

# FY 2021 Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program

## Grant Application Instructions



**CFDA Number: 84.374A**

Form Approved OMB [#####]

Expiration Date: [TBD]

Application Closing Date: [TBD]

**U.S. Department of Education | Office of Elementary and Secondary Education**  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W. | Washington, DC 20202-5900

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# I. Program and Competition Background

## **Program Overview**

**Program Office:** Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) **Grant Name:** Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (TSL) **CFDA Number:** 84.374A

**Grant Type:** Discretionary/Competitive Grant

**Program Purpose:** Authorized in sections 2211 – 2213 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), TSL supports efforts of local educational agencies (LEAs) and States to focus on use and improvements in human capital management systems (HCMSs) and sustainable performance-based compensation systems (PBCSs), especially in high-need schools, to increase the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders and thereby increase student achievement. Under TSL, key HCMS decisions, including those that affect educator’s opportunities to receive performance-based compensation, are informed by the results of the LEA’s educator evaluation and support system.

**Eligible Applicants:** Eligible entities that may apply for a FY 2021 TSL grant are:

- (a) An LEA, including a charter school that is an LEA, or a consortium of LEAs;
- (b) A SEA or other State agency designated by the Chief Executive of a State to participate;
- (c) The Bureau of Indian Education; or
- (d) A partnership consisting of—
  - (i) One or more agencies described in subparagraph (a), (b), or (c); and
  - (ii) At least one nonprofit or for-profit entity.

**Program Elements Summary:** This competition has two absolute priorities, two competitive preference priorities, and several application requirements, as described in the NIA and included below. They are:

### **Absolute Priorities:**

- Absolute Priority 1: Human Capital Management System or Performance-Based Compensation Systems;
- Absolute Priority 2: High-Need Schools

### **Competitive Preference Priorities:**

- Competitive Preference Priority 1: Supporting educators and their professional growth;
- Competitive Preference Priority 2: Increase educator diversity

The Absolute Priorities, and Application Requirements are addressed in the NIA.

**Project Period:** Under this competition, applicants may apply for a three-year grant. Under the TSL statute, at the end of the three-year grant period, the Secretary may renew an award for a period of up to two additional years if the grantee demonstrates that it is effectively using its funds. This renewal may include allowing the grantee to scale up or replicate its successful program. In order to help the Department with its budgetary planning, Section IV of this application package contains instructions for applicants to submit budgets and budget narratives now for a period of up to three years.

More information on the process of funding projects in Years 4 and 5 will be provided when it is available.

## II. Timeline and General Information

### Important Dates

Event	Date
Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (84.374A) Application available	TBD
Pre-Application Information Webinars for potential applicants	TBD EDT You may register for the webinar by using the following link: <a href="#">[Link TBD]</a>
Intent to Apply Email to <a href="mailto:TSL@ed.gov">TSL@ed.gov</a>	TBD
Deadline for transmitting applications:	TBD, 11:59:59 pm Washington, DC time
Estimated Award Announcement:	Before September 30, 2021

### FY 2021 TSL Notice Inviting Applications

All applicants interested in completing a TSL application should first thoroughly review the FY 2021 Notice Inviting Applications (NIA). The NIA will orient applicants to the TSL program by providing the following information:

- Background information and purpose of the program;
- Eligibility requirements;
- Absolute Priorities;
- Competitive Preference Priorities (optional);
- Programmatic and application requirements;
- Selection Criteria and assigned points;
- Definition of terms used in the NIA;
- Procedural and substantive requirements of the application process; and
- Instructions on how to electronically submit the application.

The full text of the NIA for the FY 2021 TSL grant competition can be found in the Federal Register Web site at [TBD]. For convenience, the Federal Register Notice and NIA are published on the U.S. Department of Education's [TSL program website](#).

All TSL applications must be received on or before **11:59:59 pm Washington, DC time**, on [TBD]. Please note that U.S. Department of Education grant application deadline is **11:59:59 pm Washington, DC time**. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted, and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than **11:59:59 pm Washington, DC time**, on [TBD] the application deadline date. Late applications, without an exception granted according to the Common Instructions, will not be accepted. The Department is required to enforce the established deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants. No changes or additions to an application will be accepted after the deadline date and time.

Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the Federal Register on February 13, 2019 (84 FR 3768) and available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2019-02206>, which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

### **Notification of Intent to Apply**

The Department will be able to review grant applications more efficiently if we know the approximate number of applicants who intend to apply. Therefore, we strongly encourage, but do not require, each potential applicant to notify us of the applicant's intent to submit an application. To do so, please email [TSL@ed.gov](mailto:TSL@ed.gov) with the subject line "Intent to Apply," and include the applicant's name and contact person's name and email address by [TBD].

Applicants that do not submit a notice of intent to apply may still apply for funding; applicants that do submit a notice of intent to apply are not bound to apply or bound by the information provided.

## **FY 2021 TSL Grant Competition Design Elements**

### **Priorities and Requirements:**

The FY 2021 TSL competition includes two absolute priorities and two competitive preference priorities. Applicants are required to apply for both Absolute Priority 1 and Absolute Priority 2. Clear headings should be provided to indicate an applicant's response to the absolute priorities under which they are submitting their proposal and to the competitive preference priorities under which they are submitting their proposal, as applicable. There are four selection criteria upon which application proposals will be evaluated. To read a list of Absolute and Competitive Preference Priorities, and Selection Criteria for this grant competition, please reference the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for this competition on the Federal Register.

## **III. Application Forms and Parts**

A complete application consists of several required forms and attachments. The following sections list and provide guidance for completing the required application components.

### **A. Standard Forms**

As a part of the application, applicants must complete and submit the following, 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 (EED) Budget Worksheet Sections A & B;
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL);
- General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements - Section 427; and

- Grants.gov Lobbying form (formerly ED 80-0013 form).

Electronic copies and instructions for the required forms can be found in the Grants.gov submission package.

## **B. ED Abstract Narrative**

Eligible applicants must submit a one-page abstract. The one-page abstract, limited to 2000 characters, should be attached to the ED Abstract Narrative Form, and should include the following items:

- The name and eligibility classification of each applicant;
- Provide a list of the names of all participating LEAs, State agencies (including the Bureau of Indian Education if it is an applicant), or nonprofit or for-profit organizations or entities in the application; and
- Indicate if the application is from a single eligible applicant or a partnership and identify the applicant's eligibility classification (e.g., an LEA).
- Describe the reach of the proposed project by indicating the total number of schools, teachers, principals, etc., and students directly impacted by the project in the participating LEA(s);
- A summary statement of the project objectives and activities; and
- An identification of the Competitive Preference Priorities for which the applicant is applying.

## **C. Project Narrative**

The Project Narrative should describe the project that an applicant would carry out as well as other required elements if its application is funded. It also should include the eligible applicant's response to the Selection Criteria (provided in the last portion of this Section IV.B) since the application will be evaluated and scored against these criteria. The NIA identifies the maximum possible score for each criterion. The Project Narrative should, as a general matter, follow the order of the Selection Criteria. It should contain clear headings to help the Department staff and peer reviewers match the narrative with the Selection Criteria.

Finally, the Project Narrative also may include the eligible applicant's response, if any, to one or both of the Competitive Preference Priorities.

It is also important that applicants here clearly address (a) Absolute Priority 1 and Absolute Priority 2, (b) the statutory application requirements, and (c) either or both of the Competitive Preference Priorities for which they wish to apply. The budgetary information associated with the match – and any other non-Federal resources offered to support the project -- should be included in the Budget of Non-Federal funds (EED Budget Worksheet-Section B) and the Budget

Narrative. Other relevant information about the match may be included in the Project Narrative. Depending on the priority, an applicant may be able to address a priority fully within the context of its selection criteria discussion. In other cases, an applicant may wish to address a priority outside of the selection criteria discussion.

The Project Narrative should be attached as a **single** document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form in accordance with the instructions found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). It should be organized in the following manner in order to expedite the review process. First, a Table of Contents should be included which shows how your Project Narrative is organized and where important sections of your proposal are located. The Table of Contents should not exceed **one** double spaced page.

**Eligible applicants are strongly encouraged, but not required, to limit the project narrative to 40 pages.** The Table of Contents does not count toward this desired limit.

