

FY 2016
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Postsecondary Education
Washington, DC 20006-8510



**APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION FOR
GRANTS UNDER
THE HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING & MATHEMATICS (HSI
STEM) AND ARTICULATION PROGRAM**

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I. LETTER TO THE APPLICANT



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in applying for a grant under the HSI STEM & Articulation Program. In 2011, the program funded 109 new awards with the purpose of increasing the number of Hispanics and low income students with degrees in STEM fields. While we have seen an increase in Hispanics with postsecondary degrees, the need to ensure that students who enter postsecondary institutions with a major in a STEM field will graduate with the desired degree is critical.

The demand for individuals with STEM degrees and STEM-related skills continues to increase; however, Hispanic students are significantly underrepresented among those pursuing and attaining degrees in STEM fields. The goal of the HSI STEM and Articulation program is to increase the number of Hispanic students pursuing and graduating with STEM degrees.

This competition for new awards proposes to support 2 and 4 year institutions: 1. Increase the number of Hispanic students who graduate with STEM degrees; 2. Develop and/or enhance transfer and articulation models between 2 and 4 year institutions, and; 3. Support student centered program services and activities that lead to improved student outcomes. Additionally, through this competition we hope to build evidence of promising practices, as well as build upon developed practices and strategies of effectiveness that are relevant to the purpose of this program.

This application package provides tips for submitting a successful application and includes the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) published in the [Federal Register](#). This year's competition includes two absolute priorities and two competitive preference priorities. Applicants must respond to both of the absolute priorities. For the competitive priorities, applicants may receive up to one point for responding to "evidence of promise," and up to three additional points for responding to "moderate evidence of effectiveness." We have also included a factor within the "project design" criterion that requires applicants to include their logic model (as defined in the notice) and a factor which requires greater rigor with respect to evaluation methods in the "evaluation plan" criterion.

The Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards published in the [Federal Register](#) is the official document describing the requirements for submitting an HSI STEM & Articulation

program grant application. You should not rely upon any other information that is inconsistent with the guidance contained in the official document.

Applications for FY 2016 grants under the HSI STEM & Articulation Program must be submitted electronically using Grants.gov at: <http://www.grants.gov>. An applicant who is unable to submit through Grants.gov must submit a written waiver of the electronic submission requirement at least two weeks before the deadline date.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Jeffrey Hartman at (202)502-7607 or via email at jeffrey.hartman@ed.gov or Everardo Gil at (202)219-7000 or via email at everardo.gil@ed.gov. We encourage applicants to review this package for an overview of important items and information that will help you prepare and submit your application.

Sincerely,

Beatriz Ceja-Williams
Director, Hispanic-Serving Institutions Division

II. COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS

1. Purpose of the Program

The Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM and Articulation Program support eligible Hispanic-Serving institutions in developing and carrying out activities to increase the number of Hispanic and low-income students attain degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

2. Eligible Applicants

Institutions of higher education (IHEs) that meet the definition of Hispanic Serving Institution for 2016 are eligible to apply. (See eligibility section in notice for further information.)

3. Priorities:

Absolute Priorities (Required)

- Absolute Priority 1—Applicants that propose student centered services, tutoring, counseling, and student service programs designed to improve academic success, including innovative and customized instruction courses (which may include remedial education and English language instruction) designed to help retain students and move the students rapidly into core courses and through program completion.
- Absolute Priority 2—Applicants that propose 1) to increase the number of Hispanic and other low income students attaining degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics; and 2) to develop model transfer and articulation agreements between two-year HSIs and four-year institutions in such fields.

Competitive Preference Priorities (Optional)

- Competitive Preference Priority 1 (One additional point) —Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of “evidence of promise.”
- Competitive Preference Priority 2 (Three additional points) —Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of “moderate evidence of effectiveness.”

4. Electronic Submission of Applications

Applications must be submitted electronically using Grants.gov, accessible through its portal page at:

<http://www.grants.gov>

5. Format of Application

Applicants must double space the application project narrative and use a font that is either 12-point or larger. However, charts, tables, figures, graphs, footnotes, and endnotes may be single spaced but font must be 10-point or larger. The following fonts are required to be used: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. **Applications submitted in any other font, including Times Roman and Arial Narrow, will not be accepted.**

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

6. Page Limits

If you are not addressing a competitive preference priority, you must limit your application narrative to no more than 50 pages. If you are addressing one of the competitive preference priorities, you must limit your application narrative to no more than 55 pages. The Notice contains additional information governing page limits and formatting instructions.

7. Project Abstract

The project abstract is limited to one page, single spaced. The abstract should describe the target area to be served, the services that will be provided and the activities to be conducted during the 5-year performance period. It should also include the citations, if applying for competitive priority points.

8. Notice to Successful Applicants

The Department's Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs will inform the Congress regarding applications approved for new 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.

9. Notice to Unsuccessful Applicants

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

10. Contact Information

For Program-related questions and assistance, please contact:

Jeffrey Hartman at (202)502-7607 or via email at jeffrey.hartman@ed.gov or

Everardo Gil at (202)219-7000 or via email at everardo.gil@ed.gov

For technical support regarding Grants.gov, please contact:

Telephone: (800) 518-4726

E-mail: support@grants.gov

Grants.gov Contact Center is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Also refer to "Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants" found in this application booklet.

III. SUBMISSION PROCEDURES

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

Instructions for Transmitting Application

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 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 qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, submit your paper application 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 84.031C)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4260

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

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

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

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

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

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

Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery:

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

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.031C)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

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

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

- (1) You must indicate on the envelope—and, if not provided by the Department, in Item 11 of the SF 424—the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and
- (2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this 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.

