

II of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, Pub. L. 105-220 (29 U.S.C. 760-764); Title VI, Section 605 of the Higher Education Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1125).

(b) *Regulations—General Applicability.* The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 81, 82, 85, 97, and 98.

Note on Peer Review Procedures: OSERS and OPE will apply requirements that are contained in 29 U.S.C. 760 and 762(f).

Priorities

For FY 2003, we have selected 7 invitational priorities for the SBIR program. SBIR projects are encouraged to look to the future by exploring uses of technology to ensure equal access to education and promote educational excellence throughout the Nation.

The application package will include a number of examples to illustrate the kinds of activities that could be funded under each priority. Specific examples are listed only as examples of advanced applications or basic research of interest to us, and they are not to be interpreted as exclusive. We intend to provide sufficient flexibility to obtain the greatest degree of creativity and innovation possible, consistent with overall SBIR and ED program objectives.

An application must be limited to one priority listed in this notice. When an application is relevant to more than one priority, the applicant must decide which priority is most relevant and submit it under that priority only. However, there is no limitation on the number of different applications that an applicant may submit under this competition, even to the same priority. A firm may submit separate applications on different priorities, or different applications on the same priority, but each application should respond to only one priority. Duplicate applications will be returned without review.

Invitational Priorities

We are particularly interested in applications that meet one of the following priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1) we do not give an application that meets one of these priorities a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

CFDA Number 84.133S: The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)

Priority 1—This priority supports research to develop methods, procedures, and rehabilitation technology that maximize the full inclusion and integration into society,

employment, independent living, family support, and economic and social self-sufficiency of individuals with disabilities, especially individuals with the most significant disabilities; or improve the effectiveness of services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

The following six invitational priorities relate to innovative research utilizing new technologies (including nanotechnologies and biotechnologies) to address the needs of individuals with disabilities and their families.

Invitational Priority 1—Development of Technology to Support Access or Promote Integration of Individuals with Disabilities in the Community, Workplace, or Educational Setting.

Invitational Priority 2—Development of Technology to Enhance Sensory or Motor Function of Individuals with Disabilities.

Invitational Priority 3—Development of Technology to Improve School to Work Transition and Employment Outcomes for Individuals with Disabilities.

Invitational Priority 4—Development of Technology to Promote Community Integration or Support Independent Living for Individuals with Disabilities.

Invitational Priority 5—Development of Technology to Support Early Intervention for Infants, Toddlers, and Small Children.

Invitational Priority 6—Development of Technology to Support Service Delivery, Training, or Evaluation of Interventions in the Clinical or Community-Based Rehabilitation Settings.

CFDA Number 84.017S: The Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE)

Priority 2—This priority supports research that contributes to achieving the purposes of part A of Title VI of the Higher Education Act—International Education Program.

Invitational Priority 7—Development of Interactive CD-ROMs in the Pashto and Farsi (Iranian) Languages with Glossaries, for use in Multi-Platforms (e.g., PC, Mac) at the 1 to 1+ Proficiency Levels according to the ACTFL-ILR Proficiency Scales. The language materials must include items drawn from native speakers and from mass information media, including recent events and authentic cultural materials. The overall objective would be the creation of highly practical communicative instruments for the two languages.

Selection Criteria: Under 34 CFR 75.210, we use the following selection criteria to evaluate applications for new grants under this competition. The

maximum score for all of these criteria is 100 points. The maximum score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(a) Significance (25 points).

(b) Quality of the Project Design (50 points).

(c) Quality of Project Personnel (15 points).

(d) Adequacy of Resources (10 points).

We will make awards based upon these selection criteria and the availability of funds. In the evaluation and handling of applications, we will make every effort to protect the confidentiality of the application and any evaluations.

Application Procedures

The Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) of 1998, (Pub. L. 105-277) and the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, (Pub. L. 106-107) encourage us to undertake initiatives to improve our grant processes. Enhancing the ability of individuals and entities to conduct business with us electronically is a major part of our response to these Acts. Therefore, we are taking steps to adopt the Internet as our chief means of conducting transactions in order to improve services to our customers and to simplify and expedite our business processes.

Note: Some of the procedures in these instructions for transmitting applications differ from those in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) (34 CFR 75.102). Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed regulations. However, these amendments make procedural changes only and do not establish new substantive policy. Therefore, under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(A), the Secretary has determined that proposed rulemaking is not required.

We are requiring that applications for grants for FY 2003 under Phase I SBIR program be submitted electronically using e-Application available through the Education Department's e-GRANTS system. The e-GRANTS system is accessible through its portal page at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

Applicants who are unable to submit an application through the e-GRANTS system may apply for a waiver to the electronic submission requirement. To apply for a waiver, applicants must explain the reason or reasons that prevent them from using the Internet to submit their applications. The reasons must be outlined in a letter addressed to: Priority 1: Kristi Wilson, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative