

(A) Personal and family budget planning;

(B) Understanding credit building principles to meet long-term and short-term goals (e.g., loan to debt ratio, credit scoring, negative impacts on credit scores);

(C) Cost planning for postsecondary education (e.g., spending, saving, personal budgeting);

(D) College cost of attendance (e.g., public vs. private, tuition vs. fees, personal costs);

(E) Scholarship, grant, and loan education (e.g., searches, application processes, and variances between private and government loans); and

(F) Assistance in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

(5) FOSTER CARE YOUTH.-The term “foster care youth” means youth who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system.

(6) HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH- The term “homeless children and youth” means those persons defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434(a)).

(7) INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES- The term “individuals with disabilities” means a person who has a diagnosed physical or mental impairment that substantially limits that person's ability to participate in educational experiences and opportunities.

(8) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION- The term “institution of higher education” means an educational institution as defined in sections 101 and 102 of the HEA.

(9) VETERAN ELIGIBILITY. - No veteran shall be deemed ineligible to participate in any program under this chapter by reason of such individual’s age who-

(A) served on active duty for a period of more than 180 days, any part of which occurred after January 31, 1955, and was discharged or released there from under conditions other than dishonorable; or

(B) served on active duty after January 31, 1955, and was discharged or released there from because of a service connected disability.

(10) WAIVER. - The Secretary may waive the service requirements in subparagraph (A) or (B) of paragraph (3) if the Secretary determines the application of the service requirements to a veteran will defeat the purpose of a program under this chapter.

SEC. 402F. [20 U.S.C. 1070a-16] EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS.

(a) PROGRAM AUTHORITY.-The Secretary shall carry out a program to be known as Educational Opportunity Centers which shall be designed-

(1) To provide information with respect to financial and academic assistance available for individuals desiring to pursue a program of postsecondary education; and

(2) To provide assistance to such persons in applying for admission to institutions at which a program of postsecondary education is offered, including preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers.

(3) to foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths (as such term is defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a)), students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students; and

(4) to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students, including

(A) basic personal income, household money management, and financial planning skills; and

(B) basic economic decisionmaking skills.

(b) PERMISSIBLE SERVICES.- An Educational Opportunity Center assisted under this section may provide services such as--

(1) public information campaigns designed to inform the community regarding opportunities for postsecondary education and training;

(2) assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483(a);

(3) assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications;

(4) assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations;

(5) education or counseling services designed to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students;

(6) guidance on secondary school reentry or entry to a general educational development (GED) program or other alternative education programs for secondary school dropouts;

(7) individualized personal, career, and academic counseling;

(8) tutorial services;

(9) career workshops and counseling;

(10) mentoring programs involving elementary or secondary school teachers, faculty members at institutions of higher education, students, or any combination of such persons;

(11) programs and activities described in paragraphs (1) through (10) that are specially designed for students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students who are individuals with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youth (as such term is defined in section 725 of the

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a)), students who are foster care youth, or other disconnected participants.

(c) SPECIAL RULE.

(1) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.-Funds received by a grant recipient that are used under this subsection shall be used to supplement, and not supplant, non-Federal funds expended for Educational Opportunity Centers programs.

(d) REQUIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS.-In approving applications for projects under this section for any fiscal year, the Secretary shall

(1) require an assurance that not less than two-thirds of the persons participating in the project proposed to be carried out under any application

(A) be low-income individuals who are first generation college students.

EOC PROGRAM REGULATIONS

Title 34: Education

**CHAPTER VI—OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION,
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

PART 644—EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS

Section Contents

Subpart A—General

- §644.1 What is the Educational Opportunity Centers program?
- §644.2 Who is eligible for a grant?
- §644.3 Who is eligible to participate in a project?
- §644.4 What services may a project provide?
- §644.5 How long is a project period?
- §644.6 What regulations apply?
- §644.7 What definitions apply?

Subpart B—How Does One Apply for an Award?

- §644.10 How many applications may an eligible applicant submit?
- §644.11 What assurances must an applicant submit?

Subpart C—How Does the Secretary Make a Grant?

- §644.20 How does the Secretary decide which new grants to make?
- §644.21 What selection criteria does the Secretary use?
- §644.22 How does the Secretary evaluate prior experience?
- §644.23 How does the Secretary set the amount of a grant?
- §644.24 What is the review process for unsuccessful applicants?

Subpart D—What Conditions Must Be Met by a Grantee?

- §644.30 What are allowable costs?
 - §644.31 What are unallowable costs?
 - §644.32 What other requirements must a grantee meet?
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Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 1070a-16, unless otherwise noted.

Source: 59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§644.1 What is the Educational Opportunity Centers program?

The Educational Opportunity Centers program provides grants for projects designed—

- (a) To provide information regarding financial and academic assistance available to individuals who desire to pursue a program of postsecondary education;
- (b) To provide assistance to individuals in applying to admission to institutions that offer programs of postsecondary education, including assistance in preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers; and
- (c) To improve the financial and economic literacy of participants on topics such as—
 - (1) Basic personal income, household money management, and financial planning skills; and
 - (2) Basic economic decision-making skills.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65780, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.2 Who is eligible for a grant?

The following entities are eligible for a grant to carry out an Educational Opportunity Centers project:

- (a) An institution of higher education.
- (b) A public or private agency or organization, including a community-based organization with experience in serving disadvantaged youth.
- (c) A secondary school.
- (d) A combination of the types of institutions, agencies, and organizations described in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994 , as amended at 75 FR 65780, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.3 Who is eligible to participate in a project?

(a) An individual is eligible to participate in an Educational Opportunity Centers project if the individual meets all of the following requirements:

(1)(i) Is a citizen or national of the United States;

(ii) Is a permanent resident of the United States;

(iii) Is in the United States for other than a temporary purpose and provides evidence from the Immigration and Naturalization Service of his or her intent to become a permanent resident;

(iv) Is a permanent resident of Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Palau); or

(v) Is a resident of the Freely Associated States—the Federated States of Micronesia or the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

(2)(i) Is at least 19 years of age; or

(ii) Is less than 19 years of age, and the individual cannot be appropriately served by a Talent Search project under 34 CFR part 643, and the individual's participation would not dilute the Educational Opportunity Centers project's services to individuals described in paragraph (a)(2)(i) of this section.

(3) Expresses a desire to enroll, or is enrolled, in a program of postsecondary education, and requests information or assistance in applying for admission to, or financial aid for, such a program.

(b) A veteran as defined in §644.7(b), regardless of age, is eligible to participate in an Educational Opportunity Centers project if he or she satisfies the eligibility requirements in paragraph (a) of this section other than the age requirement in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 1070a-16)

§644.4 What services may a project provide?

An Educational Opportunity Centers project may provide the following services:

(a) Public information campaigns designed to inform the community about opportunities for postsecondary education and training.

(b) Academic advice and assistance in course selection.

- (c) Assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications.
- (d) Assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations.
- (e) Education or counseling services designed to improve the financial and economic literacy of participants.
- (f) Guidance on secondary school reentry or entry to a General Educational Development (GED) program or other alternative education program for secondary school dropouts.
- (g) Individualized personal, career, and academic counseling.
- (h) Tutorial services.
- (i) Career workshops and counseling.
- (j) Mentoring programs involving elementary or secondary school teachers, faculty members at institutions of higher education, students, or any combination of these persons.
- (k) Programs and activities described in this section that are specially designed for participants who are limited English proficient, participants from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, participants who are individuals with disabilities, participants who are homeless children and youth, participants who are foster care youth, or other disconnected participants.
- (l) Other activities designed to meet the purposes of the Educational Opportunity Centers program stated in §644.1.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65780, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.5 How long is a project period?

A project period under the Educational Opportunity Centers program is five years.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11)

[75 FR 65780, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.6 What regulations apply?

The following regulations apply to the Educational Opportunity Centers program:

(a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75 (except for §§75.215 through 75.221), 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

(b) The regulations in this part 644.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 1070a-16)

(c)(1) 2 CFR part 180 (OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)), as adopted at 2 CFR part 3485; and

(2) 2 CFR part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards), as adopted at 2 CFR part 3474.

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65780, Oct. 26, 2010; 79 FR 76102, Dec. 19, 2014]

§644.7 What definitions apply?

(a) General definitions. The following terms used in this part are defined in 2 CFR part 200, subpart A, or in 34 CFR 77.1:

Applicant	Grant
Application	Grantee
Budget	Private
Budget period	Project
EDGAR	Project period
Equipment	Public
Facilities	Secretary
Fiscal year	Supplies

(b) Other definitions. The following definitions also apply to this part:

Different population means a group of individuals that an eligible entity desires to serve through an application for a grant under the Educational Opportunity Centers program and that—

(i) Is separate and distinct from any other population that the entity has applied for a grant under this chapter to serve; or

(ii) While sharing some of the same needs as another population that the eligible entity has applied for a grant to serve, has distinct needs for specialized services.

Financial and economic literacy means knowledge about personal financial decision-making, which may include but is not limited to knowledge about—

(i) Personal and family budget planning;

(ii) Understanding credit building principles to meet long-term and short-term goals (e.g., loan to debt ratio, credit scoring, negative impacts on credit scores);

(iii) Cost planning for postsecondary or postbaccalaureate education (e.g., spending, saving, personal budgeting);

(iv) College cost of attendance (e.g., public vs. private, tuition vs. fees, personal costs);

(v) Financial assistance (e.g., searches, application processes, and differences between private and government loans, assistanceships); and

(vi) Assistance in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Foster care youth means youth who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system.

HEA means the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended.

Homeless children and youth means those persons defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a).

Individual with a disability means a person who has a disability, as that term is defined in section 12102 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

Institution of higher education means an educational institution as defined in sections 101 and 102 of the HEA.

Low-income individual means an individual whose family's taxable income did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level amount in the calendar year preceding the year in which the individual initially participated in the project. The poverty level amount is determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Participant means an individual who—

(i) Is determined to be eligible to participate in the project under §644.3; and

(ii) Receives project services.

Postsecondary education means education beyond the secondary school level.

Potential first-generation college student means—

(i) An individual neither of whose parents received a baccalaureate degree; or

(ii) An individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent and whose supporting parent did not receive a baccalaureate degree.

Secondary school means a school that provides secondary education as determined under State law, except that it does not include education beyond grade 12.

Target area means a geographic area served by an Educational Opportunity Centers project.

Veteran means a person who—

(i) Served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable;

(ii) Served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States and was discharged or released because of a service connected disability;

(iii) Was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States and was called to active duty for a period of more than 30 days; or

(iv) Was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States who served on active duty in support of a contingency operation (as that term is defined in section 101(a)(13) of title 10, United States Code) on or after September 11, 2001.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11, 1070a-16, and 1141)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65780, Oct. 26, 2010; 79 FR 76102, Dec. 19, 2014]

Subpart B—How Does One Apply for an Award?

§644.10 How many applications may an eligible applicant submit?

(a) An applicant may submit more than one application for Educational Opportunity Centers grants as long as each application describes a project that serves a different target area or another designated different population.

(b) For each grant competition, the Secretary designates, in the Federal Register notice inviting applications and other published application materials for the competition, the different populations for which an eligible entity may submit a separate application.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11, 1221e-3)

[75 FR 65781, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.11 What assurances must an applicant submit?

An applicant must submit, as part of its application, assurances that—

(a) At least two-thirds of the individuals it serves under its proposed Educational Opportunity Centers project will be low-income individuals who are potential first-generation college students;

(b) The project will collaborate with other Federal TRIO projects, GEAR UP projects, or programs serving similar populations that are serving the same target schools or target area in order to minimize the duplication of services and promote collaborations so that more students can be served.

(c) The project will be located in a setting or settings accessible to the individuals proposed to be served by the project; and

(d) If the applicant is an institution of higher education, it will not use the project as a part of its recruitment program.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994. Redesignated and amended at 75 FR 65781, Oct. 26, 2010]

Subpart C—How Does the Secretary Make a Grant?

§644.20 How does the Secretary decide which new grants to make?

(a) The Secretary evaluates an application for a new grant as follows:

(1)(i) The Secretary evaluates the application on the basis of the selection criteria in §644.21.

(ii) The maximum score for all the criteria in §644.21 is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses with the criterion.

(2)(i) For an application for a new grant to continue to serve substantially the same populations and campuses that the applicant is serving under an expiring project, the Secretary evaluates the applicant's prior experience of high quality service delivery under the expiring project on the basis of the outcome criteria in §644.22.

(ii) The maximum total score for all the criteria in §644.22 is 15 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses with the criterion.

(iii) The Secretary evaluates the PE of an applicant for each of the three project years that the Secretary designates in the Federal Register notice inviting applications and the other published application materials for the competition.

(iv) An applicant may earn up to 15 PE points for each of the designated project years for which annual performance report data are available.

(v) The final PE score is the average of the scores for the three project years assessed.

(b) The Secretary makes new grants in rank order on the basis of the applications' total scores under paragraph (a) of this section.

(c) If the total scores of two or more applications are the same and there are insufficient funds for these applications after the approval of higher-ranked applications, the Secretary uses the remaining funds to serve geographic areas and eligible populations that have been underserved by the Educational Opportunity Centers program.

(d) The Secretary does not make a new grant to an applicant if the applicant's prior project involved the fraudulent use of program funds.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11, 1070a-16, and 1144a(a))

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65781, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.21 What selection criteria does the Secretary use?

The Secretary uses the following criteria to evaluate an application for a new grant:

(a) Need for the project (24 points). The Secretary evaluates the need for an Educational Opportunity Centers project in the proposed target area on the basis of the extent to which the application contains clear evidence of—

(1) A high number or percentage, or both, of low-income families residing in the target area;

(2) A high number or percentage, or both, of individuals residing in the target area with education completion levels below the baccalaureate level;

(3) A high need on the part of residents of the target area for further education and training from programs of postsecondary education in order to meet changing employment trends; and

(4) Other indicators of need for an Educational Opportunity Centers project, including the presence of unaddressed educational or socioeconomic problems of adult residents in the target area.

(b) Objectives (8 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the applicant's objectives and proposed targets (percentages) in the following areas on the basis of the extent to which they are both ambitious, as related to the need data provided under paragraph (a) of this section, and attainable, given the project's plan of operation, budget, and other resources:

(1) (2 points) Secondary school diploma or equivalent.

(2) (3 points) Postsecondary enrollment.

(3) (1.5 points) Financial aid applications.

(4) (1.5 points) College admission applications.

(c) Plan of operation (30 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the applicant's plan of operation on the basis of the following:

(1) (4 points) The plan to inform the residents, schools, and community organizations in the target area of the goals, objectives, and services of the project and the eligibility requirements for participation in the project;

(2) (4 points) The plan to identify and select eligible participants and ensure their participation without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, or disability;

(3) (2 points) The plan to assess each participant's need for services provided by the project;

(4) (12 points) The plan to provide services that meet participants' needs and achieve the objectives of the project; and

(5) (8 points) The management plan to ensure the proper and efficient administration of the project including, but not limited to, the project's organizational structure, the time committed to the project by the project director and other personnel, and, where appropriate, its coordination with other projects for disadvantaged students.

(d) Applicant and community support (16 points). The Secretary evaluates the applicant and community support for the proposed project on the basis of the extent to which the applicant has made provision for resources to supplement the grant and enhance the project's services, including—

(1) (8 points) Facilities, equipment, supplies, personnel, and other resources committed by the applicant; and

(2) (8 points) Resources secured through written commitments from schools, community organizations, and others.

(e) Quality of personnel (9 points). (1) The Secretary evaluates the quality of the personnel the applicant plans to use in the project on the basis of the following:

(i) The qualifications required of the project director.

(ii) The qualifications required of each of the other personnel to be used in the project.

(iii) The plan to employ personnel who have succeeded in overcoming the disadvantages or circumstances like those of the population of the target area.

(2) In evaluating the qualifications of a person, the Secretary considers his or her experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project.

(f) Budget (5 points). The Secretary evaluates the extent to which the project budget is reasonable, cost-effective, and adequate to support the project.

(g) Evaluation plan (8 points). The Secretary evaluates the quality of the evaluation plan for the project on the basis of the extent to which the applicant's methods of evaluation—

(1) Are appropriate to the project's objectives;

(2) Provide for the applicant to determine, using specific and quantifiable measures, the success of the project in—

(i) Making progress toward achieving its objectives (a formative evaluation); and

(ii) Achieving its objectives at the end of the project period (a summative evaluation); and

(3) Provide for the disclosure of unanticipated project outcomes, using quantifiable measures if appropriate.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65781, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.22 How does the Secretary evaluate prior experience?