Late Applications

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

IV. NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR THE HSI-STEM AND ARTICULATION PROGRAM CFDA 84.031S

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM
and Articulation Program

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of
Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM and Articulation Program
Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY)
2016.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.031C.

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 Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM and Articulation Program supports eligible Hispanic-Serving institutions (as defined in section 502 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) (20 U.S.C. 1101a)) (HSIs) in developing and carrying out activities described in section 503(b) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1101b)(b)) to increase the number of Hispanic and low-income students attaining degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

Background: Given the growth in the Hispanic population, taking steps to increase the number of Hispanic students with STEM credentials is critical to the future workforce and economy of the United States. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics¹ project that jobs in occupations related to STEM will grow to more than nine million between 2012 and 2022. This represents an increase of about one million jobs over 2012 employment levels. Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that Latinos accounted for just 6.5 percent of the STEM workforce in 2011, even though they made up about 17 percent of the U.S. population. The number of Hispanic students graduating with a postsecondary degree has increased in recent years; however,

¹ Vilorio, D. (2014, March). STEM 101: Intro to tomorrow's jobs. *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/careeroutlook/2014/spring/art01.pdf>

these students continue to be significantly underrepresented in the total number of students earning STEM credentials. In 2013 Hispanic students accounted for nine percent of students earning STEM degrees and certificates, with the majority of such Hispanic students coming from HSIs.²

These data demonstrate the need for comprehensive support programs that promote educational opportunities in STEM fields for Hispanics. The Department has promoted college retention, affordability, and completion, especially for minority and low-income students through various policy initiatives. This competition specifically acknowledges the importance of student-centered programs that will increase the number of Hispanic and low-income students who graduate with degrees in STEM fields, as well as the need to promote strong articulation and transfer models, leading to more transfer students attaining STEM field degrees.

In recent years, the Department has emphasized the importance of promoting evidence-based practices through our grant competitions. In an effort to focus on promising strategies that have been the subject of research and evaluation as a way to enhance the effectiveness of work supported by funded applicants with Federal dollars, and to improve outcomes for

² *Excelencia in Education*. (2015). *Finding Your Workforce: Latinos in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)*. Washington, D.C.: Excelencia in Education.

students participating in our programs, we have included competitive preference priorities encouraging applicants to model their proposed projects on evidence-based strategies. For applicants that address a competitive preference priority, we award one additional point if the activities or strategies are supported by a study that meets the evidence of promise standard or three additional points if the activities or strategies are supported by a study (or studies) that meet the moderate evidence of effectiveness standard. Applicants must demonstrate that the research cited is relevant to the proposed project activities or strategies. It is critical for applicants to note that in assessing the relevance of the research cited to the proposed project, the Secretary will consider, among other factors, the portion of requested funds that will be dedicated to the evidence-based strategies or activities. In addition, in an effort to help generate evidence about effective intervention strategies and best practices that lead to increased completion rates at two- and four-year HSIs, particularly for STEM credentials, we have included a selection criterion awarding additional points for applications that propose rigorous evaluation methods for their proposed projects.

Priorities: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(v), Absolute Priority 1 is from the list of authorized activities in the

statute (see section 503(b)(5) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1101b(b) (5)). In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), Absolute Priority 2 is from section 371(b)(2)(B) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1067q(b)(2)(B)). In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(ii), the competitive preference priorities are from 34 CFR 75.226.

Absolute Priorities: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet both priorities.

These priorities are:

Absolute Priority 1.

An application that proposes to develop or enhance tutoring, counseling, and student service programs designed to improve academic success, including innovative and customized instruction courses (which may include remedial education and English language instruction) designed to help retain students and move the students rapidly into core courses and through program completion.

Absolute Priority 2.

An application that proposes activities to increase the number of Hispanic and other low-income students attaining

degrees in the STEM fields and proposes to develop model transfer and articulation agreements between two-year HSIs and four-year institutions in STEM fields.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2016 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are competitive preference priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award one additional point to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 1 and three additional points to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 2. Applicants may address only one of the competitive preference priorities and must clearly indicate in their application which competitive preference priority they are addressing. Applicants that address Competitive Preference Priority 2, but whose applications do not meet the moderate evidence of effectiveness standard, may still be considered under Competitive Preference Priority 1 to determine whether their applications meet the evidence of promise standard.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1. (One additional point)
Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of "evidence of promise."

Competitive Preference Priority 2. (Three additional points) Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of “moderate evidence of effectiveness.”

Definitions: These definitions are from 34 CFR 77.1.

Evidence of promise means there is empirical evidence to support the theoretical linkage(s) between at least one critical component and at least one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice. Specifically, evidence of promise means the conditions in both paragraphs (i) and (ii) of this definition are met:

(i) There is at least one study that is a--

(A) Correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias;

(B) Quasi-experimental design study that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations; or

(C) Randomized controlled trial that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with or without reservations.

(ii) The study referenced in paragraph (i) of this definition found a statistically significant or substantively important (defined as a difference of 0.25 standard deviations or larger), favorable association between at least one critical

component and one relevant outcome presented in the logic model for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice.

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.

Note: In developing logic models, applicants may want to use resources such as the Pacific Education Laboratory’s Education Logic Model Application (www.relpacific.mcrel.org/PERR.html or <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED544779.pdf>) to help design their logic model.

Moderate evidence of effectiveness means one of the following conditions is met:

(i) There is at least one study of the effectiveness of the process, product, strategy, or practices being proposed that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations, found a statistically significant favorable impact on a relevant outcome (with no statistically significant and overriding unfavorable impacts on that outcome for relevant populations in the study or in other studies of the intervention

reviewed by and reported on by the What Works Clearinghouse), and includes a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive the process, product, strategy, or practice.

(ii) There is at least one study of the effectiveness of the process, product, strategy, or practice being proposed that meets the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations, found a statistically significant favorable impact on a relevant outcome (with no statistically significant and overriding unfavorable impacts on that outcome for relevant populations in the study or in other studies of the intervention reviewed by and reported on by the What Works Clearinghouse), includes a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive the process, product, strategy, or practice, and includes a large sample and a multi-site sample. Note: Multiple studies can cumulatively meet the large and multi-site sample requirements as long as each study meets the other requirements in this paragraph.

Multi-site sample means more than one site, where site can be defined as a local educational agency, locality, or State.

Quasi-experimental design study means a study using a design that attempts to approximate an experimental design by identifying a comparison group that is similar to the treatment group in important respects. These studies, depending on design

and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (but not What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations).

Randomized controlled trial means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, schools, or districts to receive the intervention being evaluated (the treatment group) or not to receive the intervention (the control group). The estimated effectiveness of the intervention is the difference between the average outcome for the treatment group and for the control group. These studies, depending on design and implementation, can meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) (or the ultimate outcome if not related to students) the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice is designed to improve; consistent with the specific goals of a program.

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

What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards means the standards set forth in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0, March 2014), which can be found at the following link:

<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19>.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C.1067q(b)(2)(B).

Although the HSI STEM and Articulation Program authorized under section 371 of the HEA is not part of the Developing HSIs Program authorized by title V of the HEA, the eligibility and activity provisions under the Developing HSIs Program apply to the HSI STEM and Articulation Program pursuant to section 371(a) (2) and (b)(2)(B) of the HEA.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485 (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education (IHEs) only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$91,773,000.

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: \$700,000-1,200,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$775,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 109.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: (a) IHEs that qualify as eligible HSIs are eligible to apply under the HSI STEM and Articulation Program. To be an eligible HSI, an IHE must--

(i) Have an enrollment of needy students, as defined in section 502(b) of the HEA (section 502(a)(2)(A)(i) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(2)(A)(i));

(ii) Have, except as provided in section 522(b) of the HEA, average educational and general expenditures that are low, per full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student, in comparison with the average educational and general expenditures per FTE undergraduate student of institutions that offer similar instruction (section 502(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(2)(A)(ii));

Note: The notice announcing the FY 2016 process for designation of eligible institutions, and inviting applications for waiver of eligibility requirements, was published in the Federal Register on November 19, 2015 (80 FR 72422). Only institutions that the Department determines are eligible, or are granted a waiver, may apply for a grant in this program.

(iii) Be accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association that the Secretary has determined to be a reliable authority as to the quality of education or training offered, or making reasonable progress toward accreditation, according to such an agency or association (section 502(a)(2)(A)(iv) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(2)(A)(iv));

(iv) Be legally authorized to provide, and provide within the State, an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree, or be a junior or community college (section 502(a)(2)(A)(iii) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(2)(A)(iii)); and

(v) Have an enrollment of undergraduate FTE students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application (section 502(a)(5)(B) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(5)(B)).

Note: Institutions that met basic eligibility as an "eligible institution," during the eligibility period for title III and V

as published in the Federal Register on November 19, 2015 (80 FR 72422), and met the 25 percent threshold of Hispanic student enrollment based on data reported to IPEDS for the 2013-2014 academic year, are not required to submit additional information. Institutions that met basic eligibility, but did not meet the 25 percent threshold of Hispanic student enrollment for academic year 2013-2014, must include, as part of their application, their most up-to-date Hispanic enrollment data submitted to IPEDS, the institution's state reported enrollment data, or the institution's annual report for the 2014-2015 academic year (see application instruction booklet regarding eligibility documentation). If the IPEDS data indicate that the institution has an undergraduate FTE that is less than 25 percent, and the institution fails to demonstrate that the IPEDS data are inaccurate, the institution will be ineligible.

(b) An eligible HSI that submits multiple applications may only be awarded, one grant.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching unless the grantee uses a portion of its grant for establishing or improving an endowment fund. If a grantee uses a portion of its grant for endowment fund purposes, it must match those grant funds with non-Federal funds (section 503(c)(2) of the HEA; 20 U.S.C. 1101b(c)(2)).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request for Application Package: Everardo Gil or Jeffrey Hartman, Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 7E311, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 219-7000 or (202) 502-7607 or by email: Everardo.Gil@ed.gov or Jeffrey.Hartman@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, the absolute priorities, and the competitive preference priorities that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We have established the following mandatory page limits for all applications:

- If you are not addressing a competitive preference priority, you must limit your application narrative to no more than 50 pages.

- If you are addressing one of the competitive preference priorities, you must limit your application narrative to no more than 55 pages.

Please include a separate heading for the absolute priorities and for the competitive preference priority, if you address one.

For the purpose of determining compliance with the page limits, each page on which there are words will be counted as one full page. Applicants must use the following standards:

- 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" margins.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, except titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, captions and all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs. These items may be single-spaced. Charts, tables, figures, and graphs in the application narrative count toward the page limit.

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

use a 10-point font in charts, tables, figures, graphs, footnotes, and endnotes.

