

**U.S. Department of Education  
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION  
Washington, DC 20202**

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

**FY 20XX APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE  
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM**

**CFDA NUMBER: 84.066A**

FORM APPROVED

OMB No. 1840-0820, Expiration Date: xx/xx/xxxx



**DATED MATERIAL – OPEN IMMEDIATELY  
CLOSING DATE: TBD**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dear Applicant Letter.....	4
Competition Highlights.....	5
Overview.....	8
Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants.....	10
Application Transmittal Instructions.....	14
Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards.....	16
Authorizing Legislation.....	44
Educational Opportunity Centers Program Regulations.....	56
Annual Low-Income Levels.....	76
Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.....	77
Supplemental Information.....	78
Educational Opportunity Centers Program Profile Form.....	83
Educational Opportunity Centers Program Assurances.....	86
Prior Experience.....	88
<b>INSTRUCTIONS</b>	
Instructions for Completing the Application Package.....	91
Instructions for Project Narrative.....	93
Competitive Preference Priorities.....	97
Performance Indicators.....	98
Instructions for Budget Summary Form & Itemized Budget.....	100
Instructions for Standard Forms.....	104

Application Checklist.....105  
Paperwork Burden Statement.....106



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION**

Dear Applicant,

We are pleased to provide the application package for the fiscal year (FY) 20XX Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program grant competition, which contains the information and instructions needed to submit a complete application to the U.S. Department of Education (Department) through Grants.gov.

The EOC Program provides grants to institutions of higher education to operate projects that provide opportunities for academic development, student assistance with basic college requirements, and motivation for students to successfully complete their postsecondary education. The goal of EOC is to help adults by providing guidance on how to enter, re-enter and navigate postsecondary institutions.

The FY 20XX competition contains TBD competitive preference priorities, which are described in the Notice Inviting Applications (Notice) and this application package. We sincerely hope applicants will consider addressing these competitive preference priorities.

Please review the entire application package carefully before preparing and submitting an application. Additional information on the EOC Program is accessible on the Department's website at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/trioeoc/index.html>.

Lastly, please do not rely upon any information that is inconsistent with the guidance contained within the *Federal Register* Notice.

Thank you for your interest in the EOC Program. We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Nasser Paydar  
Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education

## COMPETITION HIGHLIGHTS

1. **Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program applications for FY 20XX must be submitted electronically using Grants.gov.** You are urged to acquaint yourself with the requirements of Grants.gov early as the registration procedures may require 5 or more days to complete. A more thorough discussion is included later in this application package. Grants.gov is accessible through its portal page at: **<http://www.Grants.gov>**. The requirements for obtaining an exception to the electronic submission requirement are included in the Notice for FY 20XX. If you think you may need an exception, you are urged to review the requirements promptly.

**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 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.**

2. Grants.gov does not allow applicants to “un-submit” applications. Therefore, if you discover that changes or additions are needed once your application has been accepted and validated by the Department, you must “re-submit” the application. You should know that if the Department receives duplicate applications, we will accept and process the application with the latest “date/time received” validation.
3. Please note that you must submit your application by 11:59:59 p.m. (Eastern Time) on or before the application deadline date. Late applications will not be accepted. **We suggest that you submit your application several days before the deadline.** The Department is required to enforce the established deadline to ensure fairness to all applicants. No changes or additions to an application will be accepted after the deadline date and time.
4. Electronic submission of applications is required; therefore, you must submit an electronic application unless you follow the procedures outlined in the Notice for FY 20XX and qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement.
5. We recommend that you limit the application narrative, which includes the budget narrative, to the equivalent of no more than 60 pages.
6. **All attachments must be in Portable Document Format (PDF) or Microsoft Word. Other types of files will not be accepted.** We highly recommend that all attachments are in PDF format. You must provide the DUNS number that was used when your organization registered with the System for Award Management (SAM).

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

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

Also, refer to the “U.S. Department of Education Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants” section found in this application booklet.

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

7. In the FY 20XX competition, the EOC program has TBD competitive preference priorities. They are:

TBD

We recommend that any application addressing the competitive preference priorities include no more than three additional pages for each priority addressed. Responses to the competitive preference priorities should be uploaded to the Other Attachment Form.

8. As you develop your application, we ask you to carefully consider the specific content that you will provide in the Objectives section of the application. This part of the application should address the appropriate standardized objectives related to attainment of secondary school diploma, completion of financial aid application, completion of admission application and postsecondary enrollment as stated on the EOC Program Profile Sheet.
9. In the Project Narrative, you must address each of the appropriate objectives, and explain how the objective is ambitious and attainable. Applicants should use comparative data to show why the proposed percentages are ambitious based on information provided in the Need section of the Project Narrative and attainable based on the information provided in the Plan of Operation and the resources available to the project. **Applicants may not modify, amend or delete any of these objectives.**
10. Consistent with the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), applicants may submit multiple EOC Program applications to serve different target areas.
11. All applicants must complete the EOC Program Profile Form. The EOC Program Profile Form contains four standardized objectives. All applicants are required to propose the percentage or number—as indicated on the form—at which each of these objectives will be met. Applicants may not modify, amend or delete any of these objectives. Instructions for submitting the form are included in the Instructions for Completing the Application Package.

12. All applicants must provide a one-page abstract. Complete instructions for submitting the abstract are included in the Instructions for Completing the Application Package in this application. The abstract must be uploaded into the ED Abstract Form in Grants.gov.

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

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

## **OVERVIEW**

### **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM**

#### **Authorization**

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

#### **Program Regulations**

34 CFR part 644 Educational Opportunity Centers Program

#### **What is the Educational Opportunity Centers Program?**

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

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

#### **Who is eligible to receive a grant?**

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

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

#### **What activities and services does a project provide?**

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

- (1) Public information campaigns designed to inform the community regarding opportunities for postsecondary education and training;
- (2) Academic advice and assistance in course selection;
- (3) Assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications;
- (4) Assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations;
- (5) Education or counseling services designed to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students;



- (6) Guidance on secondary school reentry or entry to a general educational development (GED) program or other alternative education programs for secondary school dropouts; (7) Individualized personal, career, and academic counseling;
- (8) Tutorial services;
- (9) Career workshops and counseling;
- (10) Mentoring programs involving elementary or secondary school teachers, faculty members at institutions of higher education, students, or any combination of such persons; and
- (11) Programs and activities as described in paragraphs (1) through (10) that are specially designed for students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths, students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students.

## IMPORTANT – PLEASE READ FIRST

### U.S. Department of Education

### *Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants*

To facilitate your use of Grants.gov, this document includes important submission procedures you need to be aware of to ensure your application is received in a timely manner and accepted by the Department of Education.

#### **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. Grants.gov no longer provides support for Microsoft Internet Explorer 9 or below.

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 it 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's name, address, and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) 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 usually takes approximately 7 to 10 business days, but can take longer depending on 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>. Please note that your organization will need to update its SAM registration annually.

