

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RIN 1855-ZA00

[CFDA No.: 84.330C]**Office of Innovation and Improvement—Advanced Placement Incentive (API) Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003**

Purpose of Program: The API program, funded under section 1705 of Title I, Part G of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), awards competitive grants designed to increase the successful participation of low-income students in pre-advanced placement and advanced placement courses and tests. By supporting increased access to and participation in pre-advanced placement and advanced placement courses and tests, the program provides greater opportunities for low-income students to achieve to high standards in English, mathematics, science, and other core subjects. Additional long-term goals of the program are to demonstrate that larger and more diverse groups of students can participate and succeed in advanced placement programs, and to increase the numbers of low-income and other disadvantaged students who receive baccalaureate and advanced degrees.

The API program provides resources that local educational agencies (LEAs) and other eligible applicants can use in pursuit of the objectives of the NCLB which aims for all elementary and secondary students to achieve to high standards. In particular, this program provides an opportunity for eligible entities to create new programs in schools identified for improvement, corrective action, or restructuring under Title I, Part A of the ESEA.

Eligible Applicants: (a) State educational agencies (SEAs); (b) LEAs, including charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law; and (c) national nonprofit educational entities with expertise in advanced placement services. In the case of an eligible entity that is an SEA, the SEA may use API grant funds to award subgrants to LEAs to enable those LEAs to carry out activities authorized under this program.

Applications Available: 5–16–03.

Notification of Intent to Apply for Funding: The Department will be able to develop a more efficient process for reviewing grant applications if it has a better understanding of the number of entities that intend to apply for funding under this competition. Therefore, the

Secretary strongly encourages each potential applicant for the API program to notify the Department by e-mail that it intends to submit an application for funding. The notification of intent to apply for funding should be sent no later than June 16, 2003 to the following Internet address:

madeline.baggett@ed.gov.

Applicants who fail to provide this e-mail notification may still apply for funding.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: 7–3–03.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: 9–1–03.

Estimated Available Funds:

Approximately \$10.7 million.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$200,000 to \$700,000 per year.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$200,000—\$450,000 per year.

Estimated Number of Awards: 22–42.

Note: These estimates are projections for the guidance of potential applicants. The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part VII of the application package) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You are encouraged to limit Part VII to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, using 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 text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs; and
- Use a font that is either 12-point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

Applicable Regulations and Statute:

(a) *Regulations.* Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) *Statute.* Title I, Part G of Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), 20 U.S.C. 6535–6537.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The API program promotes greater access to, and participation in, advanced placement courses and tests for low-income and other disadvantaged students. Covered programs include pre-advanced placement and advanced placement courses as well as the advanced placement tests administered by the

College Board. The International Baccalaureate Organization courses and exams are also approved under the program. Other educational entities that provide comparable programs of rigorous academic courses and testing through which low-income students may earn college credit may request approval from the Secretary.

The Secretary encourages schools to offer more rigorous middle and high school curricula in English, mathematics, science, and other core subjects. The API program supports that effort and, thus, is an important component of the Department’s commitment to ensuring that “no child is left behind”. In addition to improving academic achievement for all students, the program strives to raise expectations for low-income children. The development, enhancement, and expansion of advanced placement courses in all core disciplines is a key strategy for increasing the participation of students, especially low-income and other disadvantaged students, in advanced placement and other challenging courses.

Since the original authorization of the Department’s Advanced Placement program in 1998, funding for the program has increased from \$3 million to the current appropriation of \$23 million. In May 2002, low-income students took 140,571 advanced placement tests administered by the College Board, a 25 percent increase compared to 2001. While the Department is encouraged by this dramatic increase, it is important to note that, in 2002, the College Board changed the way it collects the data, and part of the increase may reflect this change. In addition, even with significant gains, there is still a significant gap between the level of participation of low-income students in advanced placement courses and tests and the level of participation of students from more affluent backgrounds.

The API program supports activities that enable greater numbers of low-income and other disadvantaged students to benefit from advanced placement courses and exams (ultimately increasing the likelihood that these students will receive college degrees) through increased access to, and participation in, pre-advanced placement and advanced placement courses. Pre-advanced placement and advanced placement teachers in the schools served by the program may participate in sustained, high-quality professional development activities designed to:

- (1) Improve teacher content area knowledge;