

project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timeliness, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks (6 points).

(ii) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project (5 points).

(g) *Quality of the project evaluation* (12 points total).

(1) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.

(2) In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project (6 points).

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible (6 points).

Application Procedures

Note: Some of the procedures in these instructions for transmitting applications differ from those in the 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 Assistive Technology Act Data Collection Project—CFDA #84.224B is one of the programs included in the pilot project. If you are an applicant under this project, you may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format.

The pilot project involves the use of the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application). Users of e-Application will be entering data online while

completing their applications. You may not e-mail a soft copy of a grant application to us. If you participate in this voluntary pilot project by submitting an application electronically, the data you enter online will be saved into a database. We request your participation in e-Application. We shall continue to evaluate its success and solicit suggestions for improvement.

If you participate in e-Application, please note the following:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- You will not receive any additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in paper format. When you enter the e-Application system, you will find information about its hours of operation.

- You may submit all documents electronically, including the Application for Federal Assistance (ED 424), Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement, which will include a PR/Award number (an identifying number unique to your application).

- Within three working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the Application for Federal Assistance (ED 424) to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

(1) Print ED 424 from the e-Application system.

(2) The institution's Authorizing Representative must sign this form.

(3) Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard copy signature page of the ED 424.

(4) Fax the signed ED 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 260-1349.

- We may request that you give us original signatures on all other forms at a later date.

- *Closing Date Extension in Case of System Unavailability:* If you elect to participate in the e-Application pilot for the 84.224B competition and you are prevented from submitting your application on the closing date because the e-Application system is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day in order to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery. For us to grant this extension—

(1) You must be a registered user of e-Application, and have initiated an e-Application for this competition; and

(2) (a) The e-Application system must be unavailable for 60 minutes or more

between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Washington, DC, time on the deadline date; or

(b) The e-Application system must be unavailable for any period of time during the last hour of operation (that is, for any period of time between 3:30 and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC, time) on the deadline date.

The Department must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension you must contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** or (2) the e-GRANTS help desk at 1-888-336-8930.

You may access the electronic grant application for the 84.224B competition at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

Parity Instructions

Users of e-Application, a data driven system, will be entering data online while completing their applications. This will be more interactive than just e-mailing a soft copy of a grant application to us. If you participate in this voluntary pilot project by submitting an application electronically, the data you enter online will go into a database and ultimately will be accessible in electronic form to our reviewers.

This pilot project continues the Department's transition to an electronic grant award process. In addition to e-Application, the Department plans to expand the number of discretionary programs using the electronic peer review (e-Reader) system and to increase the participation of discretionary programs offering grantees the use of the electronic annual performance reporting (e-Reports) system.

To help ensure parity and a similar look between electronic and paper copies of grant applications, we are asking each applicant that submits a paper application to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Submit your application on 8.5" by 11" paper.
- Leave a 1-inch margin on all sides.
- Use consistent font throughout your document. You may also use boldface type, underlining, and italics. However, please do not use colored text.
- Please use black and white, also, for illustrations, including charts, tables, graphs and pictures.

- For the narrative component, your application should consist of the number and text of each selection criterion followed by the narrative. The text of the selection criterion, if