To register in SAM.gov, click on the “Get Started” link under the “Register Your Entity...” heading in SAM.gov. Grantees, and other entities wanting to do business with the U.S. Department of Education (e.g., entities applying for a grant), that are not already registered in SAM.gov must complete the “Register Entity” registration option and NOT the “Get a Unique Entity ID” option. The “Get a Unique Entity ID” option, which is not a full registration, is only available to entities for reporting purposes. Failing to complete the “Register Entity” option may result in loss of funding, loss of applicant eligibility, and/or delays in receiving a grant award. Information about SAM is available at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). To further assist you with registering in SAM or updating your existing SAM registration, see the [Quick Start Guide for Grant Registrations](#) and the Entity Registration Video at <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

- 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 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the deadline date.

You must provide the UEI on your application that was used when you registered as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) on Grants.gov. This UEI is assigned to your organization in SAM at the time your organization registers in SAM. If you do not enter the UEI assigned by SAM on your application, 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. Eastern 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 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern 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>.

We discourage paper applications, but if electronic submission is not possible (e.g., you do not have access to the internet), (1) you must provide a prior written notification that you intend to submit a paper application and (2) your paper application must be postmarked by the application deadline date. If you submit your prior written notification by email, it must be received by the Department no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date. If you mail your notification to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than 14 calendar days before the application deadline date. (See the [2022 Common Instructions](#) for detailed instructions regarding this procedure.)

### **Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov**

Please go to <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 found at this Grants.gov link: <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html> as well as additional information on Workspace at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-faqs.html#workspace>.

### **Slow Internet Connections**

When using a slow internet connection, such as 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. Failure to fully upload an application by the deadline date and time will result in your application being marked late in the G5 system. **If you do not have access to a high-speed internet connection, 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 14 calendar days before the application deadline date.** (See the *Federal Register* notice for detailed instructions and the [2022 Common 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.

## **APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Application Submission Instructions: Applicants are required to follow the Common Instructions for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs (Common Instructions), published in the *Federal Register* on December 7, 2022 (87 FR 75045). The Common Instructions contain requirements and information on how to submit an application. These instructions may be found at: [www.federalregister.gov/d/2022-26554](http://www.federalregister.gov/d/2022-26554).

**It is important to note that the Department of Education requires the electronic submission of applications and only allows paper submission by mail if electronic submission is not possible (e.g., you do not have access to the internet). Applicants requesting and qualifying for an exception to the electronic submission requirement must follow the guidance provided in the Common Instructions.**

If you want to apply for a grant and be considered for funding, you must meet the following deadline requirements:

### **Electronic Submission of Applications:**

**You must submit your grant application through the Internet using the software provided on the Grants.gov Web site ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)) by 11:59:59 p.m., Eastern 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 Grants.gov information found in this application package and visit [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

### **Submission of Paper Applications by Mail:**

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

**U.S. Department of Education  
OFO/G5 Functional Application Team  
Mail Stop 5C231  
Attention: ALN 84.066A  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4260**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Note for Mailing of Paper Applications:**

If you mail 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.

**NOTICE INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR NEW AWARDS**

**Note: The U.S. Department of Education is not holding an Educational Opportunity Centers grant competition in FY 2024. Therefore, the most recent Notice Inviting Applications for this program (FY 2021) has been included.**

4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION Applications for New Awards;

Educational Opportunity Centers

Program AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary

Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice. SUMMARY: The Department of Education (Department) is issuing a notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2021 for the Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program, Assistance Listing Number 84.066A. This notice relates to the approved information collection under OMB control number 18400820.

**DATES:**

Applications Available: January 13, 2021.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: March 1, 2021.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: April 28, 2021.

ADDRESSES: For the addresses for obtaining and



submitting an application, please refer to our 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 [www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf](http://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR2019-02-13/pdf/2019-02206.pdf).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rachael Wiley Ed.D, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, room 271-24, Washington, DC 20202-4260. Telephone: (202) 453-6078. Email: [Rachael.Wiley@ed.gov](mailto:Rachael.Wiley@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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

[Full Text of Announcement](#)

I. Funding Opportunity Description

[Purpose of Program](#): The purposes of the EOC Program are to: provide information regarding financial and academic assistance available for qualified individuals who want to enter or continue to pursue a program of postsecondary education; provide assistance to those

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individuals in applying for admission to institutions that offer programs of postsecondary education, including assistance in preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers; and improve the financial and economic literacy of program participants. Priorities: This notice contains three competitive preference priorities. Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2 are from the Secretary's Notice of Final Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on March 2, 2018 (83 FR 9096) (Supplemental Priorities). Competitive Preference Priority 3 is from the Secretary's Notice of Administrative Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on March 9, 2020 (85 FR 13640) (Administrative Priorities). Note: Applicants must include, in the one-page abstract submitted with the application, a statement indicating which, if any, of the competitive preference priorities are addressed. If the applicant has addressed the competitive preference priorities, this information must also be listed on the ~~EOC Program Profile Form~~. Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2021 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 an application up to two additional points for each priority, for a total of up to six additional points, depending on how well the application meets each of these priorities.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Ensuring that Service Members, Veterans, and Their Families Have Access to High Quality Educational Options (up to 2 points).

Projects that are designed to address the academic needs of military- or veteran-connected students (as defined in this notice).

Competitive Priority 2: Fostering Flexible and Affordable Paths to Obtaining Knowledge and Skills (up to 2 points).

Projects that are designed to create or expand opportunities for individuals to obtain recognized postsecondary credentials through the demonstration of prior knowledge and skills, such as competency-based learning. Such credentials may include an industry-

recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree.

Competitive Priority 3: Applications that Demonstrate a Rationale (up to 2 points).

Under this priority, an applicant proposes a project that demonstrates a rationale (as defined in 34 CFR 77.1). Definitions: The definitions below are from 34 CFR 77.1 and the Supplemental Priorities.

Demonstrates a rationale means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active “ingredients” that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes. Note: In developing logic models, applicants may want to use

resources such as the Regional Educational Laboratory Program's (REL Pacific) Education Logic Model Application, available at <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/elm.asp>, to help design their logic models. Other sources include:  
[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL\\_2014025.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014025.pdf),  
[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL\\_2014007.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/pacific/pdf/REL_2014007.pdf), and  
[https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL\\_2015057.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northeast/pdf/REL_2015057.pdf).

Military- or veteran-connected student means a student who is a member of the uniformed services, a veteran of the uniformed services, or the spouse of a service member or veteran. Note: For the purpose of ~~this~~ definition, "student" may include a prospective student.

Project component means an activity, strategy, intervention, process, product, practice, or policy included in a project. Evidence may pertain to an individual project component or to a combination of project components (e.g., training teachers on

instructional practices for English learners and follow-on coaching for these teachers).

Relevant outcome means the student outcome(s) or other outcome(s) the key project component is designed to improve, consistent with the specific goals of the program. ~~Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070a-11 and 20 U.S.C. 1070a-16.~~ Note: Projects must be awarded and operated in a manner consistent with the nondiscrimination requirements contained in the U.S. Constitution and the Federal civil rights laws.

Application Requirements: For FY 2021 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, applicants must meet the following application requirements from 34 CFR 644.11.

