

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services invites applications for FY 2003 under the Special Education—Technical Assistance and Dissemination to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities Program. This program is authorized under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended. This notice provides closing dates, priorities, and other information regarding the transmittal of applications.

Purpose of Program: This program provides technical assistance and information that (1) support States and local entities in building capacity to improve early intervention, educational, and transitional services and results for children with disabilities and their families; and (2) address goals and priorities for changing State systems that provide early intervention, educational, and transitional services for children with disabilities and their families.

Eligible Applicants: State educational agencies, local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, other public agencies, nonprofit private organizations, for-profit organizations, outlying areas, freely associated States, and Indian tribes or tribal organizations.

Applications Available: July 7, 2003.

Deadline for Transmittal of

Applications: August 6, 2003.

Deadline for Intergovernmental

Review: October 6, 2003.

Estimated Available Funds: \$9.5 million.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$30,000—\$575,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$179,000.

Maximum Awards: The chart shown in the Project Award section of this notice lists the maximum amount of funds for individual States for FY 2003. The Secretary may make awards under the priority described in the Priorities section to support single or multi-State projects. A State may be served by only one supported project. In determining the maximum funding levels for each State the Secretary considered, among other things, the following factors:

- (1) The total number of children from birth through age 21 in the State;
- (2) Number of people in poverty in the State;
- (3) Previous funding levels; and
- (4) Maximum and minimum funding amounts.

Estimated Number of Awards: 48.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Page Limit: Part III of the application submitted under this notice, the

application narrative, is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use in evaluating your application. You must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 70 pages, using the following standards:

- A “page” is 8.5” x 11” (on one side only) with one-inch 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, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use a font that is either 12-point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; Part IV, the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, the resumes, the bibliography or references, or the letters of support. However, you must include all of the application narrative in Part III.

We will reject your application if—

- You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or
- You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

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.

Selection Criteria

In evaluating an application for a new grant under this competition, we will use selection criteria chosen from the general selection criteria in 34 CFR 75.210 of EDGAR. The specific selection criteria to be used for this competition will be provided in the application package for this competition.

General Requirements

(a) The projects funded under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).

(b) Applicants and grant recipients under this competition must involve qualified individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see section 661(f)(1)(A) of IDEA).

(c) If a project maintains a Web site, it must include relevant information and documents in an accessible form on the Web site.

Priority

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet the following absolute priority:

Background

IDEA includes provisions designed to ensure that each child with a disability is provided a high-quality individual program of services to meet his or her developmental and educational needs. For children who are deaf and blind to receive such services, intensive technical assistance must be afforded State and local educational agencies, parents, and professionals regarding appropriate educational placements, accommodations, environmental adaptations, support services, and other matters. In addition, given the severity of deaf-blindness and the low-incidence nature of this population, many early intervention programs or local school districts lack personnel with the training or experience to serve children who are deaf-blind.

Priority

This priority supports projects to build the capacity of State and local agencies, parents, and professionals to improve outcomes for children and young adults who are deaf-blind, and their families, by providing technical assistance, information, and training on early intervention, special education, related services, and transitional services. Projects must:

(a) Identify and support specific activities to, at a minimum:

(1) Enhance State capacity to improve services and results for children who are deaf-blind;

(2) Facilitate the achievement of systemic-change goals by improving education opportunities for children who are deaf-blind;

(3) Focus on implementation of research-based best practices;

(4) Ensure that service providers have the necessary skills to address the unique needs of children who are deaf-blind; and

(5) Address the needs of families of children who are deaf-blind.

(b) Maintain needs assessment information to develop statewide priorities for technical assistance, information, and training across all age ranges by:

(1) Collecting basic demographic information on children with deaf-blindness;

(2) Assessing the critical needs of these children; and