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

The page limit applies to all of the application narrative section, including your complete response to the selection criteria, the absolute priorities, and a competitive preference priority. However, the page limit does not apply to Part I, the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424); the Department of Education Supplemental Information form (SF 424); Part II, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524) and budget narrative; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the one-page project abstract. If you include any attachments or appendices not specifically requested in the application package, these items will be counted as part of your application narrative for purposes of the page-limit requirement.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

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

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [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, 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 person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 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: (a) General. We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

(b) Applicability of Executive Order 13202. Applicants that apply for construction funds under the HSI STEM and Articulation Program must comply with Executive Order 13202, as amended. This Executive order provides that recipients of Federal construction funds may not “require or prohibit bidders, offerors, contractors, or subcontractors to enter into or adhere to agreements with one or more labor organizations, on the same or other construction project(s)” or “otherwise discriminate against bidders, offerors, contractors, or subcontractors for becoming or refusing to become or remain signatories or otherwise to adhere to agreements with one or more labor organizations, on the same or other related construction project(s).” Projects funded under this program that include construction activity will be provided a copy of this Executive order and will be asked to certify that they will adhere to it.

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: 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 the HSI STEM and Articulation 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 HSI STEM and Articulation Program, CFDA number 84.031C, 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 this competition 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 84.031, not 84.031C).

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 competition 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: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget

Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-only, non-modifiable Portable Document Format (PDF) format. 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 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, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the persons 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 the Grants.gov system 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: Everardo Gil or Jeffrey Hartman, Office of Postsecondary Education, 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 84.031C)
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 application 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 84.031C)
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 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 selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210. We will award up to 100 points to an application under the selection criteria; the total

possible points for each selection criterion are noted in parentheses.

(a) Quality of the Project Design. (Maximum 30 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 following factors:

(1) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (Up to 10 points)

(2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. (Up to 5 points)

(3) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in this notice). (Up to 5 points)

(4) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (Up to 10 points)

(b) Quality of Project Services. (Maximum 20 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services

to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice. (Up to 10 points)

(2) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services. (Up to 10 points)

(c) Significance. (Maximum 20 points) The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies. (Up to 5 points)

(2) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement. (Up to 15 points)

(d) Quality of the Management Plan. (Maximum 10 points) The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for

the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (Up to 5 points)

(2) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project. (Up to 5 points)

(e) Quality of the Project Evaluation. (Maximum 20 points)

The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (Up to 5 points)

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. (Up to 5 points)

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's

effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. (Up to 10 points)

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 requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

Awards will be made in rank order according to the average score received from an evaluation performed by a panel of non-Federal reviewers based on responses to the selection criteria and, if applicable, the competitive preference priorities. If an application is scored highly, has the possibility of being funded, and includes a response to one of the competitive

preference priorities, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) will review the studies cited in the application to determine whether they meet the “moderate evidence of effectiveness” or the “evidence of promise” standard. Only those applications that address a competitive preference priority and have the possibility of being funded because of high scores and available funds for new awards will undergo further review by IES.

Note: As noted in 34 CFR 75.217, we will use other information noted in this section to select applications for new grants when two or more applicants receive the same score in the rank order and the program funds are insufficient to fund all applicants with the same cut off score.

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 multiyear 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.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 Secretary has established the following key performance measures for assessing the effectiveness of the HSI STEM and Articulation Program:

a. The percentage change, over the five-year grant period, of the number of Hispanic and low-income full-time STEM field degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled.

b. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time STEM field degree-seeking undergraduate students who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the

previous year and are enrolled in the current year who remain in a STEM field degree/credential program.

c. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at four-year HSIs graduating within six years of enrollment with a STEM field degree.

d. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at two-year HSIs graduating within three years of enrollment with a STEM field degree/credential.

e. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income students transferring successfully to a four-year institution from a two-year institution and retained in a STEM field major.

f. The number of Hispanic and low-income students participating in grant-funded student support programs or services.

g. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs who successfully completed gateway courses.

h. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs in good academic standing.

i. The percent of Hispanic and low-income STEM field major transfer students on track to complete a STEM field degree within three years from their transfer date.

j. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs and completed a degree or credential.

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 measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, 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: Jeffrey Hartman or Everardo Gil, Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 7E311, Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 502-7607 or (202) 219-7000 or by email: Jeffrey.Hartman@ed.gov or Everardo.Gil@ed.gov.

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

Applicants should periodically check the HSI Program Web site for information regarding pre-application technical assistance workshops and webinars. The address is: www.ed.gov/programs/idueshsi/index.html.

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 compact disc) on request to one of the program contact persons 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 PDF. To use PDF, you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at the 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 search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated:

Lynn Mahaffie,
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Policy, Planning and Innovation
Delegated the Duties of Assistant
Secretary for Postsecondary
Education.

V. AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION

The Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM and Articulation Program (HSI STEM & Articulation Program) is authorized under Title III, Part F, Section 371 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Legislation governing the HSI STEM & Articulation Program can be accessed from the following website: [20 U.S.C. 1067q \(b\) \(2\) \(B\)](#)

Title III, Part F, Section 371 of the Higher Education Act, as amended ([20 U.S.C. 1067q \(b\) \(2\) \(B\)](#))

(a) Eligible Institution

An institution of higher education is eligible to receive funds from the amounts made available under this section if such institution is—

- (1) a part B institution (as defined in [section 1061 of this title](#));
- (2) a Hispanic-serving institution (as defined in [section 1101a of this title](#));
- (3) a Tribal College or University (as defined in [section 1059c of this title](#));
- (4) an Alaska Native-serving institution or a Native Hawaiian-serving institution (as defined in [section 1059d\(b\) of this title](#));
- (5) a Predominantly Black Institution (as defined in subsection (c));
- (6) an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institution (as defined in subsection (c)); or
- (7) a Native American-serving nontribal institution (as defined in subsection (c)).