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

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

(b) The project will collaborate with other Federal TRIO projects, GEAR UP projects, or programs serving

similar populations that are serving the same target schools or target area in order to minimize the duplication of services and promote collaborations so that more students can be served;

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

(d) If the applicant is an institution of higher education, it will not use the project as a part of its recruitment program. Applicable Regulations: (a) ~~The Education Department General~~ Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 75 (except for §§ 75.215 through 75.221), 77, 79, 81, 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. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR

part 644. (e) The Supplemental Priorities. (f) The Administrative Priorities. Note: The regulations in 34 CFR 86 apply to institutions of higher education (IHES) only.

## II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$55,994,306.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition. Estimated Range of Awards: ~~\$232,050 - \$1,280,000.~~

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$273,793. Maximum

Award: The maximum award varies based on whether the applicant is currently receiving an EOC Program grant, as well as the number of participants served. •

For an applicant that is not currently receiving an EOC Program grant, the maximum award amount is \$232,050.

Applicants must have a per-participant cost of no more than \$273 and propose to serve a minimum of 850 participants. • For an applicant that is

currently receiving an EOC

Program grant-- 1. The applicant may request a maximum award amount that is an amount equal to 100



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percent of the applicant's base award amount for FY 2020 to serve a minimum number of participants equal to the applicant's approved FY 2020 participant number; or

2. If the applicant proposes to reduce the number of participants to be served below the amount served in FY 2020, the proposed number of participants must be at least 850 and the per-participant cost must not exceed the applicant's cost per participant for FY 2020 or \$273, whichever is greater. For example, if an applicant's per participant cost for FY 2020 is \$344 and the applicant is proposing to serve 850 participants under the FY 2021 competition, the applicant would be eligible to request a \$292,400 grant ( $\$344 \times 850 = \$292,400$ ). Note: Applicants currently receiving an EOC Program grant in FY 2020 are strongly encouraged to continue to serve the same number of participants under the proposed project. Estimated Number of Awards: 140. Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice. Project Period: Up to 60 months.

### III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: IHEs; public and private agencies and organizations, including community-based organizations with experience in serving disadvantaged

youth; secondary schools; and combinations of such institutions, agencies, and organizations. Note: If you are a nonprofit organization, under 34 CFR 75.51, you may demonstrate your nonprofit status by providing: (1) proof that the Internal Revenue Service currently recognizes the applicant as an organization to which contributions are tax deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;

(2) a statement from a State taxing body or the State attorney general certifying that the organization is a nonprofit organization operating within the State and that no part of its net earnings may lawfully benefit any private shareholder or individual; (3) a certified copy of the applicant's certificate of incorporation or similar document if it clearly establishes the nonprofit status of the applicant; or (4) any item described above if that item applies to a State or national parent organization, together with a statement by the State or parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate.

2. a. ~~Cost Sharing or Matching:~~ This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

b. ~~Indirect Cost Rate Information:~~ This program uses a training indirect cost rate. This limits indirect cost reimbursement to an entity's actual indirect costs, as determined in its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or eight percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For more information regarding training indirect cost rates, see 34 CFR 75.562. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see

[www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html).

c. ~~Administrative Cost Limitation:~~ This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

3. ~~Subgrantees:~~ A grantee under this competition may not award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

4. Other: ~~An~~ applicant may submit more than one application for an EOC Program grant so long as each application describes a project that serves a different

target area (34 CFR 644.10(a)). The term "target area" is defined as a geographic area served by a project (34 CFR 644.7(b)). IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Application Submission Instructions:

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 [www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/201902206.pdf](http://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2019-02-13/pdf/201902206.pdf), which contain requirements and information on how to submit an application.

2. 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.

3. Funding Restrictions: We specify unallowable costs in

34 CFR 644.31. We reference additional regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

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

4. Recommended Page Limit: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative, which includes the budget narrative, to no more than 60 pages and (2) 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.

- 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, and no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative

budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the onepage abstract. However, the recommended page limit does apply to all of the application narrative.

We recommend that any application addressing the competitive preference priorities include no more than three additional pages for each priority addressed.

V. Application Review Information

1. ~~Selection Criteria:~~ The selection criteria for this competition are from 34 CFR 644.21. We will award up to 100 points to an application under the selection criteria and up to 6 additional points to an application under the competitive preference priorities, for a total score of up to 106 points. The maximum number of points available for each criterion is indicated in parentheses.

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

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

- (2) A high number or percentage, or both, of individuals residing in the target area with education completion levels below the baccalaureate level;
- (3) A high need on the part of residents of the target area for further education and training from programs of postsecondary education in order to meet changing employment trends; and
- (4) Other indicators of need for an EOC project, including the presence of unaddressed educational or socio-economic problems of adult residents in the target area.

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

- (1) Secondary school diploma or equivalent (2 points).
- (2) Postsecondary enrollment (3 points).
- (3) Financial aid applications (1.5 points).

(4) College admission applications (1.5 points).

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

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

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

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

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

(5) The management plan to ensure the proper and efficient administration of the project including, but not limited to, the project's organizational structure, the time committed to the project by the project



director and other personnel, and, where appropriate, its coordination with other projects for disadvantaged students (8 points).

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

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

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

points). ~~—(e) Quality of personnel~~ (9 points). (1)

The Secretary evaluates the quality of the personnel the applicant plans to use in the project on the basis of the following--

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

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

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

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

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

(1) Are appropriate to the project's objectives;  
(2) Provide for the applicant to determine, using specific and quantifiable measures, the success of the project in-- (i) Making progress toward achieving its objectives (a formative evaluation); and

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

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

~~2. Review and Selection Process:~~ We remind potential applicants that, 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 (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

For this competition, a panel of non-Federal reviewers will review each application in accordance with the selection criteria in 34 CFR 644.21. The individual scores of the reviewers will be added and the sum divided by the number of reviewers to determine the peer review score received in the review process. Additionally, in accordance with 34 CFR 644.22, the Secretary will award prior experience points to applicants that conducted an EOC Program project during budget periods 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20, based on their documented experience. Prior experience points, if any, will be added to the application's averaged reader score to determine the total score for each application.

If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, the Secretary will choose among the tied applications so as to serve

geographic areas and eligible populations that have been underserved by the EOC Program.

3. ~~Risk Assessment and Specific 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 specific 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.

4. ~~Integrity and Performance System:~~ If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2), we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you

that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through the System for Award Management. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

5. ~~In General:~~ In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department will review and consider applications for funding pursuant to this notice inviting applications in accordance with--

(a) Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR 200.205);

(b) Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115–232) (2 CFR 200.216);

(c) Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (2 CFR 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341);

(d) Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR 200.322); and

(e) Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR 200.340).

## 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. ~~Open Licensing Requirements:~~ Unless an exception applies, if you are awarded a grant under this competition, you will be required to openly license to

the public grant deliverables created in whole, or in part, with Department grant funds. When the deliverable consists of modifications to preexisting works, the license extends only to those modifications that can be separately identified and only to the extent that open licensing is permitted under the terms of any licenses or other legal restrictions on the use of pre-existing works. Additionally, a grantee or subgrantee that is awarded competitive grant funds must have a plan to disseminate these public grant deliverables. This dissemination plan can be developed and submitted after your application has been reviewed and selected for funding. For additional information on the open licensing requirements please refer to 2 CFR 3474.20.

