

period of each grant. The Department plans to use FY 2003 funds appropriated for this program to make continuation awards for the second budget period of these projects to grantees that demonstrate they are making substantial progress toward achieving the goals and objectives for their projects. The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

*Project Period:* Up to 36 months.

*Applicable Regulations:* The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 97, 98, and 99.

*Definitions:* For purposes of this competition, terms used in this notice have the following meanings as found in 34 CFR 490.4:

*Life skills* includes self-development, communication skills, job and financial skills development, education, interpersonal and family relationship development, and stress and anger management.

*Local correctional agency* means any agency of local government that provides corrections services to incarcerated adults.

*Local correctional education agency* means any agency of local government, other than a local correctional agency, that provides educational services to incarcerated adults.

*State correctional agency* means any agency of State government that provides corrections services to incarcerated adults.

*State correctional education agency* means any agency of State government, other than a State correctional agency, that provides educational services to incarcerated adults.

*Additional Awards:* Contingent upon the availability of FY 2003 and FY 2004 funds, we may make additional awards under these appropriations from the rank-ordered list of unfunded applications from this competition.

*Absolute Priority:* Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we will consider only applications that meet the following absolute priority: Grants for projects that assist State or local correctional agencies and State or local correctional education agencies in establishing and operating programs designed to reduce recidivism through the development and improvement of life skills necessary for reintegration of adult prisoners into society.

*Invitational Priorities:* Within the absolute priority, we are particularly interested in applications that meet one or more of the following invitational priorities.

*Invitational Priority 1.* Projects that integrate life skills instruction and services under a comprehensive reentry

plan with the State Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative project funded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

*Invitational Priority 2.* Projects that emphasize cognitive and interpersonal skills such as goal setting, developing strong family relationships, strengthening values, and enhancing social skills.

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1) we do not give an application that meets the invitational priorities a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

*Performance Measures:* The Secretary has established the following key performance measure for assessing the effectiveness of the Life Skills for State and Local Prisoners Program: the number of prisoners who attain measurable gains in one or more of the life skill domains (e.g., self-development, communication skills, job and financial skills development, education, interpersonal and family relationship development, stress and anger management or others) taught under these Life Skills projects. The Secretary has set an overall performance target that calls for the number of prisoners acquiring enhanced life skills from the cohort of Life Skills grant program projects initiated under this competition to increase by five percent annually.

In applying the selection criteria that follow for "Quality of project services" and "Quality of the project evaluation", the Secretary will take into consideration the extent to which the applicant demonstrates a strong capacity (1) to help achieve this target, and (2) to provide reliable data to the Department on the project's impact as measured by number of prisoners participating in Life Skills grants acquiring enhanced life skills.

*Selection Criteria:* We use the following selection criteria from 34 CFR 75.210 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 or factor under that criterion is indicated in parentheses.

(1) *Significance.* (20 points)—In determining the significance of the proposed project, the following factors are considered:

(a) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

(b) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

(c) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity

to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

(d) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to yield findings that may be utilized by other appropriate agencies and organizations.

(2) *Quality of the project design.* (25 points)—In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the following factors are considered:

(a) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(b) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(c) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

(d) The extent to which the design for implementing and evaluating the proposed project will result in information to guide possible replication activities or strategies, including information about the effectiveness of the approach or strategies employed by the project.

(e) The extent to which the proposed project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population.

(3) *Quality of project services.* (25 points)—In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the following factors are considered:

(a) The quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(b) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project reflect up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(c) 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 lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

(d) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.

(4) *Quality of the management plan.* (10 points)—In determining the quality of the management plan for the