

Summary of Potential Costs and Benefits

The Assistant Secretary has determined this project to be beneficial to the ongoing research and further assistance of VR customers. No other direct financial contribution is expected of the grantee.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program. *Applicable Program Regulations:* 34 CFR part 373.

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(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.235P Special Demonstration Programs—Model Demonstration Projects to Improve the Literacy and Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Disabilities)

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 773(b).

Dated: July 22, 2003.

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Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No. 84.235P]

Special Demonstration Programs—Model Demonstrations To Improve the Literacy and Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Disabilities; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

Purpose of Program: Special Demonstration Programs support projects that expand and improve the provision of rehabilitation and other services authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Act), or further the purposes of the Act in empowering individuals with disabilities to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion and integration into society. This competition focuses attention on the adult literacy needs of individuals with learning disabilities pursuing employment under the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program. We intend that projects funded under these priorities will demonstrate that certain specific literacy services may raise the literacy levels and earnings of individuals with disabilities compared to individuals who receive the usual vocational rehabilitation (VR) services.

Eligible Applicants: State VR agencies.

Applications Available: July 28, 2003.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: August 27, 2003.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: September 26, 2003.

Estimated Available Funds: \$1,600,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$200,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 8. Eight projects will be funded in total. Four projects will be funded under each of the two reading curricula described in the Background section of the notice of proposed priorities published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. It is suggested that you limit Part III to 35 pages.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, 97, and 99. (b) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 373.

Priorities

Model Demonstrations To Improve the Literacy and Employment Outcomes of Individuals With Disabilities

It is the policy of the Department of Education not to solicit applications before the publication of final priorities. However, in this case it is essential to solicit applications on the basis of the notice of proposed priorities published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**, because the Department's authority to obligate these funds will expire on September 30, 2003. Applicants should base their applications on the proposed priorities. If changes are made in the final notice in response to public comments or other considerations, applicants will be given an opportunity to revise or resubmit their applications.

For FY 2003, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet this priority.

Invitational Priority

The invitational priority in the notice of proposed priorities published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register** also applies to this competition.

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

Application Procedures

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.

Pilot Project for Electronic Submission of Applications

In FY 2003, the U.S. Department of Education is continuing to expand its pilot project for electronic submission of applications to include additional formula grant programs and additional discretionary grant competitions. The Special Demonstration Programs—CFDA number 84.235P is one of the programs included in the pilot project. If you are an applicant under the Special Demonstration Programs, you may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format.