4. ~~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/appforms.html](http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html).

5. Performance Measures: Under the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, the following measure will be used by the Department to evaluate the success of the EOC Program: participants' success in completing a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, completion of applications for student financial aid, submission of applications for postsecondary admission, and postsecondary enrollment. All EOC Program grantees will be required to submit annual performance reports.

6. 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. Other Information Accessible Format: On request ~~\_\_\_\_\_ to the program~~ contact person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT, individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format. The Department will provide the requestor with an accessible format that may include Rich Text Format (RTF) or text format (txt), a thumb drive, an MP3 file, braille, large print, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ audiotape, or compact disc, or other accessible format. Electronic Access to This Document: The

official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. You may access the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations at [www.govinfo.gov](http://www.govinfo.gov). 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 Portable Document Format (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](http://www.federalregister.gov). Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department. Dated:

\_\_\_\_\_/s/  
Christopher J. McCaghren,  
*Acting Assistant Secretary for  
Postsecondary Education.*

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**AUTHORIZING LEGISLATION**

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

## **CHAPTER I-FEDERAL TRIO PROGRAMS**

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

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

(b) RECIPIENTS, DURATION, AND SIZE.-

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

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

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

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

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

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

(c) PROCEDURES FOR AWARDING GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.-

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

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(8) REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION BY THE SECRETARY.-

(A) GUIDANCE.-Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, the Secretary shall issue non-regulatory guidance regarding the rights and responsibilities of applicants with respect to the application and evaluation process for programs and projects assisted under this chapter,

including applicant access to peer review comments. The guidance shall describe the procedures for the submission, processing, and scoring of applications for grants under this chapter, including-

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

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

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

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

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

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

(C) REVIEW.-

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

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

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

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

Department, the application of the applicant shall be reconsidered in the peer review process for the applicable grant competition.

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

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

(iv) ERROR IN PEER REVIEW PROCESS.-

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

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

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

- (aa) did not review the application in the original peer review;
- (bb) is a member of the cohort of peer reviewers for the grant program that is the subject of such secondary review; and
- (cc) to extent practicable, has conducted peer reviews in not less than two previous competitions for the grant program that is the subject of such secondary review.

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

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



demonstrate that-- (aa) points were withheld for criteria not required in statute, regulation, or guidance governing the Federal TRIO programs or the application for a grant for such programs; or  
(bb) information pertaining to selection criteria was wrongly determined to be missing from the application.

(v) FINALITY.-

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

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

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

(d) OUTREACH.-

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

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

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

ensure that all areas of the United States with large concentrations of eligible participants are served.

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

(e) DOCUMENTATION OF STATUS AS A LOW INCOME INDIVIDUAL-

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

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

(B) verification from another governmental source;

(C) a signed financial aid application; or

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

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

(A) a signed statement from the individual;

(B) verification from another governmental source;

(C) a signed financial aid application; or

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

(3) Notwithstanding this subsection and subsection (h)(4), individuals who are foster care youth (including youth in foster care and youth who have left foster care after reaching age 13), or homeless children and youths' as defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, shall be eligible to participate in programs under sections 402B, 402C, 402D, and 402F.

(f) OUTCOME CRITERIA -

(1) USE FOR PRIOR EXPERIENCE DETERMINATION- For competitions for grants under this chapter that begin on or after January 1, 2009, the Secretary shall determine an eligible entity's prior experience of high quality service delivery, as

required under subsection (c)(2), based on the outcome criteria described in paragraphs (2) and (3).

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

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

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

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

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

(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.-For the purpose of making grants and contracts under this chapter, there are authorized to be appropriated \$900,000,000 for fiscal year 2009 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the five succeeding fiscal years. Of the amount appropriated under this chapter, the Secretary may use no more than 1/2 of 1 percent of such amount to obtain additional qualified readers and additional staff to review applications, to increase the level of oversight monitoring, to support impact studies, program assessments and reviews, and to provide technical assistance to potential applicants and current grantees. In expending these funds, the Secretary shall give priority to the additional administrative requirements provided in the Higher Education Amendments of 1992, to outreach activities, and to obtaining additional readers.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(A) Personal and family budget planning;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (2) To provide assistance to such persons in applying for admission to institutions at which a program of postsecondary education is offered, including preparing necessary applications for use by admissions and financial aid officers.
- (3) to foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths (as such term is defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a)), students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students; and
- (4) to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students, including-
  - (A) basic personal income, household money management, and financial planning skills; and
  - (B) basic economic decision-making skills.
- (b) PERMISSIBLE SERVICES.- An Educational Opportunity Center assisted under this section may provide services such as--
  - (1) public information campaigns designed to inform the community regarding opportunities for postsecondary education and training;
  - (2) assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications, including the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483(a);
  - (3) assistance in completing college admission and financial aid applications;
  - (4) assistance in preparing for college entrance examinations;
  - (5) education or counseling services designed to improve the financial literacy and economic literacy of students;
  - (6) guidance on secondary school reentry or entry to a general educational development (GED) program or other alternative education programs for secondary school dropouts;
  - (7) individualized personal, career, and academic counseling;
  - (8) tutorial services;

- (9) career workshops and counseling;
- (10) mentoring programs involving elementary or secondary school teachers, faculty members at institutions of higher education, students, or any combination of such persons;
- (11) programs and activities described in paragraphs (1) through (10) that are specially designed for students who are limited English proficient, students from groups that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, students who are individuals with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youth (as such term is defined in section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a)), students who are foster care youth, or other disconnected participants.

(c) SPECIAL RULE.-

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

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

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

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

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## EOC PROGRAM REGULATIONS

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Title 34: Education

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

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PART 644—EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS

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---- Section Contents

Subpart A—General

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

Subpart B—How Does One Apply for an Award?

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

Subpart C—How Does the Secretary Make a Grant?

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

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

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

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

#### Subpart A—General

##### §644.1 What is the Educational Opportunity Centers program?

The Educational Opportunity Centers program provides grants for projects designed

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

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

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

##### §644.2 Who is eligible for a grant?

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

- (a) An institution of higher education.
- (b) A public or private agency or organization, including a community-based organization with experience in serving disadvantaged youth.
- (c) A secondary school.

(d) A combination of the types of institutions, agencies, and organizations described in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section.

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

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

§644.3 Who is eligible to participate in a project?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

§644.4 What services may a project provide?

An Educational Opportunity Centers project may provide the following services:

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

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

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

§644.5 How long is a project period?

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

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

[75 FR 65780, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.6 What regulations apply?

The following regulations apply to the Educational Opportunity Centers program:

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

(b) The regulations in this part 644.

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

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

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

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

§644.7 What definitions apply?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(i) Personal and family budget planning;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Participant means an individual who—

- (i) Is determined to be eligible to participate in the project under §644.3; and
- (ii) Receives project services.

Postsecondary education means education beyond the secondary school level.

Potential first-generation college student means—

- (i) An individual neither of whose parents received a baccalaureate degree; or
- (ii) An individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent and whose supporting parent did not receive a baccalaureate degree.

