

students; and \$500,000–2,000,000 for LEAs with enrollments above 300,000 students.

*Estimated Average Size of Awards:* Total for all three years is \$750,000.

*Estimated Number of Awards:* 100–135.

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

*Project Period:* Up to 36 months.

## Full Text of Announcement

### I. Funding Opportunity Description

*Purpose of Program:* Teaching American History grants support projects to raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of traditional American history. Grant awards assist local educational agencies (LEAs), in partnership with entities that have extensive content expertise, to develop, document, evaluate, and disseminate innovative, cohesive models of professional development. By helping teachers to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of traditional American history as a separate subject matter within the core curriculum, these programs improve instruction and raise student achievement.

*Priorities:* This competition includes one absolute priority and two invitational priorities that are explained in the following paragraphs. To be considered for funding, each applicant must address the absolute priority regarding Partnerships with Other Agencies or Institutions. These priorities are as follows.

In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), this priority is from section 2351(b) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Pub. L. 107–110).

*Absolute Priority:* For FY 2004, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3) we consider only applications that meet this priority.

This priority is:

#### *Partnerships With Other Agencies or Institutions*

Each applicant must propose to work in collaboration with one or more of the following:

- IHE.
- Non-profit history or humanities organizations.
- Libraries or museums.

**Note:** Each applicant is encouraged to include in its application an assurance from appropriate officials of the agency or institution(s) with which it will work in partnership. This assurance may include information about how the partnering agency

or institution(s) will help the applicant implement the proposed project.

Under this competition we are particularly interested in applications that address the following priorities. *Invitational Priorities:* For FY 2004 these priorities are invitational priorities. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1) we do not give an application that meets these invitational priorities a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

These priorities are:

#### *Invitational Priority 1—Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Evaluation Designs*

The Secretary is particularly interested in receiving applications that propose evaluation plans that are based on rigorous scientifically based research methods to assess the effectiveness of a particular intervention. The Secretary intends that this priority will allow program participants and the Department to determine whether the project produces meaningful effects on student achievement or teacher performance.

Evaluation methods using an experimental design are best for determining project effectiveness. Thus, the project should use an experimental design under which participants—e.g., students, teachers, classrooms, or schools—are randomly assigned to participate in the project activities being evaluated or to a control group that does not participate in the project activities being evaluated.

If random assignment is not feasible, the project may use a quasi-experimental design with carefully matched comparison conditions. This alternative design attempts to approximate a randomly assigned control group by matching participants—e.g., students, teachers, classrooms, or schools—with non-participants having similar pre-program characteristics.

In cases where random assignment is not possible and an extended series of observations of the outcome of interest precedes and follows the introduction of a new program or practice, regression discontinuity designs may be employed.

For projects that are focused on special populations in which sufficient numbers of participants are not available to support random assignment or matched comparison group designs, single-subject designs such as multiple baseline or treatment-reversal or interrupted time series that are capable of demonstrating causal relationships can be employed.

Proposed evaluation strategies that use neither experimental designs with

random assignment nor quasi-experimental designs using a matched comparison group nor regression discontinuity designs will not be considered responsive to the priority when sufficient numbers of participants are available to support these designs. Evaluation strategies that involve too small a number of participants to support group designs must be capable of demonstrating the causal effects of an intervention or program on those participants.

The proposed evaluation plan must describe how the project evaluator will collect—before the project intervention commences and after it ends—valid and reliable data that measure the impact of participation in the program or in the comparison group.

In determining the quality of the evaluation method, we will consider the extent to which the applicant presents a feasible, credible plan that includes the following:

(1) The type of design to be used (that is, random assignment or matched comparison). If it will be matched comparison, the applicant should include in the plan a discussion of why random assignment is not feasible.

(2) Outcomes to be measured.

(3) A discussion of how the applicant plans to assign students, teachers, classrooms, or schools to the project and control group or match them for comparison with other students, teachers, classrooms, or schools.

(4) A proposed evaluator, preferably independent, with the necessary background and technical expertise to carry out the proposed evaluation. (An independent evaluator does not have any authority over the project and is not involved in its implementation.)

#### *Invitational Priority 2—Traditional American History*

The Secretary is particularly interested in receiving applications that propose projects that address traditional American history, meaning, for example, projects that teach the significant issues, episodes, and turning points in the history of the United States, and how the words and deeds of individual Americans have determined the course of our Nation. This history teaches how the principles of freedom and democracy, articulated in our founding documents, have shaped—and continue to shape—America's struggles and achievements, as well as its social, political, and legal institutions and relations. Applicants are invited to propose projects that enable students to gain an understanding of these principles and of the historical events and people that best illustrate them.