

each applicant to identify the amount of the Federal award for which it is applying and can qualify. That amount is based on the amount of matching funds to be provided by the applicant. The size of each award will depend on the total number of fundable applications that NIDRR and RSA receive and the requests for Federal funding that are included in those applications.

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(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.224C, Alternative Financing Program and 84.235T, Access to Telework Fund Program.)

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 773(b) and 29 U.S.C. 3051-3056.

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Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA Nos.: 84.224C and 84.235T]

Alternative Financing Mechanism Program and Access to Telework Fund Program; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

Purpose of Program: This notice invites applications for two programs: the Alternative Financing Mechanisms Program (AFP) under title III of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (AT Act) that is administered by the

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and the Access to Telework Fund Program (Telework) under section 303(b) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Rehab Act), that is administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).

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 priority, definitions, and application and project requirements 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 priority, definitions, and application and project requirements. 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Funds under these competitions will be used to support projects in FY 2003.

States may jointly apply for and administer an AFP grant and a Telework grant. These States must meet the requirements for each priority and will compete separately under each priority. Alternatively, States may apply for either the AFP or the Telework grant, or both, to be administered separately. In addition, Indian tribes are eligible to apply for Telework grants.

Priorities

Absolute Priority 1—Alternative Financing Mechanism Program (84.224C)

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

The AFP will award grants to States to pay for the Federal share of the cost of the establishment and administration of, or the expansion and administration of, an AFP featuring one or more alternative financing mechanisms to allow individuals with disabilities and their family members, guardians, advocates, and authorized representatives to purchase AT devices and AT services.

Eligible Applicants: States that receive or have received grants under section 101 of the AT Act are eligible for an AFP grant. Under section 3(a)(13)(A) of the AT Act, State means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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

Selection Criteria

In evaluating an application for a new grant under this competition, we will determine if an applicant has submitted the required assurances.

Absolute Priority 2—Access to Telework Fund Program (84.235T)

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

The Access to Telework Fund Program will award grants to States and Indian Tribes to pay for the Federal share of the cost of the establishment and administration of an Access to Telework Fund featuring one or more alternative financing mechanisms to allow individuals with disabilities access to computers and other needed equipment not provided by an employer to enable them to telework from home or other remote sites.

Eligible Applicants: States as defined in the AT Act and governing bodies of American Indian tribes located on Federal and State reservations consistent with section 7(19)(B) of the Rehab Act are eligible for a Telework grant. Consortia of States and American Indian tribes are also eligible for a Telework grant.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, and 85

Selection Criteria

In evaluating an application for a new grant under this competition, we will determine if an applicant has submitted the required assurances.