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

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

Veteran means a person who—

- (i) Served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States for a period of more than 180 days and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable;
- (ii) Served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States and was discharged or released because of a service connected disability;
- (iii) Was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States and was called to active duty for a period of more than 30 days; or
- (iv) Was a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States who served on active duty in support of a contingency operation (as that term is

defined in section 101(a)(13) of title 10, United States Code) on or after September 11, 2001.

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

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

Subpart B—How Does One Apply for an Award?

§644.10 How many applications may an eligible applicant submit?

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

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

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

[75 FR 65781, Oct. 26, 2010]

§644.11 What assurances must an applicant submit?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### Subpart C—How Does the Secretary Make a Grant?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

§644.21 What selection criteria does the Secretary use?

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

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

- (1) A high number or percentage, or both, of low-income families residing in the target area;
- (2) A high number or percentage, or both, of individuals residing in the target area with education completion levels below the baccalaureate level;
- (3) A high need on the part of residents of the target area for further education and training from programs of postsecondary education in order to meet changing employment trends; and
- (4) Other indicators of need for an Educational Opportunity Centers project, including the presence of unaddressed educational or socioeconomic problems of adult residents in the target area.

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

- (1) (2 points) Secondary school diploma or equivalent.
- (2) (3 points) Postsecondary enrollment.
- (3) (1.5 points) Financial aid applications.
- (4) (1.5 points) College admission applications.

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

- (1) (4 points) The plan to inform the residents, schools, and community organizations in the target area of the goals, objectives, and services of the project and the eligibility requirements for participation in the project;
- (2) (4 points) The plan to identify and select eligible participants and ensure their participation without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, or disability;
- (3) (2 points) The plan to assess each participant's need for services provided by the project;
- (4) (12 points) The plan to provide services that meet participants' needs and achieve the objectives of the project; and
- (5) (8 points) The management plan to ensure the proper and efficient administration of the project including, but not limited to, the project's organizational structure, the time committed to the project by the project director and other personnel, and, where appropriate, its coordination with other projects for disadvantaged students.

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

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

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

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

(i) The qualifications required of the project director.

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

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

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

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

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

- (1) Are appropriate to the project's objectives;
- (2) Provide for the applicant to determine, using specific and quantifiable measures, the success of the project in—
  - (i) Making progress toward achieving its objectives (a formative evaluation); and
  - (ii) Achieving its objectives at the end of the project period (a summative evaluation); and
- (3) Provide for the disclosure of unanticipated project outcomes, using quantifiable measures if appropriate.

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

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

§644.22 How does the Secretary evaluate prior experience?

- (a) In the case of an application described in §644.20(a)(2)(i), the Secretary—
  - (1) Evaluates the applicant's performance under its expiring Educational Opportunity Centers project;
  - (2) Uses the approved project objectives for the applicant's expiring Educational Opportunity Centers grant and the information the applicant submitted in its annual performance reports (APRs) to determine the number of PE points; and
  - (3) May adjust a calculated PE score or decide not to award PE points if other information such as audit reports, site visit reports, and project evaluation reports indicates the APR data used to calculate PE points are incorrect.
- (b) The Secretary does not award PE points for a given year to an applicant that does not serve at least 90 percent of the approved number of participants. For purposes of this section, the approved number of participants is the total number of participants the project would serve as agreed upon by the grantee and the Secretary.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[75 FR 65781, Oct. 26, 2010]

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

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

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

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

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

(1) \$200,000; or

(2) The amount requested by the applicant.

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

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

§644.24 What is the review process for unsuccessful applicants?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- (A) A peer reviewer's appropriate use of his or her professional judgment in evaluating and scoring an application;
- (B) Any situation in which the applicant did not include information needed to evaluate its response to a specific selection criterion in the appropriate section of the application as stipulated in the *Federal Register* notice inviting applications or the other published application materials for the competition; or

(C) Any error by the applicant.

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

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

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

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

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

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

(7) If the Secretary determines that the Department or the Department's agent made an administrative error that relates to the PE points awarded, as described in

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

[75 FR 65782, Oct. 26, 2010]

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

##### §644.30 What are allowable costs?

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

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

(1) Visits to postsecondary educational institutions;

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

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

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

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

(1) A waiver is unavailable; and

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

(d) In-service training of project staff.

(e) Rental of space if—

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

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

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

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

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

§644.31 What are unallowable costs?

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

(a) Tuition, fees, stipends, and other forms of direct financial support for participants.

(b) Research not directly related to the evaluation or improvement of the project.

(c) Construction, renovation, and remodeling of any facilities.

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

§644.32 What other requirements must a grantee meet?

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

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

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

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

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

- (2) The services that are provided to the participant;
  - (3) The specific educational benefits received by the participant; and
  - (4) To the extent practicable, any services the participant receives during the project year from another Federal TRIO program or another federally funded program that serves populations similar to those served under the EOC program.
- (d) Project director. (1) A grantee must employ a full-time project director unless—
- (i) The director is also administering one or two additional programs for disadvantaged students operated by the sponsoring institution or agency; or
  - (ii) The Secretary grants a waiver of this requirement.
- (2) The grantee must give the project director sufficient authority to administer the project effectively.
- (3) The Secretary waives the requirements in paragraph (d)(1) of this section if the applicant demonstrates that that the project director will be able to effectively administer more than three programs and that this arrangement would promote effective coordination between the program and other Federal TRIO programs (sections 402B through 402F of the HEA) and similar programs funded through other sources.

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

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

**FEDERAL TRIO PROGRAMS  
ANNUAL LOW-INCOME LEVELS**

(Effective January 19, 2023, Until Further Notice)

<b>Size of Family Unit</b>	<b>48 Contiguous States, D.C., and Outlying Jurisdictions</b>	<b>Alaska</b>	<b>Hawaii</b>
<b>1</b>	\$21,870	\$27,315	\$25,155
<b>2</b>	\$29,580	\$36,960	\$34,020
<b>3</b>	\$37,290	\$46,605	\$42,885
<b>4</b>	\$45,000	\$56,250	\$51,750
<b>5</b>	\$52,710	\$65,895	\$60,615
<b>6</b>	\$60,420	\$75,540	\$69,480
<b>7</b>	\$68,130	\$85,185	\$78,345
<b>8</b>	\$75,840	\$94,830	\$87,210

For family units with more than eight members, add the following amount for each additional family member: \$7,710 for the 48 contiguous states, the District of Columbia and outlying jurisdictions; \$9,645 for Alaska; and \$8,865 for Hawaii.

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

The figures shown under family income represent amounts equal to 150 percent of the family income levels established by the Census Bureau for determining poverty status. The poverty guidelines were published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in the *Federal Register* on January 19, 2023, and are effective as of January 19, 2023.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372

This program falls under the rubric of Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to strengthen federalism--or the distribution of responsibility between localities, States, and the Federal government--by fostering intergovernmental partnerships. This idea includes supporting processes that State or local governments have devised for coordinating and reviewing proposed Federal financial grant applications.

The process for doing this requires grant applicants to contact State Single Points of Contact for information on how this works. Multi-state applicants should follow procedures specific to each state.

Further information about the State Single Point of Contact process and a list of names by State can be found at:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>.

