



U.S. Department of State
in coordination with the
U.S. Department of Education

**Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange (MECE)
Program**

Assistance Listing Number: 84.021C

FY 2026 Grant Competition

June 15, 2026

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Program Information

In coordination with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the U.S. Department of State (State), the U.S. Department of Education (ED) is soliciting applications in support of the administration of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange (MECE) program.

The purpose of the program is to promote, improve, and develop the study of modern foreign language training and area studies in U.S. schools, colleges, and universities by supporting visits and study in foreign countries by teachers and prospective teachers. The program provides opportunities for teachers and prospective teachers to improve their skill in languages, their knowledge of the culture of the people of other countries, and finances visits by teachers from those other countries to the United States for the purpose of participating in foreign language training and area studies in U.S. schools, colleges, and universities.

Program Authority: Section 102(b)(6) of the Mutual Educational and Cultural

Exchange Act of 1961 [[22 U.S.C. 2451](#) et seq.] (“Fulbright-Hays Act”).

OMB Control Number: 1894-0006¹

For Further Information: Kurrinn Abrams, Telephone: 202-987-1920, Email: MECE@ed.gov.

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$10,193,170.

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: \$2,550,000-\$5,100,000 for the 36-month project period.

Estimated number of awards: 2-4.

Project Period: 36 months.

Application Deadline: July 15, 2026

Note: This application notice and instructions is the official document governing the grant competition. ED is not bound by any estimates in this notice

¹ According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 210 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 and voluntary. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0006. *Note:* Please do not return completed applications to this address.

Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

Consistent with Sec. 104(e)(1) of the Fulbright-Hays Act, eligible applicants are public or private nonprofit foundations, educational or other institutions.

Note: “Public or private nonprofit foundations, educational or other institutions” include the following:

- Public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education (IHEs);
- State departments of education (including State Education Agencies and State Higher Education Agencies);
- Public or private nonprofit educational organizations; and
- Consortia of such public or private nonprofit IHEs, State departments of education, and public or private nonprofit educational organizations.

Note: An applicant that is a nonprofit organization may, under 34 CFR 75.51, demonstrate its 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.

Cost Sharing or Matching

This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

Indirect Cost Rate Information

This program does not allow indirect costs.

Subgrantees

Under [34 CFR 75.708\(b\)](#) and [\(c\)](#), a grantee under this competition may award subgrants—to directly carry out project activities described in its application—to the following types of entities: IHEs, nonprofit organizations, professional organizations, or businesses. The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in the approved application or that it selects through a competition under procedures established by the grantee.

Use of Funds

Allowable Uses: Consistent with Sec. 104(e) of the Fulbright-Hays Act, grant funds under this program may be used for the following activities:

1. tuition and other necessary incidental expenses, for travel expenses from their places of residence and return for themselves, and for the dependent members of their immediate families, for health and accident insurance premiums, emergency medical expenses, costs of preparing and transporting to their former homes the remains of any of such persons who may die while away from their homes as participants or dependents of participants in this program, and for per diem in lieu of subsistence at rates prescribed by the Director of the United States Information Agency², for all such persons, and for such other expenses as are necessary for the successful accomplishment of the purposes of the Fulbright-Hays Act;
2. to provide for orientation courses, language training, or other appropriate services and materials for persons traveling out of the countries of their residence for educational and cultural purposes; and
3. to provide or continue services to increase the effectiveness of such programs following the return of such persons to the countries of their residence.

Additionally, where using MECE funds for “tuition or other necessary incidental expenses”, grantees must comply with the requirements of 34 CFR 75.60 and 34 CFR 75.62. Under 34 CFR 75.60, individuals are ineligible to receive fellowship or scholarship funds through discretionary grants funded by the Department where the individual—

(a) Is not current in repaying a debt or is in default, as that term is used in [34 CFR part 668](#), on a debt—

(1) Under a program administered by the Department under which an individual received a fellowship, scholarship, or loan that they are obligated to repay; or

² While this language is taken from statute, no such position currently exists as the United States Information Agency was absorbed by the Department of State in 1999. Domestic U.S. government per diem rates may be found at <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates> and foreign per diem rates at https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp.

(2) To the Federal Government under a nonprocurement transaction; and

(b) Has not made satisfactory arrangements to repay the debt.