(b) New investment of funds

(1) In general

(A) Provision of funds

There shall be available to the Secretary to carry out this section, from funds in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$255,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2008 through 2019. The authority to award grants under this section shall expire at the end of fiscal year 2019.

(B) Availability

Funds made available under subparagraph (A) for a fiscal year shall remain available for the next succeeding fiscal year.

(2) Allocation and allotment

(A) In general, of the amounts made available under paragraph (1) for each fiscal year—

- (i) \$100,000,000 shall be available for allocation under subparagraph (B);

- (ii) \$100,000,000 shall be available for allocation under subparagraph (C); and
- (iii) \$55,000,000 shall be available for allocation under subparagraph (D).

(B) HSI STEM and articulation programs

The amount made available for allocation under this subparagraph by subparagraph (A)(i) for any fiscal year shall be available for Hispanic-serving Institutions [\[1\]](#) for activities described in [section 1101b of this title](#), with a priority given to applications that propose—

- (i) to increase the number of Hispanic and other low income students attaining degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics; and
- (ii) to develop model transfer and articulation agreements between 2-year Hispanic-serving institutions and 4-year institutions in such fields.

ADDITIONAL CITATIONS FROM THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT:

SEC. 502. [20 U.S.C. 1101a] DEFINITIONS; ELIGIBILITY.

(a) Definitions. For the purpose of this title:

(1) EDUCATIONAL AND GENERAL EXPENDITURES. The term “educational and general expenditures” means the total amount expended by and institution for instruction, research, public service, academic support (including library expenditures), student services, institutional support, scholarships and fellowships, operation and maintenance expenditures for the physical plant, and an mandatory transfers that the institution is required to pay by law.

(2) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION. The term “eligible institution” means--

(A) an institution of higher education--

- (i) has an enrollment of needy students as required by subsection (b);
- (ii) except as provided in section 512(b), the average educational and general expenditures of which are low, per full time equivalent undergraduate student, in comparison with the average educational and general expenditures per full time equivalent undergraduate student of institutions that offer similar instruction:

(iii) that is--

(I) legally authorized to provide, and provides within the State, an education program for which the institution awards a bachelor’s degree or

(II) a junior or community college;

(iv) that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary to be reliable authority as to the quality of training offered or that is, according to such an agency or association, making reasonable progress toward accreditation;

(v) that meets such other requirements as the Secretary may prescribe; and

(vi) that is located in a State; and

(B) any branch of any institution of higher education described under subparagraph (A) that by itself satisfies the requirements contained in clauses (I) and (ii) of such subparagraph. For purposes of the determination of whether an institution is an eligible institution under this paragraph, the factor described under subparagraph (A)(I) shall be given twice the weight of the factor described under subparagraph (A)(ii).

(3) ENDOWMENT FUND.-- The term “endowment fund” means a fund that

(A) is established by State law, by a Hispanic-serving institution, or by a foundation that is exempt from Federal income taxation;

(B) is maintained for the purpose of generating income for the support of the institution; and

(C) does not include real estate.

(4) FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STUDENTS.--The term “full-time equivalent students” means the sum of the number of students enrolled full time at an institution, plus the full-time equivalent of the number of students enrolled part time (determined on the basis of the quotient of the sum of the credit hours or all part-time student divided by 12) at such institution.

(5) HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION. -- The term “Hispanic-Serving institution” means an institution of higher education that—

(A) is an eligible institution; and

(B) has an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application.

(6) JUNIOR OR COMMUNITY COLLEGE. The term “junior or community college” means an institution of higher education--

(A) that admits as regular students persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance in the State in which the institution is located and who have the ability to benefit from the training offered by the institution;

(B) that does not provide an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree (or an equivalent degree); and

(C) that--

(i) provides an educational program of not less than 2 years in duration that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree; or

(ii) offers a 2-year program in engineering, mathematics or the physical or biological sciences, designed to prepare a student to work as a technician or at the semiprofessional level in engineering, scientific, or other technological fields requiring the understanding the application of basic engineering, scientific, or mathematical principles of knowledge.

(b) Enrollment of Needy Students.-- For the purpose of this title, the term "enrollment of needy students" means an enrollment at an institution with respect to which--

(1) at least 50 percent of the degree students so enrolled are receiving need-based assistance under title IV in the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made (other than loans for which an interest subsidy is paid pursuant to section 428); or

(2) a substantial percentage of the students so enrolled are receiving Federal Pell Grants in the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which determination is made compared to the percentage of students receiving Federal Pell Grants at all such institutions in the second fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which the determination is made, unless the requirement of this paragraph is waived under section 512(a).

SEC. 503. [20 U.S.C. 1101b] AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.

(a) TYPES OF ACTIVITIES AUTHORIZED. Grants awarded under this title shall be used by Hispanic-serving institutions of higher education to assist the institutions to plan, develop, undertake, and carry out programs to improve and expand such institutions' capacity to serve Hispanic students and other low-income students.

(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES. Grants awarded under this section shall be used for one or more of the following activities:

(1) Purchase, rental or lease of scientific or laboratory equipment for educational purposes, including instructional and research purposes.

(2) Construction, maintenance, renovation, and improvement in classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and other instructional facilities.