The also encourage applicants to adhere to the following guidelines when constructing the Project Narrative:

- A “page” is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Calibri, Courier, or Arial.

Ensure that you only attach the U.S. Department of Education approved file types detailed in the Common Instructions. Also, do not upload any password-protected files to your application. When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.

**NOTE:** The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the Budget Narrative justification; the assurances and certifications; the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support. However, the recommended page limit does apply to the entire “Project Narrative” section except for the Table of Contents.

#### **D. Effective Educator Development (EED) Applicant Budget Worksheet**

In accordance with 34 CFR 75.232, Department of Education staff perform a cost analysis of each recommended project to ensure that costs relate to the activities and objectives of the project, are **reasonable, allowable and allocable**. The budget should only include costs that are allowable, reasonable and necessary for carrying out the objectives of the TSL project. Rules



about allowable costs are set out in 2 C.F.R. Part 200, *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance), in Subpart E—Cost Principles. During the Department’s budget review that occurs as a part of the grant selection process, we may delete or reduce costs from the budget that are not reasonable, necessary, and allocable to the program, or are otherwise unallowable.

You will use the **EED Applicant Budget Worksheet** to provide a line-item summary of the requested Federal funds, the amount and source of Non-Federal matching funds you commit to providing in your application, and a budget narrative that provides a description and justification for the funds to be used in your proposed TSL project. While the budget narrative should project costs of all partners and any other entities who will work on the project, only one combined budget representing the total of all costs of the proposed project should be provided. This budget should reflect a 3-year proposed project period. Specific instructions for how to compose the budget narrative are included later in this section.

The **EED Applicant Budget Worksheet** should be attached as a **single** document to the Budget Narrative Attachment Form in accordance with the instructions found on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Do not upload any password-protected files to your application. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.

Remember that you must provide all requested budget information for each year of the project (up to 36 months) and the total amount identified in Sections A and B of the **EED Applicant Budget Worksheet** Form. The annual budget period will be October 1 – September 30. For instance, the budget for year 1 should include the estimated costs for October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022, and so forth.

### **Budget Summary Guidelines (Budget Worksheet Sections A, B, and C)**

Applicants must provide a summary of requested federal funds for each line-item category included on the worksheet. Applicants should provide dollar amounts for all requested years of the desired grant award.

#### **Section A: Federal Funding Summary**

- Applicants should populate the Name of Institution/Organization: and use the dropdown to select the appropriate EED program (SEED, TSL, or TQP) at the top of the Section A tab.
- Costs associated with performance payments for educators should be reflected in the Performance Based Compensation line item, only.
- Indirect Cost Rates: The TSL program is a Supplement Not Supplant grant program and applicants must use a restricted indirect cost rate not to exceed 8 percent.

- Applicants who apply an incorrect indirect cost rate to their proposed budgets will be required to apply the correct indirect cost rate if their application is proposed for funding prior to the start of their project period.
- All applicants should review the Budget and Match/Cost Share FAQs for additional information on indirect cost rates.

**NOTE about Indirect Costs:**

The Department of Education (ED) reimburses grantees for its portion of indirect costs that a grantee incurs on projects funded by the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (CFDA 84.374A). The applicant should include any proposed indirect costs in its proposed TSL-supported budget and budget narrative. In order to charge indirect costs to this program, a grantee must have a currently approved Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) agreement with a restricted rate.

If an applicant does not have a current indirect cost rate agreement, it does not need to submit any documentation regarding indirect costs with its application. These proposed indirect costs should be calculated using a temporary rate of ten percent and that rate should be applied to all direct salaries and wages. However, the applicant must expeditiously take steps to obtain an indirect cost rate agreement after the grant award is made. The rules allow for a temporary ICR of 10% of budgeted salaries and wages and require the grantee to submit an ICR proposal within 90 days after issuance of the grant award notification (see 34 CFR § 75.560(c)).

For additional information about obtaining an approved indirect cost rate or applying for an indirect cost rate, contact the Department's Office of the Chief Financial Officer at (202) 245-8035.

The ICR must be negotiated with and approved by the grantee's cognizant agency, i.e., either (1) the federal agency from which it has received the most direct funding, subject to indirect cost support; (2) the federal agency specifically assigned cognizance by the Office of Management and Budget; or (3) the State agency that provides the most subgrant funds to the grantee (if no direct federal awards are received).