Additionally, 34 CFR 75.62 notes the following requirements applicable to grantees, in making awards involving potential fellowship costs:

(a) An entity that provides a fellowship, scholarship, or discretionary grant to an individual under a grant from, or an agreement with, the Secretary shall require the individual who applies for such an award to provide with his or her application a certification under the penalty of perjury—

(1) That the individual is eligible under [§ 75.60](#); and

(2) That the individual has not been debarred or suspended by a judge under section 421 of the Controlled Substances Act ([21 U.S.C. 862](#)).

(b) An entity subject to this section may not award a fellowship, scholarship, or discretionary grant to an individual if—

(1) The individual fails to provide the certification required under [paragraph \(a\)](#) of this section; or

(2) The Secretary informs the entity that the individual is ineligible under [§ 75.60](#).

(c) If a fellowship, scholarship, or discretionary grant is made to an individual who provided a false certification under [paragraph \(a\)](#) of this section, the individual is liable for recovery of the funds made available under the certification, for civil damages or penalties imposed for false representation, and for criminal prosecution under [18 U.S.C. 1001](#).

(d) The Secretary may require an entity subject to this section to provide a list of the individuals to whom fellowship, scholarship, or discretionary grant awards have been made or are proposed to be made by the entity.

Reasonable and Necessary Costs: Applicants must ensure that all costs included in the proposed budget are necessary and reasonable to meet the goals and objectives of the proposed project. Any costs determined by the Secretary to be unreasonable or unnecessary will be removed from the final approved budget.

Audits: (i) A non-Federal entity that expends \$1,000,000 or more during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards must have a single or program-specific audit

conducted for that year in accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR part 200. (2 CFR 200.501(a))

(ii) A non-Federal entity that expends less than \$1,000,000 during the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in Federal awards is exempt from Federal audit requirements for that year, except as noted in 2 CFR 200.503 (Relation to Other Audit Requirements), but records must be available for review or audit by appropriate officials of the Federal agency, pass-through entity, and Government Accountability Office (GAO) (2 CFR 200.501(d)).

Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Applications Available	June 15, 2026
Application Deadline	July 15, 2026
Deadline for Intergovernmental Review	September 14, 2026

ED will be able to review grant applications more efficiently if we know the approximate number of applicants that intend to apply. Therefore, we strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of their intent to submit an application. To do so, please email the program contact person listed above with the subject line “Intent to Apply,” and include the applicant's name and a contact person's name and email address. Applicants that do not submit a notice of intent to apply may still apply for funding; applicants that do submit a notice of intent to apply are not bound to apply or bound by the information provided.

Applicants are required to follow the 2025 Common Instructions and Information for Applicants to Department of Education Discretionary Grant Programs, published in the *Federal Register* on August 29, 2025 (90 FR 42234) and available at [ED 2025 Common Instructions](#).

Program Description

Priorities

This notice includes two (2) Absolute Priorities, and one (1) Competitive Preference Priority. The Absolute Priorities are from Section 102(b)(6) of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (Fulbright Hays Act) and from the Secretary's Supplemental Priority and Definitions on Promoting Patriotic Education published in the *Federal Register* on May 22, 2026 (91 FR 30291) (SSP-PE). The Competitive Preference Priority is from the Secretary's Supplemental Priorities and Definitions on Evidence-Based Literacy, Education Choice, and Returning Education to the States ([90 FR 43514](#)) (SSP-RES), published in the **Federal Register** on September 9, 2025.

All priorities that are being addressed must be identified in the Abstract Form, the Project Narrative, and the Other Attachments Forms sections of the application.

Absolute Priorities: For Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applications from this competition, these priorities are Absolute Priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet the Absolute Priorities. Each application must clearly promote modern foreign language training and the use of Patriotic Education.

Competitive Preference Priorities: For FY 2026, there is one (1) competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award 0 or 10 additional points to an application that meets the Competitive Preference Priority.