- (3) Support of faculty exchanges, faculty development, curriculum development, academic instruction, and faculty fellowships to assist in attaining advanced degrees in the fellow's field of instruction.
- (4) Purchase of library books, periodicals, and other educational materials, including telecommunications program material.
- (5) Tutoring, counseling, and student service programs designed to improve academic success.
- (6) Funds management, administrative management, and acquisition of equipment for use in strengthening funds management.
- (7) Joint use of facilities, such as laboratories and libraries.
- (8) Establishing or improving a development office to strengthen or improve contributions from alumni and the private sector.
- (9) Establishing or improving an endowment fund.
- (10) Creating or improving facilities for Internet or other distance learning academic instruction capabilities, including purchase or rental of telecommunications technology equipment or services.
- (11) Establishing or enhancing a program or teacher education designed to qualify students to teach in public elementary schools and secondary schools.
- (12) Establishing community outreach programs that will encourage elementary school and secondary school students to develop the academic skills and the interest to pursue postsecondary education.
- (13) Expanding the number of Hispanic and other underrepresented graduate and professional students that can be served by the institution by expanding courses and institutional resources.
- (14) Other activities proposed in the application submitted pursuant to section 504 that --
 - (A) that contribute to carrying out the purposes of this title
 - (B) are approved by the Secretary as part of the review and acceptance of such application.
- (c) Endowment fund limitations. --
 - (1) Portion of a grant. -- A Hispanic-serving institution may not use more than 20 percent of the grant funds provided under this title for any fiscal year for establishing or improving an endowment fund.
 - (2) Matching required. -- A Hispanic-serving institution that uses any portion of the grant funds provided under this title for any fiscal year for establishing or improving and endowment fund shall provide from non-Federal funds an amount equal to or greater than the portion.

(3) Comparability. -- The provisions of part C of subchapter III of this chapter regarding the establishment or increase of an endowment fund, that the Secretary determines are not inconsistent with this subsection, shall apply to funds used under paragraph (1).

VI. APPLICANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 HSI STEM & Articulation Program’s Notice Inviting Applications (NIA), published in the Federal Register, outlines the requirements for the program competition. This application instructions package provides notes and other pertinent information to assist applicants.

The FY 2016 application includes the following:

- Two Absolute Priorities-Applicants must address both priorities in order to be eligible for review;
- Two Competitive Priorities regarding evidence;
- Five Selection Criteria, which include various factors that are weighed differently and add up to the total maximum points allowed for each criterion; and
- Ten Performance Measures, which the applicant should consider when responding to the selection criteria.

Absolute Priorities (Required)

- Absolute Priority 1—Applicants that propose student centered services, tutoring, counseling, and student service programs designed to improve academic success, including innovative and customized instruction courses (which may include remedial education and English language instruction) designed to help retain students and move the students rapidly into core courses and through program completion.
- Absolute Priority 2—Applicants that propose 1) to increase the number of Hispanic and other low income students attaining degrees in the fields of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics; and 2) to develop model transfer and articulation agreements between two-year HSIs and four-year institutions in such fields.

Competitive Preference Priorities (Optional)

Competitive Preference Priority 1 (One additional point) —Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of “evidence of promise.”

Competitive Preference Priority 2 (Three additional points) —Applications supported by evidence of effectiveness that meets the conditions set out in the definition of “moderate evidence of effectiveness.”

Note:

An applicant addressing the Competitive Preference Priorities can earn one (1) additional point by demonstrating that its strategy/activity is based on research that meets the Evidence of Promise standard or three (3) additional points by demonstrating that its strategy/activity is based on research that meets the Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness standard. The applicant should clearly identify if it is addressing Evidence of Promise or Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness. Applicants that choose to address Competitive Preference Priority 1 should identify and include no more than two (2) citations of studies that support their proposed project and meet the definition in the notice of Evidence of Promise. Applicants that choose to address Competitive Preference Priority 2 should identify and include no more than two (2) citations of studies that support their proposed project and meet or the definition in the notice of Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness. The applicant should clearly identify the Competitive Preference Priority being addressed. Applicants should include their response to the priority in the Project Narrative. Citations for the studies and priority addressed should also be included in the abstract. When responding to the priority in the project narrative, the applicant’s response should articulate the relevance between of the citations provided and the proposed project.

The narrative response should describes the activity(ies)/intervention(s) the applicant plans to implement and the intended student outcomes that the activity(ies)/intervention(s) attempts to impact. Applicants should also clearly demonstrate alignment with the cited study/ies with sufficient fidelity. Where modifications to the cited intervention will be made to account for student or institutional/organizational characteristics, resource limitations, or other special factors, the applicant

should provide a justification or basis for the modifications in the narrative response to the priority.

Applicants must also demonstrate that the activities/strategies supported by the evidence cited represent a substantial or significant portion of overall program activities.

The link(s) for the citation submitted for the Competitive Preference Priorities should be provided on the Project Abstract as well as the Project Narrative. Applicants should specify in their narrative responses to this priority the findings within the study cited as evidence in support of the proposed project and ensure that the citation and link are from a publicly or readily available source.

In checking for relevance of the cited study, applicants should consider the following:

- Does the study examine the effectiveness of the process, product, strategy, activity, intervention, or practice being proposed;
- Is the outcome that the study found to have statistically significant favorable impact on a relevant outcome proposed in the project proposed by the applicant; and
- Does the study include a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to receive the process, product, strategy, activity, intervention, or practice in the application being proposed?