(a) In the case of an application described in §644.20(a)(2)(i), the Secretary—

(1) Evaluates the applicant's performance under its expiring Educational Opportunity Centers project;

(2) Uses the approved project objectives for the applicant's expiring Educational Opportunity Centers grant and the information the applicant submitted in its annual performance reports (APRs) to determine the number of PE points; and

(3) May adjust a calculated PE score or decide not to award PE points if other information such as audit reports, site visit reports, and project evaluation reports indicates the APR data used to calculate PE points are incorrect.

(b) The Secretary does not award PE points for a given year to an applicant that does not serve at least 90 percent of the approved number of participants. For purposes of this section, the approved number of participants is the total number of participants the project would serve as agreed upon by the grantee and the Secretary.

(c) The Secretary does not award PE points for the criterion specified in paragraph (d)(1) of this section (Number of participants) if the applicant did not serve at least the approved number of participants.

(d) For purposes of the PE evaluation of grants awarded after January 1, 2009, the Secretary evaluates the applicant's PE on the basis of the following outcome criteria:

(1) (3 points) Number of participants. Whether the applicant provided services to no less than the approved number of participants.

(2) (3 points) Secondary school diploma. Whether the applicant met or exceeded its approved objective with regard to participants served during the project year who do not have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent who receive a secondary school diploma or its equivalent within the time period specified in the approved objective.

(3) (5 points) Postsecondary enrollment. Whether the applicant met or exceeded its approved objective with regard to the secondary school graduates served during the project year who enroll in programs of postsecondary education within the time period specified in the approved objective.

(4) (2 points) Financial aid applications. Whether the applicant met or exceeded its objective regarding participants applying for financial aid.

(5) (2 points) College admission applications. Whether the applicant met or exceeded its objective regarding participants applying for college admission.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16)

[75 FR 65781, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.23 How does the Secretary set the amount of a grant?

(a) The Secretary sets the amount of a grant on the basis of—

(1) 34 CFR 75.232 and 75.233, for new grants; and

(2) 34 CFR 75.253, for the second and subsequent years of a project period.

(b) If the circumstances described in section 402A(b)(3) of the HEA exist, the Secretary uses the available funds to set the amount of the grant at the lesser of—

(1) \$200,000; or

(2) The amount requested by the applicant.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65782, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.24 What is the review process for unsuccessful applicants?

(a) Technical or administrative error for applications not reviewed. (1) An applicant whose grant application was not evaluated during the competition may request that the Secretary review the application if—

(i) The applicant has met all of the application submission requirements included in the Federal Register notice inviting applications and the other published application materials for the competition; and

(ii) The applicant provides evidence demonstrating that the Department or an agent of the Department made a technical or administrative error in the processing of the submitted application.

(2) A technical or administrative error in the processing of an application includes—

(i) A problem with the system for the electronic submission of applications that was not addressed in accordance with the procedures included in the Federal Register notice inviting applications for the competition;

(ii) An error in determining an applicant's eligibility for funding consideration, which may include, but is not limited to—

(A) An incorrect conclusion that the application was submitted by an ineligible applicant;

(B) An incorrect conclusion that the application exceeded the published page limit;

(C) An incorrect conclusion that the applicant requested funding greater than the published maximum award; or

(D) An incorrect conclusion that the application was missing critical sections of the application; and

(iii) Any other mishandling of the application that resulted in an otherwise eligible application not being reviewed during the competition.

(3)(i) If the Secretary determines that the Department or the Department's agent made a technical or administrative error, the Secretary has the application evaluated and scored.

(ii) If the total score assigned the application would have resulted in funding of the application during the competition and the program has funds available, the Secretary funds the application prior to the re-ranking of applications based on the second peer review of applications described in paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) Administrative or scoring error for applications that were reviewed. (1) An applicant that was not selected for funding during a competition may request that the Secretary conduct a second review of the application if—

(i) The applicant provides evidence demonstrating that the Department, an agent of the Department, or a peer reviewer made an administrative or scoring error in the review of its application; and

(ii) The final score assigned to the application is within the funding band described in paragraph (d) of this section.

(2) An administrative error relates to either the PE points or the scores assigned to the application by the peer reviewers.

(i) For PE points, an administrative error includes mathematical errors made by the Department or the Department's agent in the calculation of the PE points or a failure to correctly add the earned PE points to the peer reviewer score.

(ii) For the peer review score, an administrative error is applying the wrong peer reviewer scores to an application.

(3)(i) A scoring error relates only to the peer review process and includes errors caused by a reviewer who, in assigning points—

(A) Uses criteria not required by the applicable law or program regulations, the Federal Register notice inviting applications, the other published application materials for the competition, or guidance provided to the peer reviewers by the Secretary; or

(B) Does not consider relevant information included in the appropriate section of the application.

(ii) The term “scoring error” does not include—

(A) A peer reviewer's appropriate use of his or her professional judgment in evaluating and scoring an application;

(B) Any situation in which the applicant did not include information needed to evaluate its response to a specific selection criterion in the appropriate section of the application as stipulated in the Federal Register notice inviting applications or the other published application materials for the competition; or

(C) Any error by the applicant.

(c) Procedures for the second review. (1) To ensure the timely awarding of grants under the competition, the Secretary sets aside a percentage of the funds allotted for the competition to be awarded after the second review is completed.

(2) After the competition, the Secretary makes new awards in rank order as described in §644.20 based on the available funds for the competition minus the funds set aside for the second review.

(3) After the Secretary issues a notification of grant award to successful applicants, the Secretary notifies each unsuccessful applicant in writing as to the status of its application and the funding band for the second review and provides copies of the peer reviewers' evaluations of the applicant's application and the applicant's PE score, if applicable.

(4) An applicant that was not selected for funding following the competition as described in paragraph (c)(2) of this section and whose application received a score within the funding band as described in paragraph (d) of this section, may request a second review if the applicant demonstrates that the Department, the Department's agent, or a peer reviewer made an administrative or scoring error as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(5) An applicant whose application was not funded after the first review as described in paragraph (c)(2) of this section and whose application received a score within the funding band as described in paragraph (d) of this section has at least 15 calendar days after receiving notification that its application was not funded in which to submit a written request for a second review in accordance with the instructions and due date provided in the Secretary's written notification.

(6) An applicant's written request for a second review must be received by the Department or submitted electronically to the designated e-mail or Web address by the due date and time established by the Secretary.

(7) If the Secretary determines that the Department or the Department's agent made an administrative error that relates to the PE points awarded, as described in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, the Secretary adjusts the applicant's PE score to reflect the correct number of PE points. If the adjusted score assigned to the application would have resulted in funding of the application during the competition and the program has funds available, the Secretary funds the application prior to the re-ranking of applications based on the second peer review of applications described in paragraph (c)(9) of this section.

(8) If the Secretary determines that the Department, the Department's agent or the peer reviewer made an administrative error that relates to the peer reviewers' score(s), as described in

paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section, the Secretary adjusts the applicant's peer reviewers' score(s) to correct the error. If the adjusted score assigned to the application would have resulted in funding of the application during the competition and the program has funds available, the Secretary funds the application prior to the re-ranking of applications based on the second peer review of applications described in paragraph (c)(9) of this section.

(9) If the Secretary determines that a peer reviewer made a scoring error, as described in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, the Secretary convenes a second panel of peer reviewers in accordance with the requirements in section 402A(c)(8)(C)(iv)(III) of the HEA.

(10) The average of the peer reviewers' scores from the second peer review are used in the second ranking of applications. The average score obtained from the second peer review panel is the final peer reviewer score for the application and will be used even if the second review results in a lower score for the application than that obtained in the initial review.

(11) For applications in the funding band, the Secretary funds these applications in rank order based on adjusted scores and the available funds that have been set aside for the second review of applications.

(d) Process for establishing a funding band. (1) For each competition, the Secretary establishes a funding band for the second review of applications.

(2) The Secretary establishes the funding band for each competition based on the amount of funds the Secretary has set aside for the second review of applications.

(3) The funding band is composed of those applications—

(i) With a rank-order score before the second review that is below the lowest score of applications funded after the first review; and

(ii) That would be funded if the Secretary had 150 percent of the funds that were set aside for the second review of applications for the competition.