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
<i>Absolute Priority 1- (Fulbright-Hays Act)</i>	<i>Foreign Language Training and Studies for Prospective Teachers and Teachers</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Projects that promote modern foreign language training and area studies in U.S. schools, colleges, and universities by supporting visits and study in foreign countries by teachers and prospective teachers in such schools, colleges, and universities for the purpose of improving their skill in languages and their knowledge of the culture of the people of those countries, and by financing visits by teachers from those countries to the United States for the purpose of participating in foreign language training and area studies in U.S. schools, colleges, and universities.</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>
<i>Absolute Priority 2 (Secretary's Supplemental Priority (91 FR 30291))</i>	<i>Patriotic Education</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Projects that are designed to provide an introduction to and understanding of the founding documents and primary sources of the American political tradition, in a manner consistent with the principles of a patriotic education.</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>

<i>Priority Type</i>	<i>Priority Title</i>	<i>Required</i>	<i>Priority Language</i>	<i>Points</i>
			<i>Projects may address one or more of the following topics:</i> <i>(a) United States Constitution, government, and civics.</i> <i>(b) United States history and geography.</i> <i>(c) United States military and diplomatic history.</i> <i>(d) United States literature and rhetoric.</i> <i>(e) United States art (architecture, painting, music, photography, theater, cinema, and sculpture, etc.).</i> <i>(f) The founding documents and primary sources of Western Civilization and the American founding and their influence on the American political tradition.</i> <i>(g) The influence of Western Europe upon the American political tradition.</i>	
<i>Competitive Preference Priority (Secretary's Supplemental Priorities (90 FR 43514))</i>	<i>Returning Education to the States</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Projects or proposals that will be carried out by one or more of the following:</i> <i>Entities identified, designated, or endorsed by a Governor for the purposes of implementing the project or proposal.</i>	<i>0 or 10 points</i>

Application Requirements

See “Other Attachments Forms” for information on required application components including the applicant’s travel policies, and submission of a group agreement (consortium agreement), if applying as a consortium.

Program Requirements

Armed Forces Participant Preference

In the selection of American citizens for participation in MECE grants, grantees must give preference to those who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States. See Sec. 106(a)(2) of the Fulbright-Hays Act.

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 pre-existing 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.

Selection Criteria

For the FY 2026 MECE competition, the Department will select applications for funding based on the ranking of each application according to the score received during the panel review.

Selection criteria outline how the application will be scored. The following selection criteria for this program are from 75.210, and apply to applications for the MECE program. The maximum possible score an application can receive for addressing the selection criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is included in parenthesis following the title of the specific selection criterion. Each criterion also includes the factors that reviewers will consider in determining the extent to which an applicant meets the criterion.

Points awarded under the competitive preference priorities are in addition to any points that an applicant earns for all the selection criteria in this notice. The maximum score that an application may receive under the competitive preference priorities and the selection criteria is 110. Selection criteria are as follows:

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(a) **Need** (10 points)

In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The data presented (including a comparison to local, State, regional, national, or international data) that demonstrates the issue, challenge, or opportunity to be addressed by the proposed project. (5 points)

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates the magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project. (5 points)

(b) **Significance.** (15 points)

In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The extent to which findings from the project's implementation will contribute new knowledge to the field by increasing knowledge or understanding of educational challenges, including the underlying or related challenges, and effective strategies for addressing educational challenges and their effective implementation. (up to 5 points)

(ii) The extent to which the resources, tools, and implementation lessons of the proposed project will be disseminated in ways to the target population and local community that will enable them and others (including practitioners, researchers, education leaders, and partners) to implement similar strategies. (up to 5 points)

(iii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially contributions toward improving teaching practice and student learning and achievement. (up to 5 points)

(c) **Quality of the project design.** (40 points)

In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified, measurable, and ambitious yet achievable within the project period, and aligned with the purposes of the grant program. (up to 12 points)

(iii) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects the most recent and relevant knowledge and practices from research and effective practice. (up to 5 points)

(iv) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to build recipient and project capacity in ways that lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services. (up to 5 points)

(v) The likelihood that the services to be provided by the proposed project will lead to meaningful improvements in the achievement of students as measured against rigorous and relevant standards. (up to 5 points)

(vi) The applicant's capacity (such as qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity), together with any project partners, to further develop and bring the proposed project effectively to scale on a national level during the grant period, based on the findings of the proposed project. (8 points)

(vii) The extent to which fellowship recipients or other project participants are to be selected on the basis of academic excellence (5 points)

(c) ***Adequacy of resources.*** (10 points)

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

(i) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (up to 4 points)