**NOTE:** Applicants should pay special attention to specific questions on the application budget form (ED 524) about their cognizant agency and the ICR being used in the budget. Applicants should be aware that ED is very often not the cognizant agency for its grantees. Rather, ED accepts the currently approved ICR established by the appropriate cognizant agency. Applicants are encouraged to have an accountant calculate a proposed ICR using current information in the audited financial statements, actual cost data or the Internal Revenue Service Form 990. Applicants should use this proposed rate in the application materials and indicate the documentation used to calculate the rate. Guidance related to calculating an ICR can be found on ED's website at:

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgindex.html>.

If the requested budget does not include these estimated indirect costs, they will not be included in the budget approved by the Department that forms the basis of the grant award. This means that, after award, a grantee would only have funds with which to charge indirect costs to the grant if the approved direct costs of the grantee's project for any budget period exceed the grantee's actual direct costs. Where this occurs, the grantee may submit a requested budget revision to the Department program office to use the excess funds budgeted for direct costs to cover its indirect costs.

## Section B: Non-Federal Funding Summary

Applicants must provide a summary of secured nonfederal funds for each line-item category included on the worksheet. Reporting dollar amounts on this tab confirm that the applicant has already properly secured these funds and the funds will be available for use immediately if the applicant is successful in receiving a new EED award. No additional documentation will be needed at the time of application to confirm cost share and matching funds requirements have been met. Applicants must provide nonfederal dollar amounts appropriate for the desired grant program for all requested years of the desired grant program.

## Section C: Sources of Non-Federal Funding

Section 2212(f) of the ESEA provides that each eligible entity that receives a TSL grant must provide, from non-Federal sources, an amount equal to 50 percent of the amount of the TSL grant, which may be provided in cash or in kind, to carry out the activities supported by the grant. Applicants must itemize nonfederal cost share and match funds according to the appropriate funding source. These nonfederal funds will be used to meet the required match/cost share requirement for the proposed project award. Applicants must provide dollar amounts for all requested years of the proposed project. All funds described in Section B must also be included in Section C. Remember, including dollar amounts on this tab confirm that the applicant has already properly secured these funds and the funds will be available for use immediately if the applicant is successful.

## **Budget Breakdown and Narrative (Budget Worksheet Sections D and E)**

### Section D: Itemized Budget Breakdown

Applicants must provide budget narrative information to justify all proposed project costs. Applicants must justify the need for each expense and explain how each cost is necessary to the implementation of the proposed project. All funds included in Sections A and B should be itemized in Section D. Following are specific instructions for completing each budget category under Section D.

**Personnel:** For each project year, include the following information related to Personnel expenses in the table under this section.

- Provide the title of each position to be compensated under this project.
- Provide the base salary for each position listed.
- Provide the number of FTEs at each key position to be compensated under this project.
- Provide the dollar amount of the portion of the base salary to be compensated under this project.
- Do not include fees and expenses for consultants in the personnel category. These costs should be included under the Contractual category.

**Fringe:** For each project year, include the following information on proposed costs related to Fringe Benefits in the table under this section.

- Provide the title of each position listed in the Personnel category for which Fringe Benefits will be applied.
- Provide the Fringe Rate for each position listed.
- Provide the dollar amount of the Fringe Benefits to be provided for each position listed. If multiple staff are to be provided fringe benefits under a position title, include the total amount across all staff.
- Do not include fringe benefits for salaries and wages that are treated as part of the indirect cost.

**Travel:** For each project year, include the following information on proposed travel expenditures in the table under this section.