Absent specific State review programs, applicants may submit comments directly to the Department. All recommendations and comments must be mailed or hand-delivered by the date indicated in the actual application notice to the following address: The Secretary, EO 12372-CFDA# 84.066A, U.S. Department of Education, room 7E200, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20202.

Proof of mailing will be determined on the same basis as applications (see 34 CFR §75.102). Recommendations or comments may be hand-delivered until 4:30 p.m. (eastern time) on the closing date indicated in this notice.

**Important note:** The above address is not the same address as the one to which the applicant submits its completed applications. **Do not send applications to the above address.**

## SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

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

### 1. Estimated Funding

- Estimated Available Funds for FY XX: TBD
- Estimated Range of Awards: TBD
- Estimated Average Size of Awards: TBD
- Estimated Number of New Awards: TBD
- The Department is not bound by these estimates

### 2. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs

Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs was issued to foster an intergovernmental partnership and to strengthen federalism by relying on state and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

Applicants must contact the appropriate State Single Point of Contact to find out about, and to comply with, the State’s process under Executive Order 12372. A listing of the Single Point of Contact for each State may be viewed at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>.

### 3. Length of New Award

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

### 4. EOC Program Assurances

All applications must comply with the EOC Program statutory and regulatory requirements. The assurances are included in the application package. By submitting an EOC Program application, an applicant certifies that it has read the assurances and will fully comply with the requirements.

### 5. EOC Program Profile

All applicants must provide the information requested on this form. The EOC Program Profile form contains standardized objectives. Applicants are required to propose the percentage at which each of the standardized

objectives will be attained. On the EOC Profile form, you must fill in the blanks indicating the percentage level of achievement for each of the objectives. **You may not modify, amend or delete any of these objectives.**

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

## **6. Evaluation of Applications for Awards**

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

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

## **7. Selection Criteria**

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

## **8. Applicant Funding**

Applicants should pay close attention to the “Maximum Award” section of the Notice.

## **9. Prior Experience**

In accordance with 34 CFR 644.22, the Secretary will award prior experience (PE) points to applicants that have conducted a TRIO EOC Program project during these fiscal years: 20XX-XX, 20XX-XX and 20XX-XX. Based on the applicant’s documented experience set forth in the annual performance reports, up to 15 prior experience points will be added to the application’s averaged reader score to determine the total score for each application.

## **10. Selection of Grantees**

The Secretary will select an application for funding in rank order, based on the application's total score for the selection criteria, plus any prior experience points earned, pursuant to 34 CFR sections 644.20 through 644.22.

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

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

## **11. Expectations of Successful Grantees**

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

## **12. Notice to Unsuccessful Applicants**

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

## **13. Second Review Process**

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



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

#### **14. Annual Performance Report Requirements**

If you receive a FY 20XX new grant award, you will be required to submit annual performance reports during the five-year funding cycle using the Department's on-line function. This on-line system collects data about funded projects to enable program specialists to determine if a grantee is making substantial progress toward meeting approved project objectives.

#### **15. Contact Information**

**For EOC Program-related questions and assistance, please contact:**

Program Specialist: Rachael Wiley, Ed.D.  
Address: Student Service, Federal TRIO  
Programs  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202  
Telephone: (202) 453-6078  
E-mail Address: rachael.wiley@ed.gov

and/or

Program Specialist: Tara Lawrence  
Address: Student Service, Federal TRIO  
Programs  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4260  
Telephone: (202) 260-1475  
E-mail Address: Tara.lawrence@ed.gov

Division Director: Sharon Easterling

Address: Student Service, Federal TRIO  
Programs  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202  
Telephone: (202) 453-7425  
E-mail Address: sharon.easterling@ed.gov

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

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

**EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM PROFILE**

**Instructions:** All applicants must complete this page. The completed form must be attached to the Other Attachments Form in the application package in Grants.gov (as a .PDF document).

**DO NOT MODIFY OR AMEND THE CONTENTS OF THIS PAGE.**

- 1. Applicants currently funded under the Educational Opportunity Centers Program (FY 2021-2026) must provide their current grant award number. This can be found in Block 5 of the Grant Award Notification.

**New applicants should leave this item blank.**

PR/Award Number (Current Grantees Only): P066A (21) (22) (23) \_\_\_\_\_

Application designated to receive prior experience: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Note:** Please indicate (by checking the relevant competitive preference priorities) if you will address the competitive preference priorities. Be advised, as stated in the Notice, the maximum competitive preference priority points an application can receive under this competition is TBD additional points:

\_\_\_ Competitive Preference Priority 1:

\_\_\_ Competitive Preference Priority 2:

\_\_\_ Competitive Preference Priority 3:

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

- 4. Multiple applications submitted: No: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes: \_\_\_ How many? \_\_\_\_\_

Note: The project must be located in a setting accessible to the individuals the project proposes to serve.

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

**6. Program Objectives:**

Please fill in the proposed percent for each objective.

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

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

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

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

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

Please note the following definitions:

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

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

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

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

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

**EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM  
ASSURANCES**

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Certifying Official’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Authorized Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title of Authorized Certifying Official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Applicant Institution/Organization

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

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

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

## PRIOR EXPERIENCE

### ***Prior Experience Objectives and Calculations for EOC Projects Operating in Project Years 20XX-XX, 20XX-XX and 20XX-XX***

For the FY 20XX EOC grant competition, the prior experience (PE) assessment years are 20XX-XX, 20XX-XX and 20XX-XX. Achievement rates for each PE criterion will be based on the project's approved objectives and the information the grantee provided in the annual performance report (APR) for each project year under consideration.

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

In cases in which an applicant proposes to split a grant funded in FY 20XX into multiple proposals in the FY 20XX competition, the applicant will be eligible to receive PE points for only one proposed new project. The project for which the applicant is eligible for PE consideration is the one that proposes to serve the greatest number of currently served target areas. An applicant is responsible for indicating on the EOC Program Profile form, in Item #1, if the application is eligible for PE points.

If an applicant proposes to split a currently funded grant evenly by target areas into multiple proposals for the FY 20XX competition, with no new or additional target areas proposed to be served, the applicant must decide which one new proposal should be considered for PE points by following the instructions above for marking Item #1 on the Program Profile form.

The EOC PE criteria and point allocations are as follows for each year under consideration:

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

Note: EOC grantees may earn up to a maximum of 15 points for each year assessed. The three assessment years of data (20XX-XX, 20XX-XX and 20XX-XX) submitted by each grantee.



1. **Number of participants (maximum 3 points)** – Whether the applicant provided services to the number of participants required to be served under the approved application.

**Calculation:**

The calculation rule for the Funded Number criterion is as follows:

The total number of participants assisted (Section II, Field A3 of the APR) is compared to the number of participants the project was funded to serve (from the project's approved objectives; pre-populated at the beginning of Section II).

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

**Calculation:**

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

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

**Calculation:**

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

4. **Financial aid applications (maximum 2 points)** – The extent to which the applicant met or exceeded its objectives regarding student financial aid assistance to participants.