(ii) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served, the depth and intensity of services, and the anticipated results and benefits. (up to 3 points)

(iii) The potential for the purposes, activities, or benefits of the proposed project to be institutionalized into the ongoing practices and programs of the applicant, agency, or organization and continue after Federal funding ends. (3 points)

(d) ***Quality of the management plan.*** (10 points)

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

(i) The feasibility of the management plan to achieve project objectives and goals on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (10 points)

(e) ***Quality of the project evaluation or other evidence-building.*** (15 points)

In determining the quality of the evaluation or other evidence-building, the Secretary considers one or more of the following factors:

- (i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building are appropriate to the context within which the project operates and the target population of the proposed project. (up to 10 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation or other evidence-building include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quality data that are quantitative and qualitative. (up to 3 points)
- (iii) The extent to which the evaluation will access and link high-quality administrative data from authoritative sources to improve evaluation quality and comprehensiveness. (up to 2 points)

Performance Measures

ED has developed the following performance measures for the purposes of reporting to ED under 34 CFR §75.110.

Program Performance Measures. ED developed the following program performance indicators to evaluate the overall effectiveness of this program. These measures constitute the indicators of success for this program. Consequently, we advise an applicant for a grant under this program to give careful consideration to these measures in conceptualizing the approach and evaluation for its proposed project. If funded, you will be required to collect and report data in your project's annual performance report (34 CFR §75.590). Applications must describe:

The data collection and reporting methods the applicant would use and why those methods are likely to yield reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data.

The applicant's capacity to collect and report reliable, valid, and meaningful performance data, as evidenced by high-quality data collection, analysis, and reporting in other projects or research.

Program Measure	Description
Performance Measure 1	The number and percentage of MECE participants in foreign language and area studies who increased their reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking foreign language scores by one level.
Performance Measure 2	The number and percentage of MECE participants who integrate foreign language and area studies

	content into their teaching or curriculum within six months of program completion.
Performance Measure 3	The number and percentage of MECE participants who develop or implement new instructional materials or lessons on patriotic education topics in their home institutions.
Performance Measure 4	The frequency and quality of outreach activities (e.g., workshops, presentations, publications) related to patriotic education conducted by MECE participants within six months of program completion.

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.

Registration

To apply, you must first be registered in two systems: SAM.gov and Grants.gov. If you are already registered, make sure your registration is active and up to date.

Grants.gov registration involves several steps, including registration on 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 apply until all registration steps are complete. Once your SAM registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to become available in Grants.gov. For detailed information on the registration steps,

please go to [Grants.gov Applicant Registration](#). Please note that your organization will need to update its SAM registration annually.

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SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. This includes having a Unique Entity Identifier. SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. **Begin that process early.**

To register, go to [SAM.gov](#) and click on "[Get Started](#)."

Click on the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for the information you will need to register in SAM.gov.

If you need help, you can call 866-606-8220 or live chat with the [Federal Service Desk](#).

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with Grants.gov.

To register, go to [Grants.gov](#) and click "[Register](#)." When ready, click on "[Get Registered Now](#)" and complete the required fields.

For more information or assistance, click on "[Applicant Registration Page](#)."

ED strongly recommends 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. If Grants.gov rejects your application, 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 Unique-Entity ID (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.

A Grants.gov applicant must apply online using Workspace, a shared environment in Grants.gov where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different web forms within an application. The Grants.gov website contains [further instructions on how to apply](#).

Intergovernmental Review

This is subject to Executive Order 12372 (Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs) and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. One of the objectives of Executive Order 12372 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 developed to coordinate, and review proposed Federal financial grant applications. Grant applicants need to contact State Single Points of Contact (SPOC) for information on their State’s procedures. Multi-State applicants should follow procedures specific to each state. Further information about the [SPOC List and the official list of entities](#) can be found online.

Absent specific State review programs, applicants may submit comments directly to the point of contact listed in this notice.

Verify Submission

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, log in 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.

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 [Encountering Error Messages](#) webpage at Grants.gov.

For more detailed information on troubleshooting Adobe errors, you can review the [Adobe Reader Software Tip Sheet](#). 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.

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please go to the [Grants.gov Support Center](#) for help with Grants.gov. For additional tips related to submitting grant applications, please refer to the Grants.gov [Applicant FAQs](#) as well as [additional information on Workspace](#).

