

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA Nos. 84.305G, 84.305H, 84.305K, 84.305M, and 84.305E]

Institute of Education Sciences; Notice Inviting Applications for Grants To Support Education Research for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

SUMMARY: The Director of the Institute of Education Sciences (Institute) announces five FY 2004 competitions for grants to support education research. The Director takes this action under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Act), Title I of Pub. L. 107-279. The intent of these grants is to provide national leadership in expanding fundamental knowledge and understanding of education from early childhood education through postsecondary study.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Mission of Institute: A central purpose of the Institute is to provide parents, educators, students, researchers, policymakers, and the general public with reliable information about education practices that support learning and improve academic achievement and access to education opportunities for all students. In carrying out its mission, the Institute provides support for programs of research in areas of demonstrated national need.

Competitions in this notice: The Institute currently plans to support the following competitions in FY 2004:

- Reading Comprehension and Reading Scale-up Research;
- Cognition and Student Learning Research;
- Mathematics and Science Education Research;
- Teacher Quality Research; and
- Research on Education Finance, Leadership, and Management.

Additional competitions for FY 2004 may be announced later.

Eligible Applicants: Applicants that have the ability and capacity to conduct scientifically valid research are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, non-profit and for-profit organizations and public and private agencies and institutions, such as colleges and universities.

Request for Applications and Other Information: Information regarding program and application requirements for each of the Institute's competitions is contained in the applicable Request for Applications package (RFA), which will be available at the following Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/edresearch/applicant.html>.

The RFAs will be available—

(1) On or before *October 22, 2003*, for Cognition and Student Learning Research; Mathematics and Science Education Research; Teacher Quality Research; and Reading Comprehension and Reading Scale-up Research; and

(2) On or before *November 14, 2003*, for Research on Education Finance, Leadership and Management.

Interested potential applicants should periodically check the Institute's Web site.

Information regarding selection criteria and review procedures will also be posted at this Web site.

Fiscal Information: Although Congress has not enacted a final appropriation for FY 2004, the Institute is inviting applications for these competitions now so that it may be prepared to make awards following final action on the Department's appropriation bill. The President's Budget for the Institute for FY 2004 includes sufficient funding for all of the competitions included in this notice. The actual award of grants is pending the availability of funds.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 77, 80, 81, 82, 85, 86 (part 86 applies only to Institutions of Higher Education), 97, 98, and 99. In addition 34 CFR part 75 is applicable, except for the provisions in 34 CFR 75.100, 75.101(b), 75.102, 75.103, 75.105, 75.109(a), 75.200, 75.201, 75.209, 75.210, 75.211, 75.217, 75.219, 75.220 and 75.230.

Performance Measures

To evaluate the overall success of its education research program, the Institute of Education Sciences annually assesses the quality and relevance of newly funded research projects, as well as the quality of research publications that result from its funded research projects. Two indicators address the quality of new projects. First, an external panel of eminent senior scientists reviews the quality of a randomly selected sample of newly funded research applications, and the percentage of new projects that are deemed to be of high quality is determined. Second, because much of the Institute's work focuses on questions of effectiveness, newly funded applications are evaluated to identify those that address causal questions and then to determine what percentage of those projects use randomized field trials to answer the causal questions. To evaluate the relevance of newly funded research projects, a panel of experienced

education practitioners and administrators reviews descriptions of a randomly selected sample of newly funded projects and rates the degree to which the projects are relevant to educational practice.

Two indicators address the quality of new research publications, both print and web-based, which are the products of funded research projects. First, an external panel of eminent scientists reviews the quality of a randomly selected sample of new publications, and the percentage of new publications that are deemed to be of high quality is determined. Second, publications that address causal questions are identified, and are then reviewed to determine the percentage that employ randomized experimental designs. As funded research projects are completed, the Institute will subject the final reports to similar reviews.

To evaluate impact, the Institute surveys a random sample of K-16 policymakers and administrators once every 3 years to determine the percentage who report routinely considering evidence of effectiveness before adopting educational products and approaches.

Application Procedures

The Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) of 1998, (Pub. L. 105-277) and the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, (Pub. L. 106-107) encourage us to undertake initiatives to improve our grant processes. Enhancing the ability of individuals and entities to conduct business with us electronically is a major part of our response to these Acts. Therefore, we are taking steps to adopt the Internet as our chief means of conducting transactions in order to improve services to our customers and to simplify and expedite our business processes.

We are requiring that applications to the FY 2004 competitions be submitted electronically to the following Web site: <http://ies.constellagroup.com>.

Information on the software to be used in submitting applications will be available at the same Web site.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The contact person and the deadline for receipt of applications associated with a particular program of research is listed in the following chart and in the RFA that will be posted at: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/edresearch/applicant.html>.