Selection Criteria: (Required)

The selection criteria are used to evaluate the applications submitted for new grants under this discretionary program. This competition uses the following criteria. Please note that the factors within each of the criterion are weighed differently; therefore, you should ensure that each factor is addressed appropriately in order to receive the maximum points possible. The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are as follows:

- (a) Quality of the Project Design
- (b) Quality of Project Services
- (c) Significance
- (d) Quality of the Management Plan
- (e) Quality of the Evaluation Plan

Quality of the Project Design: (30 points Maximum)

1. The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs (Up to 10 points);
2. The inclusion of a thorough, high-quality review of relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives (Up to 5 points); and
3. The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory (as defined in the notice) (Up to 5 points)
4. The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities established for the competition. (Up to 10 points)

Note:

In responding to the criterion, applicants should align their response to the absolute priorities and the competitive priority addressed, if applicable. Additionally, applicants should consider the relationship between the proposed design and the program's performance measures. When responding to the factor regarding strong theory, the use of a logic model is a good visual diagram for your proposal as it shows the relationship among the resources that are invested, the activities that take place and the benefits or changes that result.

Quality of Project Services: (Up to 20 points)

The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants will be considered. This includes:

1. The extent to which services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice (Up to 10 points); and
2. The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services (Up to 10 points).

Note:

Given the absolute priority regarding student centered services, applicants should ensure alignment between their responses.

Significance: (Up to 20 points)

In determining the significance of the proposed project, the following factors are considered:

1. The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies (Up to 5 points); and
2. The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement (Up to 15 points).

Quality of the Management Plan: (Up to 10 points)

In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the following factors will be considered:

1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (Up to 5 points); and

2. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project (Up to 5 points).

Quality of the Evaluation Plan: (Up to 20 points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation plan, the following factors are considered:

1. The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are specified and measurable (Up to 5 points);
2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project (Up to 5 points); and
3. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Evidence Standards with reservations (Up to 10 points).

Note:

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

strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote an appropriate level of resources to project evaluation.

Successful applicants will be expected to report annually on the progress of each project or study included in the grant, including a description of preliminary or key findings and an explanation of any changes in goals, objectives, methodology, or planned products or publications.

The proposed evaluation plan should be aligned to and further build evidence on the activity(ies)/ intervention(s) identified in the competitive priority evidence standard. We encourage applicants to review the following technical assistance resources on evaluation: (1) WWC Procedures and Standards Handbook: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/references/idocviewer/doc.aspx?docid=19&tocid=1>; and (2) IES/NCEE Technical Methods papers: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/tech_methods/.

Review Process

A panel of three non-Federal reviewers will read and score each application. Awards will be made in rank order according to the average score received. Federal staff will convene panels to discuss scores and comments pertaining to each application. If an application is scored highly, has the possibility of being funded, and includes a response to one of the competitive preference priorities, IES will review the studies cited in the application to determine whether they meet the “moderate evidence of effectiveness” or the “evidence of promise” standard. Only those applications that address one of the competitive preference priorities and have the possibility of being funded because of high scores based on the selection criteria and available funds for new awards will undergo further review by IES.

Note:

As noted in 34 CFR 75.217, we will use other information noted in this section to select applications for new grants when two or more applicants receive the same score in the rank order and the program funds are insufficient to fund all applicants with the same cut off score.

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.

Performance Measures

For the HSI STEM and Articulation Program, the Secretary has established the following ten (10) performance measures for assessing the effectiveness of the program:

1. The percentage change, over the five-year grant period, of the number of Hispanic and low-income full-time STEM field degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled.
2. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time STEM field degree-seeking undergraduate students who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year who remain in a STEM field degree/credential program.
3. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at four-year HSIs graduating within six years of enrollment with a STEM field degree.
4. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at two-year HSIs graduating within three years of enrollment with a STEM field degree/credential.
5. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income students transferring successfully to a four-year institution from a two-year institution and retained in a STEM field major.
6. The number of Hispanic and low-income students participating in grant-funded student support programs or services.
7. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs who successfully completed gateway courses.

8. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs in good academic standing.
9. The percent of Hispanic and low-income STEM field major transfer students on track to complete a STEM field degree within three years from their transfer date.
10. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs and completed a degree or credential.

Note: *Applicants that receive funding under this program will be required to collect and submit data on the performance measures that are aligned to the project design in the annual performance report for each performance period.*

VII. OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION NARRATIVE FORMS

Carefully read the entire application package, the Federal Register notice and the authorizing legislation (**page 56**) before beginning to prepare an application. The HSI-STEM and Articulation Program application will use the following Grants.gov Narrative Forms.

- ED Abstract Form
- Project Narrative Attachment Form
- Budget Narrative Attachment Form
- Other Attachments Form (Upload appendices here)_

The **ED Abstract** Form is where you will attach your one-page project abstract. Include the name and address of your organization and the name, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for this project.

The abstract should not exceed one double-spaced page in 12 point font or larger and should use language that will be understood by a range of audiences. For all projects, include the project title (if applicable), goals and expected outcomes. Include population to be served, as appropriate. The abstract should also indicate the institution/s that the applicant is proposing to partner with for the purpose of meeting the articulation and transfer model absolute priority. Additionally, if the application is responding to one of the competitive preference priorities, the applicant should provide the citation/s of the studies used to support the evidence requirement.