(e) Final decision. (1) The Secretary's determination of whether the applicant has met the requirements for a second review and the Secretary's decision on re-scoring of an application are final and not subject to further appeal or challenge.

(2) An application that scored below the established funding band for the competition is not eligible for a second review.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11)

[75 FR 65782, Oct. 26, 2010]

Subpart D—What Conditions Must Be Met by a Grantee?

§644.30 What are allowable costs?

The cost principles that apply to the Educational Opportunity Centers program are in 2 CFR part 200, subpart E. Allowable costs include the following if they are reasonably related to the objectives of the project:

(a) Transportation, meals, and, with specific prior approval of the Secretary, lodging for participants and project staff for—

(1) Visits to postsecondary educational institutions;

(2) Participation in “College Day” activities; and

(3) Field trips for participants to observe and meet with persons who are employed in various career fields and can act as role models for participants.

(b) Purchase of testing materials and test preparation programs for participants.

(c) Fees required for admission applications for postsecondary education, college entrance examinations, or alternative education examinations if—

(1) A waiver is unavailable; and

(2) The fee is paid by the grantee to a third party on behalf of a participant.

(d) In-service training of project staff.

(e) Rental of space if—

(1) Space is not available at the site of the grantee; and

(2) The rented space is not owned by the grantee.

(f) Purchase, lease, or rental of computer hardware, software, and other equipment, service agreements for such equipment, and supplies for participant development, project administration, or project recordkeeping.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 1070a-16)

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65783, Oct. 26, 2010; 79 FR 76102, Dec. 19, 2014]

§644.31 What are unallowable costs?

Costs that are unallowable under the Educational Opportunity Centers program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Tuition, fees, stipends, and other forms of direct financial support for participants.
- (b) Research not directly related to the evaluation or improvement of the project.
- (c) Construction, renovation, and remodeling of any facilities.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 1070a-16)

§644.32 What other requirements must a grantee meet?

(a) Eligibility of participants. (1) A grantee shall determine the eligibility of each participant in the project at the time that the individual is selected to participate.

(2) A grantee shall determine the status of a low-income individual on the basis of the documentation described in section 402A(e) of the HEA.

(b) Number of Participants. For each year of the project period, a grantee must serve at least the number of participants that the Secretary identifies in the Federal Register notice inviting applications for a competition. Through this notice, the Secretary also provides the minimum and maximum grant award amounts for the competition.

(c) Recordkeeping. For each participant, a grantee must maintain a record of—

(1) The basis for the grantee's determination that the participant is eligible to participate in the project under §644.3;

(2) The services that are provided to the participant;

(3) The specific educational benefits received by the participant; and

(4) To the extent practicable, any services the participant receives during the project year from another Federal TRIO program or another federally funded program that serves populations similar to those served under the EOC program.

(d) Project director. (1) A grantee must employ a full-time project director unless—

(i) The director is also administering one or two additional programs for disadvantaged students operated by the sponsoring institution or agency; or

(ii) The Secretary grants a waiver of this requirement.

(2) The grantee must give the project director sufficient authority to administer the project effectively.

(3) The Secretary waives the requirements in paragraph (d)(1) of this section if the applicant demonstrates that that the project director will be able to effectively administer more than three programs and that this arrangement would promote effective coordination between the program and other Federal TRIO programs (sections 402B through 402F of the HEA) and similar programs funded through other sources.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 1070a-16).

[59 FR 2658, Jan. 18, 1994, as amended at 75 FR 65783, Oct. 26, 2010]

Federal TRIO Programs
Current-Year Low-Income Levels

(Effective **January 28, 2015** until further notice)

Size of Family Unit	48 Contiguous States, D.C., and Outlying Jurisdictions	Alaska	Hawaii
1	\$17,655	\$22,080	\$20,325
2	\$23,895	\$29,880	\$27,495
3	\$30,135	\$37,680	\$34,665
4	\$36,375	\$45,480	\$41,835
5	\$42,615	\$53,280	\$49,005
6	\$48,855	\$61,080	\$56,175
7	\$55,095	\$68,880	\$63,345
8	\$61,335	\$76,680	\$70,515

For family units with more than eight members, add the following amount for each additional family member: \$6,240 for the 48 contiguous states, the District of Columbia and outlying jurisdictions; \$7,800 for Alaska; and \$7,170 for Hawaii.

The term "low-income individual" means an individual whose family's taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150 percent of the poverty level amount.

The figures shown under family income represent amounts equal to 150 percent of the family income levels established by the Census Bureau for determining poverty status. The poverty guidelines were published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the Federal Register on January 22, 2015.

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS EXECUTIVE
ORDER 12372**

This program falls under the rubric of 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--or the distribution of responsibility between localities, States, and the Federal government--by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This idea includes supporting processes that State or local governments have devised for coordinating and reviewing proposed Federal financial grant applications.

The process for doing this requires grant applicants to 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# 84.066A, 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.**

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

The following supplements the information provided in the “Dear Applicant” letter and the Notice.

1. **Estimated Funding**

- Estimated Available Funds for FY 2016: \$46,925,000
- Estimated Range of Awards: \$230,000 - \$1,172,000 per year
- Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$377,661
- Estimated Number of New Awards: 126
- Project Period for New Awards: 60 months

The Department is not bound by these estimates.

2. **Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs**

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs was issued 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. A listing of the Single Point of Contact for each State may be viewed at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/OMB/grants/spoc.html>.

3. **Length of New Award**

Applicants for new awards may apply for five years (60 months) of funding.

4. **EOC Program Assurances**

All applications must comply with the EOC Program statutory and regulatory requirements. The assurances are included in the application package and must be signed by a certifying official and uploaded into the **Other Attachments Form** in Grants.gov. By submitting an EOC Program application, an applicant certifies that it has read the assurances and will fully comply with the requirements.

5. **EOC Program Profile**

All applicants must provide the information requested on this form. The EOC Program Profile form contains standardized objectives. Applicants are required to propose the percentage at which each of the standardized objectives will be attained. On the EOC Profile form, you must fill in the blanks indicating the percentage level of achievement

for each of the objectives. **You may not modify, amend or delete any of these objectives.**

Applicants must copy and paste the EOC Program Profile form into a separate document, or otherwise recreate the page exactly as it appears. Complete the form, save it to your computer and attach it to the *Other Attachments Form* as a .PDF document only. Do not modify or amend the language on the form in any way.

6. Evaluation of Applications for Awards

A panel of three non-federal readers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria. Each reviewer will prepare a written evaluation of the information presented in the project narrative section of the application and assign points for each selection criterion.

All applications for grants under the EOC Program will be evaluated as new submissions according to the selection criteria listed in the program regulations (34 CFR 644.21).

7. Selection Criteria

The selection criteria in 34 CFR Part 644 are used to evaluate applications. The selection criteria and maximum possible points are included in the application package.

8. Applicant Funding

Applicants should pay close attention to the “Maximum Award” section of the Notice. The Department will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding the maximum amount specified for the specific project type as indicated in the Notice.

9. Prior Experience

In accordance with 34 CFR 644.22, the Secretary will award prior experience (PE) points to applicants that have conducted a TRIO EOC Program project during these fiscal years: 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. Based on the applicant’s documented experience set forth in the annual performance reports, up to 15 prior experience points will be added to the application’s averaged reader score to determine the total score for each application and the total score will be used in funding decisions as described in the Notice.

10. Selection of Grantees

The Secretary will select an application for funding in rank order, based on the application’s total score for the selection criteria, competitive preference priorities, plus any prior experience points earned, pursuant to 34 CFR sections 644.20 through 644.22. If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, the Secretary will choose among the tied applications so as to serve geographical areas that have been underserved by the EOC Program.

The Department's Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs will inform the Congress regarding applications approved for new EOC Program grants. Successful applicants will receive award notices by mail or e-mail shortly after the Congress is notified. No funding information will be released before the Congress is notified.

11. Expectations of Successful Grantees

Currently funded projects with remaining out years on an expiring grant are required to start implementing their new objectives upon receipt of the grant.

12. Notice to Unsuccessful Applicants

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing following the notice to successful applicants.

13. Second Review Process

To implement the statutory requirements for a second review of unsuccessful applications, the Department has adopted a two-slate process. After the peer review of applications and the awarding of PE points, as applicable, the Department will rank all the applications. The Department then will establish a funding band to determine the percentage of the total funds allotted for the competition that will be set aside for the second review. The determination of the percentage of funds to be reserved for the second review and the applications to be included in the funding band will be based on the distribution of application scores. The funding band will include all of the applications with a rank-order score that is 1) below the lowest score of applications funded after the first review and 2) that would be funded if the Secretary had 150 percent of the funds that were set aside for the second review.