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 via email at: support@grants.gov. You may also access the [Grants.gov Self- Service Knowledge Base web portal](#).

Application Review Information

Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, ED may consider, under [34 CFR 75.217](#), information outside the rank order of applications, including the information in each application; and any other information—

- (a) Relevant to a criterion, priority, or other requirement that applies to the selection of applications for new grants;
- (b) Concerning the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous award under any ED program; and
- (c) Concerning the applicant's failure under any ED program to submit a performance report or its submission of a performance report of unacceptable quality.

Before making awards, ED staff will screen applications submitted in accordance with the requirements in this notice to determine whether applications have met eligibility and other requirements, including whether an application may fail to meet the “Terms and Conditions” applicable to awarded funds referenced elsewhere within this notice. This screening process may occur at various stages of the review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible will not receive a grant, regardless of whether the application was included in the peer review process. Applications not selected for funding will be informed of the Secretary's decision in accordance with [34 CFR 75.218](#).

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, ED requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from ED ([34 CFR 100.4](#), [104.5](#), [106.4](#), [108.8](#), and [110.23](#)).

Tiebreakers

In the event there are two or more applications with the same final score in the rank order listing, and there are insufficient funds to fully support each of these applications, the Department will apply the following procedure to determine which application, or applications, will receive an award:

First Tiebreaker: Under the first tiebreaker, the Secretary will select the application(s) with the highest score under selection criterion (b)(i). If the scores remain tied, then the scores under selection criterion (b)(ii) will be used to break the tie. If after implementing this tiebreaker, there are still tied applications and insufficient funding to support each application, the Secretary will implement the second tiebreaker.

Second Tiebreaker: Under the second tiebreaker, the Secretary will select the application(s) that focus on areas in foreign language training and area studies that align with the administration's priorities.

Definitions

The following definitions are from [2 CFR part 200 subpart A](#) or [34 CFR 77.1](#): “applicant,” “application,” “award,” “EDGAR,” “equipment,” “facilities,” “grant,” “grantee,” “nonprofit,” “private,” “project,” “public,” “secretary,” “state,” and “supplies”. “Institution of higher education” has the meaning as defined at [20 U.S.C. 1001](#). The definition of “patriotic education” is from the Promoting Patriotic Education Supplemental Priority.

Applicant means a party applying for a grant or subgrant under a program of the Department.

Application means a request for a grant or subgrant under a program of the Department.

Award has the same meaning as “Grant” (defined in this notice).

EDGAR means the Education Department General Administrative Regulations ([34 CFR parts 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99](#)).

Equipment means tangible personal property (including information technology systems) having a useful life of more than one year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the recipient or subrecipient for financial statement purposes, or \$10,000. See the definitions of *capital assets*, *computing devices*, *general purpose equipment*, *information technology systems*, *special purpose equipment*, and *supplies* in this section.

Facilities means one or more structures in one or more locations.

Grant means financial assistance, including cooperative agreements, that provides support or stimulation to accomplish a public purpose. [2 CFR part 200](#), as adopted in [2](#)

[CFR part 3474](#), uses the broader, undefined term “Award” to cover grants, subgrants, and other agreements in the form of money or property, in lieu of money, by the Federal Government to an eligible recipient. The term does not include—

- (i) Technical assistance, which provides services instead of money;
- (ii) Other assistance in the form of loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, or insurance;
- (iii) Direct payments of any kind to individuals; and
- (iv) Contracts that are required to be entered into and administered under procurement laws and regulations.

Grantee means the legal entity to which a grant is awarded and that is accountable to the Federal Government for the use of the funds provided. The grantee is the entire legal entity even if only a particular component of the entity is designated in the grant award notice (GAN). For example, a GAN may name as the grantee one school or campus of a university. In this case, the granting agency usually intends, or actually intends, that the named component assume primary or sole responsibility for administering the grant-assisted project or program. Nevertheless, the naming of a component of a legal entity as the grantee in a grant award document shall not be construed as relieving the whole legal entity from accountability to the Federal Government for the use of the funds provided. (This definition is not intended to affect the eligibility provision of grant programs in which eligibility is limited to organizations that may be only components of a legal entity.) The term “grantee” does not include any secondary recipients, such as subgrantees and contractors, that may receive funds from a grantee pursuant to a subgrant or contract.