- Provide the high-level travel category for each type of trip you are proposing to be funded under this grant project (i.e. conferences, regional meetings, etc.).
- In the Frequency column indicate the number of instances travel will occur within each category across the full project period.
- For each project year, provide the total amount to be expended under each travel category.
- **\*\*Required Meeting:** Applicants must budget for attendance at the Annual Effective Educator Development (EED) Grantee Summit. There are no registration fees for this 2.5 day meeting. For planning purposes, applicants should include funds for Round-trip airfare for three participants to a major U.S. city, lodging expenses for three participants for up to four nights in a major U.S. city, Per diem expenses for three participants for up to four days in a major U.S. city., and funds for local ground transportation.
- **\*\*Optional Meeting:** Applicants may budget for attendance at an optional annual regional grantee meeting. There are no registration fees for this 1.5 day meeting. For planning purposes, applicants should include funds for Round-trip airfare for three participants to a major U.S. city, lodging expenses for two participants for up to three

nights in a major U.S. city, Per diem expenses for two participants for up to three days in a major U.S. city., and funds for local ground transportation.

**Equipment:** Equipment is defined as tangible, non-expendable personal property that has a usefulness greater than one year and acquisition costs that are the lesser of the capitalization level established by the applicant entity for financial statement purposes or \$5,000 per article. Lower limits may be established to maintain consistency with the applicant's policy. For each project year, include the following information on proposed equipment expenditures in the table under this section.

- Provide a brief description of each equipment purchase proposed to be funded under the grant project.
- For each project year, indicate the quantity of units to be purchased, and the unit cost.
- The total equipment item cost for each project year will auto-calculate based on the figures provided.

**Supplies:** Supplies are defined as tangible, expendable personal property. Direct supplies and materials differ from equipment in that they are consumable, expendable, and of a relatively low unit cost. Supplies purchased with grant funds should directly benefit the grant project and be necessary for achieving the goals of the project. Individual pieces of equipment that are under \$5,000 per unit are generally considered supplies. However, as noted in the example under Equipment, an applicant's organization may have a different equipment policy. For each project year, include the following information on proposed supply expenditures in the table under this section.

- Provide a brief description of each supply purchase proposed to be funded under the grant project.
- For each project year, indicate the total cost proposed to be expended for each supply category.
- The total supply item cost for each project year will auto-calculate based on the figures provided.

**Contractual:** The contractual category should include all costs specifically incurred with actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established internal procurement system. These actions include consultant fees, expenses, and travel costs in this category if the consultant's services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract.

In August 2013, the Department issued §75.135 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) (34 CFR 75.135). This regulation permits applicants for TSL and other Department competitive grants, under certain conditions, to identify in their project applications those entities with which they would contract for data collection, data analysis,

evaluation services, or essential services, where these activities are required by the program – without the need to follow otherwise applicable Federal procurement requirements. If applicant proposes to select a contractor before receiving a TSL award, please see 34 CFR 75.135(a) - (c) (section 75.135(a) - (c) of EDGAR) on how the requirements for competitive procurements that normally apply may be avoided by naming the contractors in the application.

For each project year, include the following information on contractual expenditures in the table under this section.

- Provide a brief description of each product to be acquired or professional service to be provided by a vendor under the grant project.
- For each project year, indicate the cost for each product or service listed.
- The cost for each project year will auto-calculate based on the figures provided.

**Performance-Based Compensations:** For each project year, include the following information related to Performance-Based Compensation expenses in the table under this section.

- When indicating costs associated with performance compensation, indicate the type of performance compensation to be provided (i.e. principal performance bonuses, teacher performance bonuses, recruitment bonuses, etc.).
- Itemize costs associated with Fringe Benefits for performance-based compensation, if applicable.
- For “Quantity” provide, for each project year, the number of educators expected to receive the incentive.
- For “Amount” indicate the total proposed cost associated with the performance incentive (amount per person times the number of individuals expected to receive the incentive).
- When budgeting Performance-Based Compensation costs remember these costs **must be budgeted in the year that these expenses are earned**. While we realize that in many cases the actual payment of these funds will not occur until the next budget period (i.e., incentives for Year 1 are not paid until Year 2), the budget form requires applicants to list expenses using a 3-year budget period. As such, applicants must include **performance-based compensation costs in the year that the award will be earned**. For instance, if an applicant anticipates using the TSL grant to make performance-based awards to educators for their performance in Year 1 with the TSL grant, the applicant should include those expenses in Year 1 budget. Likewise, if an applicant anticipates using the TSL grant to make performance-based awards to educators for their performance in Year 3 of the grant, the applicant should include those expenses in the Year 3 TSL budget.

