National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) FY 2020 RFA Survey
Accessible Online at: https://surveys.ies.ed.gov/?324_FY20

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your feedback is important to helping IES improve its grants programs. This survey pertains to your experience reading and submitting an application to the FY 2020 Request for Applications (RFA) for the Special Education Research Grants Program (84.324A; https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2020_84324A.pdf), Research Training Programs in Special Education (84.324B; https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2020_84324B.pdf), and/or Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication in Special Education (84.324R; https://ies.ed.gov/funding/pdf/2020_84324R.pdf).

If you need assistance completing this survey, please contact IES/NCSER by sending an email to NCSER.Commissioner@ed.gov.

The password for this survey is **2020RFA**.

Please enter the password to access this survey:

|_____| START→

========================General - All Applicants========================

1. Is this the first time you have applied to IES for a research grant?
   o Yes
   o No

2. Have you previously been the PI or co-PI on a grant funded by IES?
   o Yes
   o No

3. How would you describe the length of the RFA(s)?
   o Adequate
   o Too long
   o Too short

4. When *writing* your grant application how much assistance with understanding the RFA(s) did you seek (for example, from IES program officers, researchers with more experience applying to IES, grant writers)?

o   A great deal
o   A moderate amount
o   A small amount
o   None

5. Please describe the type of assistance you sought when *writing* your grant application.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

6. Which, if any, parts of the RFA(s) did you find confusing?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

7. When *submitting* your grant application to Grants.gov how much assistance with understanding the RFA(s) and IES Application Submission Guide did you seek (e.g., from IES program officers, Grants.gov representatives, office of sponsored research staff, researchers with more experience applying to IES, grant writers)?
o   A great deal
o   A moderate amount
o   A small amount
o   None

8. Please describe the type of assistance you sought when *submitting* your grant application.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

9. How useful was the IES Application Submission Guide (a separate document from the RFA) when *submitting* your grant application?
o   Very useful
o   Moderately useful
o   Somewhat useful
o   Not useful
o   I did not use the IES Application Submission Guide
o   I was not aware that there was an IES Application Submission Guide

10. Would you prefer having the information in the RFA and IES Application Submission guide in a single document or keeping them separate?
o   I would prefer for this information to be in one document
o   I would prefer that the RFA and Submission Guide remain in separate documents
o   I have no opinion about this

11. Which, if any, parts of the IES Application Submission Guide did you find confusing?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

12. Please comment on how, overall, the RFA(s) and the IES Application Submission Guide could be made more helpful to you for writing and submitting grant applications.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

13. For FY 2020, replication studies were dropped from the Special Education Research Grants Program (84.324A RFA) and support for replications of an identified set of interventions was provided through the Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication in Special Education Program (84.324R). This decision was based on the argument that multiple replications are necessary to determine the impact of an intervention and are more likely to occur in a timely fashion when a limited set of interventions are centrally identified for replication. How do you view this revision?
    o   I think this revision has more benefits than drawbacks
    o   I am neutral about this revision
    o   I think this revision has more drawbacks than benefits
    o   I do not have an opinion on this revision

14. Please provide any comments that you think would enhance the Research Grants Focused on Systematic Replication in Special Education Program (84.324R).

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

15. Please comment on which learner education outcomes, listed or NOT listed in the RFA, are most important to your research. Below are the outcomes that the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) has identified in past RFAs.
    - Academic outcomes which include
        o   Learning and achievement in academic content areas, such as reading, writing, STEM, and English language proficiency
        o   Learners' successful progression through education systems, such as course and grade completion; retention; high school graduation or dropout; access to, persistence in, progress through, and completion of postsecondary education
    - Developmental outcomes pertaining to cognitive, communicative, linguistic, social, emotional, adaptive, functional, or physical development for learners from infancy through preschool
    - Social and behavioral competencies, defined as social skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are important to learners' success in school and beyond
    - Functional outcomes that improve educational results and transition outcomes to employment, independent living, and postsecondary education
    - Labor market outcomes, such as hours of employment, job stability, and wages and benefits

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

16. Please describe any contacts you had with an IES program officer, how helpful they were for you to understand the RFA(s) and IES Application Submission Guide when writing and submitting your grant application, and how IES program officers could provide more useful assistance.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

17. How useful were the IES Funding Opportunity webinars for understanding the RFA(s) and writing and submitting your grant application?
    o Very Useful
    o Useful
    o Marginally Useful
    o Not Useful
    o I did not view any of the IES Funding Opportunities webinars

18. Please comment on the usefulness of any IES webinars you viewed, how helpful they were for understanding the RFA(s), what subjects would be useful to include in future webinars, and any other ways IES should provide information on writing and submitting a grant application.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

19. Did you submit a Letter of Intent?
    o Yes, through the PRIMO website
    o Yes, through an e-mail to an IES program officer
    o No

20. Please comment on how to improve the usefulness of the Letter of Intent and the response from the IES program officer to your Letter. If you did not submit a Letter of Intent, then please describe why you did not do so and how the process might be revised to better encourage you to do so.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

21. IES has been promoting the use of cost analysis as part of Development and Innovation, Initial Efficacy and Follow-Up, Measurement, and Systematic Replication projects. In addition, a cost-effectiveness analysis plan was required for Initial Efficacy and Follow-Up and Systematic Replication projects. Did you find the RFAs clear about the cost analysis and/or cost-effectiveness analysis recommended or required for your grant application?
    o Yes
    o No

o   My application did not require a cost analysis plan

22. Please comment on how IES (including through the RFA) could be more helpful to you when developing your cost analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis plans.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

23.   Did you apply to the Special Education Research Grants Program (84.324A)?
o   Yes
o   No

==================Revisions, Topics, and Project Types – Applicants to 324A Only==================

24. IES revised the FY 2020 RFA for the Special Education Research Grants Program (84.324A) to make it clearer, shorter, less restrictive, and more accessible to a wider range of potential applicants. Did the revisions make it easier or more difficult to apply?
o   Easier
o   No different
o   More difficult
o   I have not applied before, so I have no basis for comparison

25. Please describe why the revisions made it easier or more difficult to apply.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

26.   In FY 2020, NCSER sought to increase its investment in postsecondary research for students with disabilities by allowing this work under the STEM, Technology, CTE, and Systems-Involved Students Topics. Please comment on how NCSER might best support work in this area in the future.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

27.   Please indicate which, if any, topics should be added to the RFA.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

28.   Please comment on how the Topics could be made more helpful to you for writing and submitting applications.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

29. For Exploration, how clear was the purpose and the types of projects that would be supported under this Project Type?
   o   Clear
   o   It was not clear which types of factors could be proposed
   o   It was not clear when experimental studies could be proposed (i.e., to examine relationships between factors and education outcomes but not to test the impact of an intervention)
   o   Not clear for other reasons (please describe the other reasons in the text box two items after this one)
   o   I do not have an opinion on this

30. For Initial Efficacy and Follow-Up, was it clear what would qualify as an Initial Efficacy study based on the definition provided in the RFA (Initial Efficacy projects test interventions that have not been rigorously evaluated previously to examine the intervention's beneficial impact on education outcomes in comparison to an alternative practice, program, or policy)?
   o   Clear
   o   Not Clear
   o   I do not have an opinion on this

31. Please provide more details on your responses to the two previous items on Project Types. Also, please describe how the Project Types could be clarified or made more helpful to you when writing your application.

   Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.