The **Project Narrative Attachment** Form is where you will attach the responses to the Selection Criteria, and the priorities. Responses to the Absolute Priorities and selected Competitive Priority, if applicable, should be properly labeled and placed at the front of the Project Narrative, followed by the

responses to the Selection Criteria. Applicants should include a Table of Contents that includes all responses to the Selection Criteria, and Priorities, if applicable. Applications should be concise and clearly written. You must limit the application narrative to no more than 50 single-sided, double-spaced pages, with one inch margins printed in 12-point font or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch), or 55 pages for those addressing either of the evidence competitive preference priorities.

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. Before preparing the narrative, applicants should review the Federal Register notice, program statute, and the priorities for specific guidance or requirements. Note that applications will be evaluated according to the selection criteria specified in the Federal Register notice. We suggest you organize your narrative according to the priorities and selection criteria. Clear headings should be provided to indicate an applicant's response to the priorities. Any appendices you reference in your project narrative will not be reviewed by the reviewers for the purpose of scoring your response. As such, anything that you want reviewers to consider with respect your responses should be included as part of the project narrative within the appropriate page limit.

The **Budget Narrative Attachment** Form is where you will attach a detailed line item budget narrative that aggregates to the same total amount as on the ED 524. Only one combined budget should be submitted to represent costs for all entities involved in the proposed project. An applicant may request funding for five years. Please provide, for each year, a budget narrative that supports the expenditures listed on the Budget (ED Form 524), using the same budget categories. Please be sure to include project staff travel funds for one trip to Washington, DC, each year of the project.

The **Other Attachments** Form is where you will attach the application appendices, if applicable. Additionally, key personnel resumes, support letters, and other documentation to support your application would be uploaded in this section. Please note that reviewers will not review any tables that support your

responses to the selection criteria that are included in the “Other Attachments” appendix section. Please note that any documents submitted as part of the appendices will be used for information purposes and will not be read by the reviewers for scoring purposes.

NOTE: If you have multiple documents to be attached to one of the above narrative sections (**except for Other Attachments**), it is recommended that you merge them into one .PDF file and upload them to the appropriate narrative.

VIII. INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BUDGET NARRATIVE

The **Budget Narrative Attachment** Form is where you will attach the detailed line item budget narrative. The budget narrative explains what the numbers in the budget (ED 524) represent and how you arrived at them. A budget narrative is required and will not count toward the project narrative page limit.

Along with the budget, the budget narrative provides the program with information regarding the grant investment, item by item. The budget narrative ensures that:

- Your project costs are reasonable, allowable, and necessary to carry out the activities outlined in the proposal.
- Your project request for funding is aligned to the proposed goals and objectives of the grant.

Cost Categories

Your budget narrative should detail:

- *Personnel* – Include the hours, wages, and duties of each grant-related position.
- *Fringe benefits* – List all employment related costs, such as FICA, workers compensation, health insurance, and retirement benefits.
- *Travel* – Cover mileage, airline tickets, taxis, car rentals, mileage reimbursements, parking fees, tolls, tips, and per diems for lodging and meals.
- *Equipment* – List all purchases for items with a life span of (usually) three years or more, such as furniture, computers, copy/fax machines, lab equipment, telephones, and software.
- *Supplies* – Include short-lived items needed to run an office, such as paper, envelopes, pens and pencils, CDs, staples, etc.
- *Contractual* – Specify contract services, such as leases, consultants' fees, and trainings.
- *Construction* – Include construction and/or renovation of buildings.

- *Other* – Indicate all direct costs not covered in previous budget categories.

IX. 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 HSI STEM & Articulation Program?

The performance indicators for the HSI STEM and Articulation program are:

1. The percentage change, over the five-year grant period, of the number of Hispanic and low-income full-time STEM field degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled.
2. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time STEM field degree-seeking undergraduate students who were in their first year of postsecondary enrollment in the previous year and are enrolled in the current year who remain in a STEM field degree/credential program.
3. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at four-year HSIs graduating within six years of enrollment with a STEM field degree.
4. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at two-year HSIs graduating within three years of enrollment with a STEM field degree/credential.
5. The percentage of Hispanic and low-income students transferring successfully to a four-year institution from a two-year institution and retained in a STEM field major.
6. The number of Hispanic and low-income students participating in grant-funded student support programs or services.
7. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs who successfully completed gateway courses.
8. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs in good academic standing.

9. The percent of Hispanic and low-income STEM field major transfer students on track to complete a STEM field degree within three years from their transfer date.
10. The percent of Hispanic and low-income students who participated in grant-supported services or programs and completed a degree or credential.

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.

X. REQUIRED FORMS

STANDARD FORMS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit, along with their project narratives, the required standard forms, assurances, and certifications included in the list below.

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)

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 review only materials/files attached to the section labeled “Other Attachments Form.”

- Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424
- Department of Education Budget Summary Form (ED 524) Sections A & B
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)
- General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements - Section 427
- Assurances, Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form (formerly ED 80-0013 form)

Electronic copies of the required forms can be found at the following address:

<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html> and in the Grants.gov submission package.

XI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

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.

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# [commenter must insert number--including suffix letter, if any], 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.***

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 30 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 III, Part F, Section 371 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended). 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

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

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

Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)

Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424

Department of Education Budget Information Non-Construction Programs Form (ED 524)

One-Page Program Abstract – Attached to the “ED Abstract Form” in Grants.gov

Project Narrative – Attached to the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” in Grants.gov

Budget Narrative – Attached to the “Budget Narrative Attachment Form” in Grants.gov

Additional Appendices, if applicable – Attached to the “Other Attachments Form” in Grants.gov

Assurances and Certifications – found in Grants.gov

Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)

Grants.gov Lobbying Form (ED 80-0013)

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

ED GEPA 427 Form