Only applicants whose applications scored within the funding band will be eligible for the second review. In addition, those applicants deemed eligible for the second review will have to provide evidence demonstrating that the Department, an agent of the Department, or a peer reviewer made an administrative or scoring error (as defined in the regulations) in the review of its application. The guidelines and criteria for the second review process are included in the EOC Program regulations (644.24).

14. Annual Performance Report Requirements

If you receive a FY 2016 new grant award, you will be required to submit annual performance reports during the five-year funding cycle using the Department's on-line function. This on-line system collects data about funded projects to enable program specialists to determine if a grantee is making substantial progress toward meeting approved project objectives.

15. Contact Information.

For Educational Opportunity Centers Program-related questions and assistance, please contact:

Program Specialist: Rachael Couch
Address: Federal TRIO Programs
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, N.W., Room 7000
Washington, D.C. 20006-8510
Telephone: (202) 502-7655
Fax: (202) 502-7857
E-mail Address: rachael.couch@ed.gov

or

Director, Upward Bound and Educational Opportunity Centers Division: Gaby Watts

Address: Federal TRIO Programs
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, N.W., Suite 7000
Washington, D.C. 20006-8510
Telephone: (202) 502-7545
Fax: (202) 502-7857
E-mail Address: gaby.watts@ed.gov

For Grants.gov-related questions and assistance, please contact:

Support Desk: Grants.gov Support Desk
Telephone: (800) 518-4726
Hours: 24 hours, 7 days a week, except Federal holidays
Email: support@grants.gov

Educational Opportunity Centers Program Profile

Instructions: All applicants must complete this page. The completed form must be attached to the Other Attachments Form in the application package in Grants.gov (as a .PDF document). **DO NOT MODIFY OR AMEND THE CONTENTS OF THIS PAGE.**

1. Applicants currently funded under the Educational Opportunity Centers Program (FY 2011-2016) must provide their current grant award number. This can be found in Block 5 of the Grant Award Notification.

New applicants should leave this item blank.

PR/Award Number (Current Grantees Only): P066A (11) (12) (13) (14) _____

Application designated to receive prior experience: Yes ___ No ___

Application addresses Competitive Preference Priorities (check all that apply):

___ Competitive Preference Priority 1

The Department encourages applicants to improve student outcomes by implementing initiatives that improve Community Engagement, the relationships between parents or families and school or program staff by cultivating Sustained Partnerships.

___ Competitive Preference Priority 2

The Department encourages applicants to design projects that address the needs of Military or Veteran connected students.

2. Institution/Agency/Organization/School (Legal Name):

3. All applicants must indicate the address where this project will be physically located.

Project Address: _____

Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

4. Multiple applications submitted: No:___ Yes:___ How many? _____

EOC Program Profile *continued*

5. List the target schools and estimated number of participants to be served at each target school (if applicable):

(1)_____	_____	(6)_____	_____
(2)_____	_____	(7)_____	_____
(3)_____	_____	(8)_____	_____
(4)_____	_____	(9)_____	_____
(5)_____	_____	(10)_____	_____

Note: The project must be located in a setting accessible to the individuals the project proposes to serve. Add additional sheet, if needed.

6. Provide the total number of proposed participants to be served each year: _____
(Note: Projects are expected to serve the same number of participants, each year. Two-thirds of the participants served must be low-income, potential first-generation college students.)

7. Program Objectives:

Please fill in the proposed percent for each objective.

*Note: These are the same objectives that **MUST** be stated in Part III -- Project Narrative section of your application when addressing the Objectives and the Evaluation criteria.*

(a) Secondary school diploma: ____% of participants served during the project year, who do not have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, will receive a secondary school diploma or its equivalent during the project year.

(b) Financial aid applications: ____% of participants served during the project year who are not already enrolled in a postsecondary education program and who: 1) are high school seniors; 2) are high school graduates; or 3) have obtained a high school equivalency certificate, will apply for financial aid during the project year.

(c) Postsecondary education admissions: ____% of participants served during the project year who are not already enrolled in a postsecondary education program and who: 1) are high school seniors; 2) are high school graduates; or 3) have obtained a high school equivalency certificate, will apply for college admission during the project year.

(d) Postsecondary education enrollment: ____% of participants who graduate from secondary school and are not already enrolled in a postsecondary education program will enroll in a postsecondary education program immediately following participation in an EOC program or will have received notification, by the fall semester, of acceptance but deferred enrollment until the next academic semester (e.g. spring semester).

EOC Program Profile *continued*

Please note the following definitions:

Enrolled: a participant who has completed the registration requirements (except for the payment of tuition and fees) at the institution that he or she is attending.

Acceptance but Deferred Enrollment: a participant has received an acceptance letter from the institution that he or she will attend, but cannot enroll in the fall semester immediately following participation in an EOC program for reasons determined by the institution. The institution defers enrollment until the next semester.

Equivalent of a Secondary School Diploma: A General Education Development (GED) program of study that meets or exceeds the coursework and performance standards for adult learners who have obtained a high school diploma or high school certificate or diploma issued by a state or high school.

Program of Postsecondary Education: a formal instructional program whose curriculum is designed primarily for students who are beyond the compulsory age for high school. This includes programs whose purpose is academic or vocational, and excludes a vocational and adult basic education.

Secondary School Graduate: Recipients of a secondary school diploma or other equivalent degree or certificate, including GEDs.

Part IV – Educational Opportunity Centers Program Assurances

Attach this Assurance form to the “Other Attachments Form” in the Grants.gov system. Applicants must copy and paste this page into a separate document or recreate the page exactly as it appears. Then complete the page, save it to your computer and attach it to the “Other Attachments Form” as a .pdf document only. **Do not modify or amend the language of this form in any way.**

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant will comply with the following statutory requirements:

1. The applicant assures that at least two-thirds (2/3) of the individuals it serves under its proposed Educational Opportunity Centers Program project will be low-income individuals who are potential first-generation college students.
2. The applicant assures that it will collaborate with other Federal TRIO projects, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) projects, or programs serving similar populations that are serving the same target schools or target area in order to minimize the duplication of services and promote collaboration so that more students can be served.
3. The applicant assures that the project will be located in a setting or settings accessible to the individuals proposed to be served by the project.
4. The applicant assures that if the applicant is an institution of higher education, it will not use the project as a part of its recruitment program.

Authorized Certifying Official’s Signature

Printed Name of Authorized Certifying Official

Title of Authorized Certifying Official

Name of Applicant Institution/Organization

Date Signed

Attach this Assurance Form to the “Other Attachments Form” in the Grants.gov application package

Attention Applicants: Applicants must copy and paste this page into a separate document, or recreate the page **exactly** as it appears. Then, complete the page, save it to your computer and attach it to the “Other Attachments Form” as a .pdf document only. Do not modify or amend the contents of the form in any way.

***Prior Experience Objectives and Calculations for EOC Projects
Operating in Project Years 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15***

For the FY 2016 EOC grant competition, the PE assessment years are 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. Achievement rates for each PE criterion will be based on the project's approved objectives and the information the grantee provided in the annual performance report (APR) for each project year under consideration.

An entity submitting an application to continue to serve substantially the same target areas that it is serving under its expiring EOC project is eligible to receive PE points based on the PE criteria in 34 CFR 644.22 of the program regulations.

In cases in which an applicant proposes to split a grant funded in FY 2011 into multiple proposals in the FY 2016 competition, the applicant will be eligible to receive PE points for only one proposed new project. The project for which the applicant is eligible for PE consideration is the one that proposes to serve the greatest number of currently-served target areas. An applicant is responsible for indicating on the EOC Program Profile form, in Item #1, if the application is eligible for PE points.

If an applicant proposes to split a currently-funded grant evenly by target areas into multiple proposals for the FY 2016 competition, with no new or additional target areas proposed to be served, the applicant must decide which one new proposal should be considered for PE points by following the instructions above for marking Item #1 on the Program Profile form.

EOC Prior Experience criteria (34 CFR 644.22) and point allocations are as follows. An EOC project may earn up to a total of 15 points for each year assessed; the final PE score is the average of the total scores for the three years assessed. A project that fails to serve at least 90 percent of its funded number for the project year will not receive any PE points.