**Other:** In the “Other” category, indicate all direct costs not covered in the Personnel, Fringe, Travel, Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, and Performance-Based Compensation categories. For example, include costs such as space rental, required fees, honoraria and travel (where a contract is not

in place for services), training, and communication and printing costs. Do not include costs that are included in the indirect cost rate. For each project year, include the following information for other expenses in the table under this section.

- List and identify items by major type or category (e.g., communications, printing, postage, equipment rental, etc.).
- For each project year, indicate the total proposed cost associated with the other expense.

### Section E: Narrative Justification

In this section, applicants must provide written justification to support project cost for each budget line item. Project costs must be linked to the proposed project objectives. Applicants must explain why each cost is necessary for implementation of the proposed project and describe the basis for cost estimates or computations. The budget narrative must include a breakdown of all non-Federal contributions budgeted in Section C of the EED Applicant Budget Worksheet, that will be used to support the project. The Department of Education requires each grantee to comply with statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to the program and to the content of its approved application. Therefore, if an application is approved, the grantee is responsible for fulfilling the TSL match requirement, and the commitment of non-TSL funds or in-kind resources set forth in Section B of ED Form 524 (or other portion) of its application.

Additionally, the budget narrative must provide **sufficient detail** to justify the use of **TSL and non-Federal matching funds**. It should:

- o Provide the **basis for estimating the costs** of personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs and any other projected expenditures;
- o Clarify the **relationship** between the requested funds and project activities and outcomes;
- o Describe the total **amount that will be expended** as shown in the EED Applicant Budget Worksheet; and
- o Enable reviewers and project staff to understand how the requested funds will be used.
- o As noted previously, Performance-Based Compensation costs **must be budgeted in the year that these expenses are earned** even if the actual payment of these funds will not occur until the next budget period.

### E. Other Attachments Form

Required items such as the logic model for the project, letter or other documentation showing the applicant's ability and intent to meet the program's statutory matching funds requirement, and high-need school documentation should be included as appendices to the Other Attachments form. Other items such as resumes of key personnel, letters of support from

project partners, and additional artifacts that support the project should also be **attached as appendices to the Other Attachments Form**. For each appendix, applicants are asked to label each file with the Appendix name and upload the file to the Other Attachments Form. Please adhere to the following guidelines when uploading appendices into the Other Attachments form:

- Ensure that you only attach the U.S. Department of Education approved file types detailed in the Federal Register application notice (read-only, non-modifiable .pdf files). Also, do not upload any password-protected files to your application.
- Please note that Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission.
- When attaching files, applicants should limit the size of their file names. Lengthy file names could result in difficulties with opening and processing your application. We recommend your file names be less than 50 characters.
- Eligible applicants should attach all appendices to the Other Attachments Form. The Grants.gov system will allow applicants to attach as many as ten separate appendices in this section; however, applicants are encouraged to limit the number of appendix entries to a reasonable number for a reviewer to read. The entire application package should be no larger than 8MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.
- The following structure is recommended for uploading and labeling appendices:

**Appendix A: Logic Model**

**Appendix B: Resumes of Key Personnel**

**Appendix C: Letters of Support and MOUs from partners, if applicable**

**Appendix D: Match Intent and Ability Letter**

**Appendix E: High-Needs School Data**

**Appendix F: Other documents, if applicable**

**Appendix G: Optional TSL Applicant Checklist**

### Optional TSL Applicant Checklist

The TSL Program Office has developed an optional TSL Applicant Checklist to help prospective applicants ensure their application includes all required information, before it is submitted in Grants.gov. The checklist also serves the purpose of documenting and identifying where required information can be found in the application. Submitting the optional checklist will enable the Department to, more efficiently and accurately, determine whether grant applications meet all eligibility requirements. Further, use of the checklists will enable reviewers and Department staff to identify where in your application required information is located and prevent your application from being found ineligible for funding because this information cannot be located. Therefore, we strongly encourage, each potential applicant to complete and submit the optional



checklist.

## IV. Submitting the Application Using Grants.Gov.

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this guidance 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.

### **Browser Support:**

The latest versions of Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE), Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, and Apple Safari are supported for use with Grants.gov. However, these web browsers undergo frequent changes and updates, so we recommend you have the latest version when using Grants.gov. Legacy versions of these web browsers may be functional, but you may experience issues.