**Calculation:**

- The denominator is the number of participants, at the time first service in the reporting period, who are not enrolled in postsecondary education, and who are high school seniors or equivalents in alternative programs or who have a secondary diploma or equivalent.
- The numerator is the number of participants in the denominator who applied for financial aid during the project year.

5. **College admission applications (maximum 2 points)** – The extent to which the applicant met or exceeded its objectives regarding participants' applications for admission to programs of postsecondary education.

**Calculation:**

- The denominator is the number of participants, who at time the first time of service in the reporting period, are not enrolled in postsecondary education, and who are high school seniors or equivalents in alternative programs or who have a secondary diploma or equivalent.
- The numerator is the number of participants in the denominator who applied for admission to a postsecondary education program.

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

Please note that the prior experience assessment for applicants successful under the FY 20XX competition will be based on the outcome criteria outlined in 402A(f)(3)(A) of the HEA. The outcome criteria for the EOC Program are captured in the standardized objectives included on the EOC Program Profile.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION PACKAGE**

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

**Part I: SF 424 Form**

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

**\*Notes:**

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

**Part II: ED Form 524**

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

**Part III: Attachments**

ED Abstract Form  
Project Narrative Attachment Form – includes a Table of Contents  
Other Attachments Form – includes the Program Assurances page, the EOC Program Profile form, and the Competitive Preference Priorities narrative (if addressed)

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

The Project Narrative Attachment Form is where you attach the responses addressing the program selection criteria that will be used to evaluate applications submitted for this competition. We recommend that you limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 60 pages, excluding a *Table of Contents* and other items outlined in the Notice.

**Please see the Notice for detailed information on recommended page limits and formatting requirements.** You should include a Table of Contents for your application as the first page of this section. **You must also include your budget narrative in this section as part of the selection criteria, which is counted as part of the recommended 60-page limit.** The budget should demonstrate and justify that all costs are reasonable and necessary to accomplish the proposed project activities.

The Other Attachments Form is where you attach the EOC Program Profile form, the EOC Program Assurances page, and the Competitive Preference Priorities Narrative. **No other appendices or attachments should be included.**

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

**Part IV: Assurances and Certifications**

ED-GEPA Section 427 Requirement  
Grants.gov Lobbying Form (formerly ED Form 80-0013)  
Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROJECT NARRATIVE-SELECTION CRITERIA

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

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

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

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

We recommend that you limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 60 pages, double-space all text in the application narrative, and single-space titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs. Use an easily readable font such as Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. Use a font that is either 12-point or larger and number the pages consecutively. The narrative should be written concisely. Only the required information should be submitted. Please refer to the Notice for additional application submission requirements.

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

1. **PROJECT DESIGN**

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| A. <b><u>Need</u></b> (34 CFR 644.21(a))                            | (24 points) |
| B. <b><u>Objectives</u></b> (34 CFR 644.21(b))                      | ( 8 points) |
| C. <b><u>Plan of Operation</u></b> (34 CFR 644.21(c))               | (30 points) |
| D. <b><u>Applicant and Community Support</u></b> (34 CFR 644.21(d)) | (16 points) |
| E. <b><u>Quality of Personnel</u></b> (34 CFR 644.21(e))            | ( 9 points) |
| F. <b><u>Budget</u></b> (4 CFR 644.21(f))                           | ( 5 points) |
| G. <b><u>Evaluation Plan</u></b> (34 CFR 644.21(g))                 | ( 8 points) |
| Total Maximum Score for Selection Criteria                          | 100 points  |

## 2. COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES

TBD

Total Maximum Score for Competitive Preference Priorities

TBD

**Note: Please indicate on the EOC Project Abstract and the EOC Program Profile Sheet if you will address the competitive preference priorities. Be advised, as stated in the Notice, the maximum competitive preference priority points an application can receive under this competition is TBD.**

### **Formatting**

We recommend that you 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. Double-space all text in the application narrative, and single-space titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs. Use a 12-point font. Use an easily readable font such as Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. Page numbers and an identifier may be within the 1" margin. Each page on which there is text or graphics will be counted as one full page.

The Application Narrative will include the discussion of the selection criteria. We recommend that you limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 60 pages for the FY 20XX EOC competition.

The recommended page limit does not apply to:

- Application Face Sheet (Application for Federal Assistance Form – SF424)
- Table of Contents
- Project Abstract
- Budget Summary Form (ED Form 524)
- EOC Program Profile
- EOC Program Assurances and Certifications
- ED GEPA 427

The Notice contains specific instructions on page limits.

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

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

**(A) Need:** In responding to this criterion, you must provide data to define the target population in terms of the academic, financial and other problems encountered by eligible project participants which prevent their enrollment in undergraduate programs. Also, you must provide data to demonstrate that the proposed target population has an academic need for project services and is composed of first-generation and low-income individuals.

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

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

**(C) Plan of Operation:** This criterion contains five sub-criteria, and applicants must address all five sub-criteria. For each sub-criteria, applicant should provide information on who (personnel involved), what (tasks and activities), when (timeline/timeframe), and how the project will provide services to meet its goals and objectives.

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

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

support will enable the proposed project to carry out the proposed project plan in the most cost-effective manner possible.

**(E) Quality of Personnel:** Applicants must address each of the three sub-criteria in this section. The minimum qualifications must be identified for all project personnel positions. The minimum educational qualifications must include the type of degree required and the acceptable field(s) of study. The type and minimum amount of work-related experience must also be described for each position. In addressing this criterion, you should not provide the qualifications of current staff, but rather, detail the qualifications required for each position. Please note that if you choose to submit resumes or job descriptions in the application, they will count against the recommended 60-page limit. The “plan to employ personnel who have succeeded in overcoming barriers similar to the target population to be served” must be specific. The inclusion of an equal employment opportunity statement and/or a non-discriminatory employment practices policy alone is not an adequate response to this criterion.

**(F) Budget:** In response to this criterion, applicants must provide a detailed, itemized budget narrative for the first-year (20XX-XX) budget period, **only**. The budget narrative is a part of the Project Narrative (Part III) to be addressed under the budget selection criterion (F). Additional budget instructions are cited in the instructions entitled “First Year Budget and Budget Summary Form (ED Form 524) Instructions” on the following pages. (Note: The budget narrative is counted as part of the recommended 60-page limit for Part III.) If the applicant includes a non-Federal financial contribution, please know that the Department expects the non-Federal financial contribution, at least at the level indicated for the first year, to continue for the entire length of the grant award (up to five years). This section should provide information that shows that the proposed budget will provide the resources necessary to successfully carry out the proposed project. Applicants should demonstrate here how the proposed resources would enable them to carry out the proposed project in the most cost-effective manner possible.

**(G) Evaluation Plan:** A strong evaluation plan should be included and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The evaluation plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward meeting specific project objectives based on the program’s performance indicators. The plan should describe the evaluation design, indicating: (1) what types of data will be collected; (2) when various types of data will be collected; (3) what methods will be used; (4) what instruments will be developed and when; (5) how the data will be analyzed; and (6) when reports and outcomes will be available. The evaluation plan should indicate what information, provided on a weekly, monthly and annual basis will indicate if the project is developing in a manner that meets its goals and objectives. In addition, the plan should indicate who is responsible for making sure that information is available in a timely manner and is influencing the ongoing management of the project. The use of an outside evaluator is not required.