1. Number of Participants	(maximum of 3 points)
2. Secondary School Diploma	(maximum of 3 points)
3. Postsecondary Enrollment	(maximum of 5 points)
4. Financial Aid Applications	(maximum of 2 points)
5. College Admission Applications	(maximum of 2 points)
Total	(maximum of 15 points)

- 1. a. Number of participants (maximum 1.5 points)** – Whether the applicant provided services to the number of participants required to be served under the approved application.

Calculation:

- The denominator is the number of participants the project was funded to serve in the project year.
- The numerator is the total number of participants the project actually served during the project year.

b. Two-thirds Requirement (maximum 1.5 points) – Whether two-thirds of all participants served were low-income individuals and potential first-generation college students.

Calculation:

- The denominator is the greater of the number of participants the project was funded to serve and the number of participants the project actually served during the project year.
- The numerator is the number of participants served during the project year who were low-income and potential first-generation college students.

2. **Secondary school diploma (maximum 3 points)** – The extent to which participants served during the project year did not have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent at the time of first service in the project year, but will receive a secondary school diploma or its equivalent during the project year.

Calculation:

- The denominator is the number of participants who did not have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent at the time of first service in the reporting year project year.
- The numerator is the number of participants who received a secondary school diploma or equivalent during the project year.

3. **Postsecondary Enrollment (maximum 5 points)** – The extent to which the applicant met or exceeded its objectives regarding the enrollment of participants to programs of postsecondary education.

Calculation:

- The denominator is the total number of participants without a high school diploma or equivalency credentials, high school graduates or equivalency graduates not already enrolled in a postsecondary school, postsecondary dropouts, potential postsecondary transfers, high school seniors, and participants not older than 18 years old in an alternative education program equivalent to a high school senior.

- The numerator is the total number of participants enrolled in postsecondary education for the first time during the budget period.
4. **Financial aid applications (maximum 2 points)** – The extent to which the applicant met or exceeded its objectives regarding student financial aid assistance to participants.

Calculation:

- The denominator is the total number of participants without a high school diploma or equivalency credentials, high school graduates or equivalency graduates not already enrolled in a postsecondary school, postsecondary dropouts, potential postsecondary transfers, high school seniors, and participants not older than 18 years old in an alternative education program equivalent to a high school senior.
 - The numerator is the number of participants who applied for financial aid not already enrolled in postsecondary school at time of service in the budget period who were high school seniors or equivalent in continuing education programs.
5. **College admission applications (maximum 2 points)** – The extent to which the applicant met or exceeded its objectives regarding the admission of participants to programs of postsecondary education.

Calculation:

- The denominator is the total number of participants without a high school diploma or equivalency credentials, high school graduates or equivalency graduates not already enrolled in a postsecondary school, postsecondary dropouts, potential postsecondary transfers, high school seniors, and participants not older than 18 years old in an alternative education program equivalent to a high school senior.
- The numerator is the number of participants served during the project year who applied for postsecondary education programs during the budget period.

The due date for submitting performance reports for these years is now past. No changes or modifications to the information on file with the Department will be accepted.

Prior Experience for Successful Applicants Under the FY 2016 Competition

The prior experience assessment for applicants successful under the FY 2016 competition will be based on the outcome criteria outlined in 402A(f)(3)(A) of the HEA, as amended by section 403(A)(5) of the HEOA. The revised outcome criteria that will be used for successful applicants

awarded during the 2016 EOC competition are captured in the standardized objectives included on the EOC Program Profile form in this application package.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION PACKAGE

The application consists of the following four parts. These parts are organized in the same manner that the submitted application should be organized. The parts are as follows:

Part I: SF 424 Form

Application for Federal Assistance - SF 424
Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424

***Notes:**

- Applicants must complete the Standard Form (SF 424) form first because some of the information you provide here is automatically inserted into other sections of the Grants.gov application package.
- Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the SF 424. Although the form accepts attachments, the Department of Education will only review materials/files attached to the forms listed below.

Part II: ED Form 524

Department of Education Budget Summary Form - (ED Form 524)
Sections A & B
(NOTE: Section C – Budget Narrative must be included as part of the Project Narrative Attachment Form, located in Part III.)

Part III: Attachments

ED Abstract Form
Project Narrative Attachment Form – includes a Table of Contents
Other Attachments Form – includes the Program Assurances page, the EOC Program Profile form, and the competitive preference priorities narrative

The Department of Education Abstract Form is where you attach the one-page EOC project abstract.

The Project Narrative Attachment Form is where you attach the responses addressing the program selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applications submitted for this competition. **This section has a strict page limit of 60 pages**, excluding a *Table of Contents* and other items outlined in the Notice. **Please see the Notice for detailed information on page limits and formatting requirements.** You should include a Table of Contents for your application as the first page of this section. The *Table of Contents* will not count against the 60 pages you are allowed for your responses to the selection criteria. **You must also include your**

budget narrative in this section as part of the selection criteria, which is counted as part of the 60-page limit. The budget should demonstrate and justify that all costs are reasonable and necessary to accomplish the proposed project activities. Include a description of any activities in the budget that respond to the announced **Competitive Preference Priorities**.

The Other Attachments Form is where you attach the EOC Program Profile form, the EOC Program Assurances page, and the Competitive Preference Priorities Narrative. **No other appendices or attachments should be included as they will be counted as part of the 60-page limit.**

***All attachments must be in a .PDF format only. Other types of files will not be accepted.**

Part IV: Assurances, Certifications, and Survey Forms

ED-GEPA Section 427 Requirement
Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
Grants.gov Lobbying Form (formerly ED Form 80-0013)
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROJECT NARRATIVE-SELECTION CRITERIA

The following information supplements the information provided in the “Dear Applicant” letter, “Competition Highlights,” and the Notice.

The *Project Narrative* is to be attached to the Project Narrative Attachment Form in the Grants.gov application.

Before preparing the *Part III -- Project Narrative*, applicants should review the “Dear Applicant” letter, Competition Highlights, Notice, program statute, and program regulations for specific guidance and requirements. Note that applications will be evaluated according to the specific selection criteria specified in the regulations, which are included in this package.

The Secretary evaluates an application on the basis of the broad selection criteria in 34 CFR 644.21 of the EOC Program regulations as identified in this application (see the Authorizing Legislation and Regulations). The *Project Narrative* should provide, in detail, the information that addresses the selection criteria. The maximum possible score for each category of the selection criteria is indicated in parenthesis.

You must limit the *Project Narrative* to 60 pages, double-spaced in 12-point font, and number the pages consecutively. The narrative should be written concisely. Only the required information should be submitted. If appendices or other supplemental materials are included, they will count as part of the 60-page limit. Please refer to the Notice (see Content and Form of Application Submission) for additional application submission requirements.

To facilitate the review of the application, provide responses to each of the following selection criteria in the following order:

- | | | |
|----|---|-------------|
| A. | <u>Need</u> (34 CFR 644.21(a)) | (24 points) |
| B. | <u>Objectives</u> (34 CFR 644.21(b)) | (8 points) |
| C. | <u>Plan of Operation</u> (34 CFR 644.21(c)) | (30 points) |
| D. | <u>Applicant and Community Support</u> (34 CFR 644.21(d)) | (16 points) |
| E. | <u>Quality of Personnel</u> (34 CFR 644.21(e)) | (9 points) |
| F. | <u>Budget</u> (34 CFR 644.21(f)) | (8 points) |
| G. | <u>Evaluation Plan</u> (34 CFR 644.21(g)) | (5 points) |
| H. | <u>Quality of Project Design</u> | (5 points) |

Total Maximum Score for Selection Criteria

105 points

Formatting

Double-space all text in the project narrative. Titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in figures, charts and graphs 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 (including *Times Roman* and *Arial Narrow*) will not be accepted. Applicants must use a size 12 font or larger, only.

Include a *Table of Contents*: it will not be counted toward your 60-page limit. Appendices and attachments should not be included, as these items will be counted as part of the 60-page limit.

Applicants are encouraged to include an identifying header or footer that contains the applicant's name and the page numbers. Applicants may use the one-inch (1") margin at either the top or bottom of each page for this header or footer. The pages must be numbered in consecutive order.

The Project Narrative is limited to 60 pages. This section will include the discussion of the selection criteria.