For additional information or updates, please see the Grants.gov Browser information in the Applicant FAQs: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#browser>.

### **ATTENTION - Workspace, Adobe Forms and PDF Files:**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>.

- 1) **Create a Workspace:** Creating a workspace allows you to complete the application online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- 2) **Complete a Workspace:** Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.
  - a. **Adobe Reader:** If you decide not to apply by filling out web forms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed

through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

- b. **Mandatory Fields in Forms:** In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.
- c. **Complete SF-424 Fields First:** The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant name, address, and DUNS Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.
- 3) **Submit a Workspace:** An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.
- 4) **Track a Workspace Submission:** After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>.

#### Helpful Reminders:

- 1) **REGISTER EARLY** – Grants.gov registration involves many steps including registration on SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://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 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.]

Primary information about SAM is available at [www.sam.gov](http://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 has prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>.

- 2) **SUBMIT EARLY – We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it only 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 11:59:59 p.m. Washington, D.C. 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. 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 11:59:59 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 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 11:59:59 p.m. Washington, DC 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/encountering-error-messages.html>. For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.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 email at: <mailto:support@grants.gov> or access the Grants.gov Self-Service Knowledge Base web portal at: <https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>.

If electronic submission is required, you must submit an electronic application before 11:59:59 p.m. Washington, DC Time, 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. 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. (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

## Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please visit <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html> for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov Applicant FAQs at: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html>. Additional information is available on Workspace at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#workspace>.

## Dial-Up Internet Connections

When using a dial up connection to upload and submit your application, it can take significantly longer than when you are connected to the Internet with a high-speed connection, e.g., cable modem/DSL/T1. While times will vary depending upon the size of your application, it can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection. **If you do not have access to a high-speed connection and electronic submission is required, you may want to consider following the instructions in the Federal Register notice to obtain an exception to the electronic submission requirement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.** (See the Federal Register notice for detailed instructions.)

## Attaching Files – Additional Tips

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

- When you submit your application electronically, you must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in either Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word. Although applicants have the option of uploading any narrative sections and all other attachments to their application in either PDF or Microsoft Word, we

**recommend** applicants submit all documents as read-only flattened PDFs, meaning any fillable PDF files must be saved and submitted as non-fillable PDF files and not as interactive or fillable PDF files, to better ensure applications are processed in a more timely, accurate, and efficient manner.

- 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.
- When attaching files, applicants should follow the guidelines established by Grants.gov on the size and content of file names. Uploaded file names must be fewer than 50 characters, and, in general, applicants should not use any special characters. However, Grants.gov does allow for the following UTF-8 characters when naming your attachments: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore, hyphen, space, period, parenthesis, curly braces, square brackets, ampersand, tilde, exclamation point, comma, semi colon, apostrophe, at sign, number sign, dollar sign, percent sign, plus sign, and equal sign. Applications submitted that do not comply with the Grants.gov guidelines will be rejected at Grants.gov and not forwarded to the Department.
- 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 with all attachments is less than 5 MB. Therefore, you may want to check the total size of your package before submission.

### Grants.gov System Maintenance

Please be reminded that the Grants.gov system will not be available for use during the times listed below.

Date	Scope	Details
April 17-19 , 2021	Server Maintenance	<p><b>Scheduled Maintenance Outage:</b>            Production System will go <b>Offline</b> Saturday April 17, 2021 at 12:01 AM ET.            Production System will go <b>Online</b> Monday April 19, 2021 at 6:00 AM ET.</p>

### D-U-N-S Number Instructions

All applicants must have a D-U-N-S number in order to apply for Federal funds.

**NOTE:** Check with your fiscal office to see if your institution has an assigned DUNS number before contacting Dun & Bradstreet to obtain a D-U-N-S number.

Please provide the applicant’s DUNS number. You can obtain your DUNS number at no charge by calling **1-800-333-0505** or by completing a D-U-N-S Number Request Form. The form can be obtained via the internet at the following URL:

[http://www.dnb.com/US/duns\\_update/index.html](http://www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/index.html).