Institution of higher education means an educational institution in any State that—

- (1) Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate;
- (2) Is legally authorized within such State to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;
- (3) Provides an educational program for which it awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a two-year program which is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree;

(4) Is a public or other nonprofit institution; and

(5) Is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association.

Nonprofit as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that it is owned and operated by one or more corporations or associations whose net earnings do not benefit, and cannot lawfully benefit, any private shareholder or entity.

Patriotic education means an accurate and honest presentation of the history of America grounded in an analysis of the primary sources of America's founding, the principles that shaped America's founding, and how those ideals continue to influence the nation's aspirations today.

Private as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that it is not under Federal or public supervision or control.

Project means the activity described in an application.

Public as applied to an agency, organization, or institution, means that the agency, organization, or institution is under the administrative supervision or control of a government other than the Federal Government.

Secretary means the Secretary of the Department of Education or an official or employee of the Department acting for the Secretary under a delegation of authority.

State means any of the 50 States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Supplies means all tangible personal property other than those described in the *equipment* definition. A computing device is a supply if the acquisition cost is below the lesser of the capitalization level established by the recipient or subrecipient for financial statement purposes or \$10,000, regardless of the length of its useful life. See this section's definitions of *computing devices* and *equipment*.

Award Requirements

Terms and Conditions

If you are awarded a grant under this competition, you must ensure and may be required to demonstrate that federal funds will not be used under this project in any manner that violates the United States Constitution, Title VI or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq. or 42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 794), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12131 et seq.), the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. 7905), section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1011f), or other applicable federal law. To the extent that a grantee uses grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED may take appropriate enforcement action including the potential recovery of funds or may pursue termination or non-continuation.

Please note the provisions of Executive Orders 14151, 14168, 14173, and 14190 as well as the U.S. Department of Justice’s July 29, 2025, non-regulatory “Guidance for Recipients of Federal Funding Regarding Unlawful Discrimination,” which clarifies the application of federal antidiscrimination laws to programs or initiatives that may involve discriminatory practices, including those labeled as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (“DEI”) programs.

Such activities may risk violating federal civil rights laws and may jeopardize federal funding. This includes any discriminatory equity ideology in violation of a Federal anti-discrimination law. A definition of “discriminatory equity ideology” is contained in Section 2(b) of Executive Order 14190. To the extent that any entity receiving grant funds under this grant uses those grant funds for such unallowable activities, ED reserves the right to take appropriate enforcement actions, including the recovery of grant funds or may pursue termination or non-continuation. The Grant Award Notification document accompanying your award may contain further terms and conditions, as necessary, to ensure grantee compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and administrative priorities.

Applicable Regulations

(a) Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of ED in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The SSP-PE. (e) The SSP-RES.

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

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

Application Checklist

The application will require you to fill out several forms, which are listed and linked in Grants.gov. See below for a description of forms and sections:

1. Standard Documents

- ☐ Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)
- ☐ ED Supplemental Information for SF 424

2. Budget Information

- ☐ Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (ED 524)

3. Abstract Form

- ☐ Abstract— Attach this document to the Abstract Form in the Grants.gov application.

4. Project Narrative

- ☐ Application Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form)

5. Budget Narrative

- ☐ Budget Narrative Attachment Form

6. Other Attachment Forms

- ☐ Absolute Priority Narrative (no more than 3 pages)
- ☐ Competitive Preference Priority Narrative (no more than 3 pages for each priority)
- ☐ Letters of Support (ten attachments; two-page limit per attachment)
- ☐ Curriculum Vitae (CV) of Key Personnel (five attachments; three-page limit per attachment)
- ☐ Examples of Evaluation Materials, Project Timeline Chart, Project-Specific PMF Forms with Proposed Measures and Activities (two attachment limit; no page limit)

7. Assurances and Certifications

- ☐ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form LLL)
- ☐ Grants.gov Lobbying Form
- ☐ Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (ED 524B)

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 Portable Document Format (PDF). ED recommends 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 review.
- 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.

Helpful Hints When Working with Grants.gov

Please go to <https://www.grants.gov/support> 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: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-faqs> as well as additional information on Workspace at <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/workspace-overview>.

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.

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