The page limit does not apply to:

- Application Face Sheet (Application for Federal Assistance Form – SF 424)
- Table of Contents
- Project Abstract
- Budget Summary Form (ED Form 524)
- EOC Program Profile
- Assurances and Certifications
- ED GEPA 427

The Notice contains specific instructions on page limits.

In the Project Narrative, the applicant should address the selection criteria in the order delineated earlier (A-H) because this is the order in which the Technical Review Form is organized. The Technical Review Form is used by the peer reviewers to evaluate applications.

The following guidance may assist you in addressing each of the selection criteria:

(A) Need: There are four sub-criteria in this section. In responding to this criterion, all four sub-criteria must be addressed. Data for each sub-criterion must be addressed for each of the target areas or target schools (if applicable) identified in the application.

(B) Objectives: All applicants must include the four standardized objectives as listed on the EOC Program Profile form. On the Profile form, you must fill in the blanks indicating the percentage level of achievement for each of these objectives. **These objectives may not be rewritten, restated or reworded.**

In the Project Narrative, you must address each of the objectives and explain how the objectives are ambitious and attainable. For each of the objectives, applicants should use comparative data to show why the proposed percentage is ambitious as documented in the baseline data and information provided in the “NEED” section of the Project Narrative and attainable based on information provided in the Plan of Operation and the resources available to the project (see criterion a). Applicants may propose additional objectives, but are not required to do so. Applicants will not receive additional points or penalties for proposing additional objectives.

(C) Plan of Operation: This criterion contains five sub-criteria, and applicants must address all five sub-criteria. This part of the application should provide information on who, what, when and how the project will provide services to meet its goals and objectives. If the applicant proposes to serve youths, the application must include information for the fifth sub-criterion that addresses how the project will serve students at all of the proposed target schools. Applicants must also provide information on how it will ensure that sufficient resources are available to effectively and efficiently serve the proposed number of target schools.

As previously noted, the information provided in this section of the application will be assessed based on the quality of the applicant’s response for addressing the identified needs as related to the baseline data provided in the Need section. All of the proposed services and activities should be clearly aligned with the identified needs of the participants to be served in the targeted areas and proposed target schools (if applicable).

(D) Applicant and Community Support: There are two sub-criteria that must be addressed. Applicants should not submit floor plans or letters of support or commitment in the application—this information can be described or summarized as narrative, or in a list, or in a chart. If submitted, these items will count towards the 60-page limit. Applicants must provide information on the tangible commitments and resources to be provided by the applicant and by community partners and should demonstrate in this section how the proposed commitments and support will enable the proposed project to carry out the proposed project plan in the most cost-effective manner possible.

(E) Quality of Personnel: Applicants must address each of the three sub-criteria in this section. The minimum qualifications must be identified for all project personnel positions. The minimum educational qualifications must include the type of degree required and the acceptable field(s) of study. The type and minimum amount of work-related experience must also be described for each position. The “plan to employ personnel who have succeeded in overcoming barriers similar to the target population to be served” must be specific. The inclusion of an equal employment opportunity statement and/or a non-discriminatory employment practices policy alone is not an adequate response to this criterion.

(F) Budget: In response to this criterion, applicants must provide a detailed, itemized budget narrative for the first-year (2016-2017) budget period, **only**. In addition, applicants should include a description of the activities in the budget that respond to the announced **Competitive Preference Priorities**. The budget narrative is to be included in the *Project Narrative (Part III)* Attachment Form to be uploaded into the Grants.gov application. Additional

guidance on the standard budget forms is cited in the instructions entitled “Instructions for the Budget Summary and Itemized Line Item Budget” on the following pages. Note: The budget narrative is counted as part of the 60-page limit for Part III.

Applicants should include costs that are related to the activities proposed in the Plan of Operation section, to the extent to which funds are available. All costs should be necessary to accomplish the proposed project activities, reasonable and allowable as discussed in the EOC regulations in 34 CFR part 644.30. Applicants should include a description of the activities in the budget that respond to the announced **Competitive Preference Priorities**.

(G) Evaluation Plan: A strong evaluation plan should be included and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The evaluation plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward meeting specific project objectives based on the program’s performance indicators. 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; and (6) when reports and outcomes will be available. The evaluation plan should indicate what information, provided on a weekly, monthly and annual basis will indicate if the project is developing in a manner that meets its goals and objectives. In addition, the plan should indicate who is responsible for making sure that information is available in a timely manner and is influencing the ongoing management of the project.

Applicants are encouraged to think carefully about evaluation approaches and seek cost-effective evaluation strategies. Applicants are also encouraged to explain how they will work with appropriate agencies to develop strategies for using State longitudinal data systems or other third-party verified data to track the extent to which students enroll in postsecondary education. Finally, applicants are encouraged to examine and report on unanticipated outcomes, as well as effective strategies (which can be services, bundles of services, or specific ways of implementing allowable services) that increase college access and completion.

(H) Quality of Project Design: Consistent with the Department’s increasing emphasis in recent years on promoting evidence-based practices, the Secretary will evaluate applications on the extent to which the proposed project is supported by a logic model that meets the evidence standard of “strong theory.” A logic model (also referred to as theory of action) means a well-specified conceptual framework that identifies key components of the proposed process and describes the relationships among the key components and outcomes, theoretically and operationally (as defined in the Notice). Please see the Notice for additional information on how to address this criterion.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES FOR FY 2016

The President has set a clear goal for our education system: by 2020, the United States will once again lead the world in college completion. The Department views the Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program as a critical component in the effort to increase the college enrollment rates of its participants. In order to more strategically align EOC with overarching strategies for postsecondary enrollment, the Department is announcing two competitive preference priorities for this competition.

Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2 are from the Department's Notice of Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the Federal Register on December 10, 2014 (79 FR 73426).

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Improving Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (up to 2 additional points).

This EOC competition is designed to support projects in which grantees develop a plan or expand upon existing relationships in order to coordinate their activities with the proposed target population, other Federal programs and State-funded programs with similar focus, school-level partners and other community resources in order to carry out projects that best meet the needs of adult learners.

EOC projects can serve as a catalyst for fostering collaborative outreach within the community. This EOC competition is designed to foster innovative efforts to collaborate with and engage community organizations and other partners in order to provide EOC project services to meet the needs of participants.

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting Military Families and Veterans (up to 2 additional points).

The Department encourages applicants to design projects that address the needs of Military or Veteran connected students.

This priority represents an excellent opportunity for EOC projects to create a plan that addresses the needs of the military-connected student subgroup and those who are veterans of the uniformed services, who are on active duty, or who are the spouse of an active-duty service member. Addressing this priority will allow the Department to focus Federal financial assistance on expanding the number of programs and projects Department-wide that support activities in areas of greatest educational need.

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we will award up to four additional points to an application that addressed Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2. Points will be awarded depending on how comprehensively the application addresses information for the priorities selected.

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 clearly state 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 2014-2018. 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 U.S. The Department's goals, as listed in the plan, are:

Goal 1: Postsecondary Education, Career and Technical Education, and Adult Education.

Increase college access, affordability, quality, and completion by improving postsecondary education and lifelong learning opportunities for youths and adults.

Goal 2: Elementary and Secondary Education.

Improve the elementary and secondary education system's ability to consistently deliver excellent instruction aligned with rigorous academic standards while providing effective support services to close achievement and opportunity gaps, and ensure all students graduate high school college- and career-ready.

Goal 3: Early Learning.

Improve the health, social-emotional, and cognitive outcomes for all children from birth through 3rd grade, so that all children, particularly those with high needs, are on track for graduating from high school college- and career-ready.

Goal 4: Equity.

Increase educational opportunities for and reduce discrimination against underserved students so that all students are well-positioned to succeed.

Goal 5: Continuous Improvement of the U.S. Education System.

Enhance the education system's ability to continuously improve through better and more widespread use of data, research and evaluation, evidence, transparency, innovation, and technology.

Goal 6: U.S Department of Education Capacity.

Improve the organizational capacities of the Department to implement this strategic plan.

What are the performance indicators for the Educational Opportunity Centers Program?

The performance indicators for the Educational Opportunity Centers Program (EOC) are part of the Department's plan for meeting Goal 1. The EOC Program is part of the Federal TRIO Programs. The overarching goal of the Federal TRIO Programs is "to increase the percentage of low-income and first generation college students who successfully pursue postsecondary education opportunities."