The DUNS number is a unique nine-digit number that does not convey any information about the recipient. A built-in check digit helps assure the accuracy of the DUNS number. The ninth digit of each number is the check digit, which is mathematically related to the other digits. It lets computer systems determine if a DUNS number has been entered correctly. Dun & Bradstreet, a global information services provider, has assigned DUNS numbers to over 43 million companies worldwide. For live help Monday-Friday 9am-6pm (EST), dial 1-888-814-1435.

**NOTE:** Electronic submission via Grants.gov must use the DUNS number your organization used when it registered in the Central Contractor Registry.

### Application Tips

- I. **Register or maintain registration on SAM.gov.** 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 entered into the SAM database by an entity. 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. Once your SAM registration is active, you will need to allow 24 to 48 hours for the information to update in the system.
- II. **Register early on Grants.gov.** The registration process may take up to two weeks to complete. For additional information on the registration and submission process please review the resources available on the Grants.gov Website.
- III. **Verify that the person assigned to submit the application has been designated as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).** You must be “active” in order to submit an application on behalf of the organization.
- IV. **Carefully review the FY 2021 NIA for eligibility requirements.** Be sure to address both of the absolute priorities in your application.
- V. **Review the submission for clarity.** Applications will be read by multiple peer reviewers; therefore, it is important to ensure that the application can be understood by someone who is unfamiliar with your project.
- VI. **Submit early on Grants.gov.** Applications must be finished uploading, and be validated by the Grants.gov system, by **11:59:59 pm Washington, DC time on TBD**. Validation indicates if the submission was successful and may take up to two days. If the submitted application is deemed invalid due to an error, applicants may correct the error and resubmit only if the **11:59:59 p.m. Washington, D.C. time** deadline has not passed. Applicants are encouraged

to review the submission to be sure that the files transmitted correctly. Grants.gov may not catch all errors. Late submissions or modifications to the submitted application will not be accepted after the deadline.

VII. Each application will be reviewed under the competition for which it was submitted in the Grants.gov system, and only applications that are successfully submitted by the established closing date will be reviewed.

**NOTE:** Applicants will receive multiple emails to confirm submission in Grants.gov, validation, and transmission to the Department. Once the application is transmitted to the Department, applicants will receive a final email with a unique identifier called a PR Award Number. Use this number when making inquiries about the submitted application. Please review the email carefully to ensure that you submitted the application under the intended competition.

## V. Additional Information

### **Addressing Your Questions**

The Department provides multiple avenues for interested applicants to ask questions and clarify their understanding of the TSL competition and process. Applicants should keep in mind that the Department cannot provide guidance on specific proposals.

The Department will soon make available a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document on the TSL Web site, at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/effective-educator-development-programs/teacher-and-school-leader-incentive-program/>.

Applicants should look for this FAQ document, and review it carefully to see whether their particular question has been addressed. The Department also plans to update, as appropriate, this document in response to applicant questions. Interested applicants may send their questions to [TSL@ed.gov](mailto:TSL@ed.gov).

The Department has established the following address, [TSL@ed.gov](mailto:TSL@ed.gov), where potential applicants may ask questions about the TSL competition. In addition, the Department plans to host an informational session, live or online, designed to help interested applicants with the application process. We encourage interested applicants to participate in these sessions. Participation in the Webinars is voluntary. For those who are not able to attend, the training will be available via a link posted on the TSL Web site.

### **Transparency**

After awards are made under this competition, all the submitted applications, together with reviewer scores and comments for those applications, may be posted on the Department's web site.

## **Executive Order 12372 - Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs**

This program is subject to the requirement of the Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. The objective of the Executive Order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and to strengthen federalism by relying on State and local processes for State and local government coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance. Applicants must contact the appropriate State Single Point of Contact to find out about, and to comply with, the State's process under Executive Order 12372.

You may locate the name and contact information of State Single Point of Contact at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SPOC-February-2019.pdf>

## **Paperwork Burden Statement**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 18xx-xxxx. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 87 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 under 20 U.S.C. 6631-6633. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this individual collection, or if you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form, application or survey, please contact the TSL Program Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, 3C140, Washington, DC 20202-5900 or at [TSL@ed.gov](mailto:TSL@ed.gov) directly.