Applicants are encouraged to think carefully about evaluation approaches and seek cost-effective evaluation strategies. Applicants are also encouraged to explain how they will work with appropriate agencies to develop strategies for using State longitudinal data systems or other third-party verified data to track the extent to which students enroll in postsecondary education.

Finally, applicants are encouraged to examine and report on unanticipated outcomes, as well as effective strategies (which can be services, bundles of services, or specific ways of implementing allowable services) that increase college access and completion.

### **COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES FOR FY 20XX**

**Competitive Preference Priority 1:** TBD

**Competitive Preference Priority 2:** TBD

**Competitive Preference Priority 3:** TBD

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The Department of Education prepared a strategic plan for 2022-2026. 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: Promote equity in student access to educational resources, opportunities, and inclusive environments.

Goal 2: Support a diverse and talented educator workforce and professional growth to strengthen student learning.

Goal 3: Meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs.

Goal 4: Increase postsecondary value by focusing on equity-conscious strategies to address access to high-quality institutions, affordability, completion, post-enrollment success, and support for inclusive institutions.

Goal 5: Enhance the Department's internal capacity to optimize the delivery of its mission.

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

The performance indicators for the Educational Opportunity Centers Program (EOC) are part of the Department's plan for meeting Goal 4. The EOC Program is part of the Federal TRIO Programs. The overarching goal of the Federal TRIO Programs is "to increase the percentage of low-income and first-generation college students who successfully pursue postsecondary education opportunities."

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

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

### **How does the Department of Education determine whether performance goals have been met?**

An applicant that receives a grant award will be required to submit annual performance reports as a condition of the award. The reports will document the extent to which project goals and objectives are met.

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

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

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

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

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

**The budget narrative, for the first 12-month budget period only**, is to be included in the *Project Narrative* (recommend that you limit the application narrative to the equivalent of no more than 60 pages). This section requests information on the applicant's financial plan for carrying out the project.

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

The Department is requesting that you complete the Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (ED Form 524) for ONLY the 20XX-20XX year. Please provide **a comprehensive and detailed budget narrative for the first 12-month budget period, only**.

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

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

1. **Personnel:** On line 1 (ED Form 524), enter only the project personnel salaries and wages. [Fees and expenses for consultants should be included on line 8.] The budget should include the total commitment of time and the total salary to be charged to the project for each key staff member. You should provide a breakdown of project personnel that includes: the position titles; the percent of time and number of months committed to the project for each key staff member; the salary for each key staff member; and the total salary costs to be charged to the grant.

2. Fringe Benefits: On line 2 (ED Form 524), enter the amount of fringe benefits. The institution or agency's normal fringe benefit contribution may be charged to the program. Leave this blank if fringe benefits applicable to direct salaries and wages are treated as part of the indirect costs. In the budget, include an explanation and appropriate justification if the institution or agency's normal fringe benefit contribution exceeds 20 percent of salaries.
3. Travel: On line 3 (ED Form 524), provide the costs for project personnel. [Consultants' travel should be included on line 8.] In the budget, you should detail the proposed travel costs: for each trip explain the purpose and objective of the travel and provide the number of persons traveling. Transportation costs should not exceed tourist class airfare. For automobile mileage, the established institution or agency rate should be used.

Reimbursement is allowed for taxicab, bus, train, or limousine transportation. Per diem at the established institution or agency rate is permitted when an individual is away from home overnight on official project business (see 2 CFR 220 of the Cost Principles for Educational Institutions, J.53.c, formerly, OMB Circular A-21, J.48.c - Commercial Air Travel).

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

- Project Director's Travel – Per Year
    - A. One National Conference;  
One Regional Meeting;  
One State Meeting; **and**
    - B. Travel for participation in **one** professional staff development training opportunity under the TRIO Training Program.
  - Full-time Professional Staff Travel – Per Year
    - A. One National, Regional, **or** State Meeting; **and**
    - B. Travel for participation in **one** professional staff development training opportunity under the TRIO Training Program.
4. Equipment: On line 4 (ED Form 524), indicate the cost of equipment -- non-expendable personal property, which has a usefulness of greater than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. [Consistent with an applicant's policy, a lower dollar amount may be used to define equipment.] In the budget, explain why the requested equipment is necessary to carry out

project activities, and include a list of all equipment in the following format: item, quantity, cost per unit, and total cost.

5. Supplies: On line 5 (ED Form 524), include the costs of all tangible personal property that was not included as “equipment” on line 4. In the budget, provide an itemized list of the supplies.
6. Contractual: Not applicable. Leave blank.
7. Construction: Not applicable. Leave blank.
8. Other: On line 8 (ED Form 524), indicate all direct costs not covered on lines 1 through 5. The costs/fees for consultants and consultants’ travel should be included here.

Examples of “other” costs are: equipment rental, required fees, communication costs, rental of space, utilities, custodial services, and printing costs. In the budget, provide a breakdown of all direct costs not clearly covered by other budget categories.

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

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

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

**§200.68 Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC).**

*MTDC* means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). *MTDC* excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs. Grantees charging indirect costs to a Department grant are required to have a negotiated rate with their *cognizant agency* (i.e., either the Federal agency from which it has received the most direct funding that is subject to indirect cost support, or a particular agency specifically assigned cognizance by the Office of Management and Budget). Although applicants are not required to submit with their application a copy of their indirect cost agreement to claim the 8 percent rate for funding received in this program, they are required to have documentation available for audit that shows that their negotiated indirect cost rate is at least 8 percent [§75.563(d)]. In the event that they receive an award under this program, applicants without a negotiated indirect cost rate with its cognizant agency should seek to identify that agency and contact it to obtain an approved rate as soon as possible after award notification.

Applicants should be aware that amounts representing the difference between the 8 percent rate and a greater indirect cost rate negotiated with a cognizant agency may **not** be charged to direct cost categories, used to satisfy matching or cost-sharing requirements, or charged to another Federal award.  
[§75.563(c) (3)]

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

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR STANDARD FORMS

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)
- Department of Education Supplemental Form for the SF 424
- Department of Education Budget Summary Form (ED 524)
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)
- GEPA Statement

To obtain instructions for standard forms included in this application package, please visit <https://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>.



## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

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

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

Part I - Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424

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

Part III - *Project Narrative*–The total recommended page limit for the project narrative portion of the application is 60 pages. Attach the *Project Narrative* document to the Project Narrative Attachment Form in the Grants.gov application.

Part III - Other Attachments – Attach the following documents to the Other Attachments Form in the Grants.gov application.

EOC Program Profile

EOC Program Assurances

Competitive Preference Priorities Narrative

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

Part IV - Assurances and Certifications

GEPA Section 427 Requirement

Lobbying Form (Formerly ED Form 80-0013)

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF LLL)

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

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## **PAPERWORK BURDEN STATEMENT**

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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 1840-0820. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 25 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2 Section 402A of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) and 34 CFR part 644 EOC Program for Federal TRIO Programs). 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 Student Service, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4260 or by e-mail: [TRIO@ed.gov](mailto:TRIO@ed.gov) directly.