The specific performance indicator for the Educational Opportunity Centers Program is as follows:

The success of the EOC Program will be measured by the postsecondary enrollment rates of EOC participants. All EOC grantees will be required to submit an annual performance report (APR) documenting the postsecondary enrollment. The Department of Education will aggregate the data provided in the annual performance reports from all grantees to determine the accomplishment level.

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 performance reports as a condition of the award. The reports will document the extent to which project goals and objectives are met.

The most recent version of this program's APR can be viewed at:

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioeoc/performance.html>

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BUDGET SUMMARY
AND ITEMIZED LINE ITEM BUDGET**

NOTE: Applicants must submit: (1) budget information that categorizes the requested funds (ED Form 524), **AND** (2) a detailed budget narrative for the first 12-month budget period.

The budget summary is to be included on the Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524).

The budget narrative, for the first 12-month budget period only, is to be included in the *Project Narrative* (limited to 60 pages and attached to the Project Narrative Attachment Form) as part of the Budget selection criterion.

This section requests information on the applicant’s financial plan for carrying out the project.

The federal and any non-federal shares are to be included on the Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524), and in the Budget selection criterion discussion in the *Project Narrative*.

The Department is requesting that you complete the Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524) for ONLY the 2016-2017 year. Please provide **a comprehensive and detailed budget narrative for the first 12-month budget period, only**.

It is not necessary to provide a budget summary for the total grant period requested. The funding level for the first year is stipulated based on the Maximum Award Section of the Notice, and the Department will determine the funding levels for the subsequent years of the grant award.

The Budget Information-Section A – Budget Summary – Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524) and the Budget Narrative must include all costs that are allowable, reasonable and necessary for carrying out the objectives of the EOC Program. Among the costs that may be supported with grant funds are:

1. **Personnel:** On line 1 (ED Form 524), enter only the project personnel salaries and wages. [Fees and expenses for consultants should be included on line 8.] The budget should include the total commitment of time and the total salary to be charged to the project for each key staff member. You should provide a breakdown of project personnel that includes: the position titles; the percent of time and number of months committed to the project for each key staff member; the salary for each key staff member; and the total salary costs to be charged to the grant.
2. **Fringe Benefits:** On line 2 (ED Form 524), enter the amount of fringe benefits. The institution or agency’s normal fringe benefit contribution may be charged to the program. 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 institution or agency’s normal fringe benefit contribution exceeds 20 percent of salaries.

3. Travel: On line 3 (ED Form 524), provide the costs for project personnel. [Consultants' travel should be included on line 8.] In the budget, you should detail the proposed travel costs: for each trip explain the purpose and objective of the travel and provide the number of persons traveling. Transportation costs should not exceed tourist class airfare. For automobile mileage, the established institution or agency rate should be used. Reimbursement is allowed for taxicab, bus, train, or limousine transportation. Per diem at the established institution or agency rate is permitted when an individual is away from home overnight on official project business (see 2 CFR 220 of the Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, J.53.c, formerly, OMB Circular A-21, J.48.c - Commercial Air Travel). No foreign travel will be authorized under the grant.

The Federal TRIO Programs have developed the following guidelines for recommending approval of travel. All travel must be related to the project's overall purpose and proposed activities.

- Project Director's Travel – Per Year
 - A. One National Conference;
One Regional Meeting;
One State Meeting; **and**
 - B. Travel for participation in **one** professional staff development training opportunity under the TRIO Training Program.

 - Full-time Professional Staff Travel – Per Year
 - A. One National, Regional, **or** State Meeting; **and**
 - B. Travel for participation in **one** professional staff development training opportunity under the TRIO Training Program.
4. Equipment: On line 4 (ED Form 524), indicate the cost of equipment -- non-expendable personal property, which has a usefulness of greater than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. [Consistent with an applicant's policy, a lower dollar amount may be used to define equipment.] In the budget, explain why the requested equipment is necessary to carry out project activities, and include a list of all equipment in the following format: item, quantity, cost per unit, and total cost.
5. Supplies: On line 5 (ED Form 524), include the costs of all tangible personal property that was not included as "equipment" on line 4. In the budget, provide an itemized list of the supplies.
6. Contractual: Not applicable. Leave blank.
7. Construction: Not applicable. Leave blank.

8. Other: On line 8 (ED Form 524), indicate all direct costs not covered on lines 1 through 5. The costs/fees for consultants and consultants' travel should be included here. Examples of "other" costs are: equipment rental, required fees, communication costs, rental of space, utilities, custodial services, and printing costs. In the budget, provide a breakdown of all direct costs not clearly covered by other budget categories.

Consultants: If the project proposes to use consultants, identify the consultants who will work on the project, the scope of work to be performed by each consultant, and justify why project personnel cannot perform this work. Also, provide a detailed breakdown of the costs (daily fees to be paid, estimated number of days of services, and all travel expenses, including per diem). Cost allowances for consultant fees, honoraria, per diem, and travel should not exceed amounts permitted by comparable institutional or agency policies.

9. Total Direct Costs: On line 9 (ED Form 524), provide the total direct costs requested the sum of lines 1 through 8.
10. Indirect Costs: On line 10 (ED Form 524), provide the amount of indirect costs that you propose to charge against the grant.

All grants awarded under the Educational Opportunity Centers Program (84.066A) are designated as training grants. The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) limit reimbursement to grantees for indirect costs they incur under training grants to the grantee's actual indirect costs as determined by the grantee's negotiated indirect cost agreement or a maximum of 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base, **whichever is less**. (NOTE: This limitation does not apply to State agencies, or local governments, or federally recognized Indian tribal governments. [§75.562(c) (2)])

A **modified total direct cost base** is defined as total direct costs less, training stipends, tuition and related fees, and capital expenditures of \$5,000 or more per unit. Therefore, calculations of indirect costs may not include these costs.

Grantees charging indirect costs to a Department grant are required to have a negotiated rate with their *cognizant agency* (i.e., either the Federal agency from which it has received the most direct funding that is subject to indirect cost support, or a particular agency specifically assigned cognizance by the Office of Management and Budget). Although applicants are not required to submit with their application a copy of their indirect cost agreement to claim the 8 percent rate for funding received in this program, they are required to have documentation available for audit that shows that their negotiated indirect cost rate is at least 8 percent [§75.563(d)]. In the event that they receive an award under this program, applicants without a negotiated indirect cost rate with its cognizant agency should seek to identify that agency and contact it to obtain an approved rate as soon as possible after award notification.

Applicants should be aware that amounts representing the difference between the 8 percent rate and a greater indirect cost rate negotiated with a cognizant agency may **not**

be charged to direct cost categories, used to satisfy matching or cost-sharing requirements, or charged to another Federal award. [§75.563(c) (3)]

11. Training Stipends: Not applicable. Leave blank.
12. Total Costs: On line 12 (ED Form 524), provide the total amount that you are requesting – the sum of lines 9 and 10. Note: This amount should also be the same as that shown in 18g on the application face sheet (SF 424) and on the detailed budget narrative in Part III.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Use This Checklist While Preparing Your Application Package: All items listed on this checklist are required.

Part I - Application for Federal Assistance - (SF 424)

Part I - Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424

Part II - Department of Education Budget Summary Information – Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524) – Sections A & B

Part III - Project Narrative (60-page limit addressing the selection criteria) – Attach this document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form in the Grants.gov application.

Part III - Other Attachments – EOC Program Profile
EOC Program Assurances
Competitive Preference Priorities Narrative --Attach each of these three documents to the Other Attachments Form in the Grants.gov application

Part III - ED Abstract - *one-page limit* -- Attach this document to the ED Abstract Form in the Grants.gov application. This one-page abstract, which may be single-spaced, will not count against the 60 pages you are allowed for your response to the selection criteria.

Part IV - Assurances and Certifications

GEPA Section 427 Requirement
Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
Lobbying Form (Formerly ED Form 80-0013)
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF LLL)

NOTE: Please do not attach any narratives, supporting files, or application components to the Standard Form (SF 424). Although this form accepts attachments, the Department of Education will only review materials/files attached to the Grants.gov Attachment Forms listed above.

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. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 25 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2 Section 402A of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) and 34 CFR part 644 EOC Program for Federal TRIO Programs). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to regulations.gov during the public comment period for this collection of information. If you have specific questions about the form, instrument or survey, please contact Student Service, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW, Room 7000, Washington, DC 20006-8510. Telephone: (202) 502-7600 or by e-mail: TRIO@ed.gov.