

Washington 98315–1101, Attention: NWTTS EIS/OEIS Project Manager.

Correction: In the **Federal Register** (77 FR 11497) of February 27, 2012, on page 11498, in the third column, last paragraph, correct the comment period date to read:

Written comments must be postmarked no later than April 27, 2012, and should be mailed to: Ms. Kimberly Kler, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Northwest, 1101 Tautog Circle, Suite 203, Silverdale, Washington 98315–1101, Attention: NWTTS EIS/OEIS Project Manager.

Dated: March 16, 2012.

J.M. Beal,

Lieutenant Commander, Office of the Judge Advocate, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 2012–7018 Filed 3–22–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3810–FF–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Application for New Awards; Training for Realtime Writers Program

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information

Training for Realtime Writers Program

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2012.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.116K.

DATES:

Applications Available: March 23, 2012.

Deadline for Transmittal of

Applications: May 7, 2012.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: July 6, 2012.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The objective of this program is to provide grants to institutions of higher education (IHEs) that meet certain qualifications, to promote training and placement of individuals, including individuals who have completed a court reporting training program, as realtime writers in order to meet the requirements for closed captioning of video programming set forth in section 713 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 613) and the regulations prescribed thereunder.

Priorities: This notice contains one absolute priority and three competitive preference priorities. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), the absolute

priority is from section 872(a)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA), 20 U.S.C. 1161s(a)(3). The competitive preference priorities are from the notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs published in the **Federal Register** on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR 27637).

Absolute Priority: For FY 2012 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet this priority.

Applicants must: (1) Demonstrate they possess the most substantial capability to increase their capacity to train realtime writers; (2) demonstrate the most promising collaboration with educational institutions, businesses, labor organizations, or other community groups having the potential to train or provide job placement assistance to realtime writers; or (3) propose the most promising and innovative approaches for initiating or expanding training or job placement assistance efforts with respect to realtime writers.

An eligible entity receiving a grant must use the grant funds for purposes relating to the recruitment, training and assistance, and job placement of individuals, including individuals who have completed a court reporting training program, as realtime writers, including: (1) Recruitment; (2) the provision of scholarships (subject to the requirements in section 872(c)(2) of the HEA); (3) distance learning; (4) further developing and implementing both English and Spanish curricula to more effectively train individuals in realtime writing skills, and education in the knowledge necessary for the delivery of high quality closed captioning services; (5) mentoring students to ensure successful completion of the realtime training and providing assistance in job placement; (6) encouraging individuals with disabilities to pursue a career in realtime writing; and (7) the employment and payment of personnel for the purposes described.

Competitive Preference Priorities: Within this absolute priority, we give competitive preference to applications that address the following priorities.

There are three competitive preference priorities: Competitive Preference Priority 1—Improving Productivity; Competitive Preference Priority 2—Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making; and Competitive Preference Priority 3—Technology.

Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award one additional point for each competitive priority that an application meets. The maximum competitive preference points an application can receive under this competition is three.

Note: Applicants must include in the one-page abstract submitted with the application a statement indicating which competitive preference priority or priorities they are addressing.

These priorities are:

Competitive Preference Priority 1—Improving Productivity (1 Additional Point)

Projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, modification of school schedules and teacher compensation systems, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Competitive Preference Priority 2—Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making (1 Additional Point)

Projects that are designed to collect (or obtain), analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, including data on program participant outcomes, in accordance with privacy requirements (as defined in this notice), in one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Improving postsecondary student outcomes relating to enrollment, persistence, and completion and leading to career success; and

(b) Providing reliable and comprehensive information on the implementation of Department of Education programs, and participant outcomes in these programs, by using data from State longitudinal data systems or by obtaining data from reliable third-party sources.

Competitive Preference Priority 3—Technology (1 Additional Point)

Projects that are designed to improve student achievement (as defined in this notice) or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing teachers to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Definitions

These definitions are from the notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the **Federal**

Register on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR 27637), and they apply to the competitive preference priorities in this notice.

Open educational resources (OER) means teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use or repurposing by others.

Privacy requirements means the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, and its implementing regulations in 34 CFR part 99, the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a, as well as all applicable Federal, State, and local requirements regarding privacy.

Student Achievement Means

(a) For tested grades and subjects: (1) A student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across schools.

(b) For non-tested grades and subjects: alternative measures of student learning and performance, such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests;

student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across schools.

Note: Projects responding to competitive preference priority 3 must incorporate ways to improve student achievement (as defined in this notice) or teacher effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials. The Department recognizes that some of the examples in the definition of student achievement may not be relevant to the TRTW program. Accordingly, applicants who are writing to this priority should address paragraph (a)(2) of the definition of "student achievement," which tells applicants to focus on other measures of student learning, and should address this competitive preference priority in a way that improves student achievement in a relevant higher education context.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1161s.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the **Federal Register** on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR 27637).

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds:

\$1,127,684.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2013 from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition.

Estimated Range of Awards:

\$200,000–\$300,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards:

\$281,921 for the entire performance period.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$300,000 for the entire grant period. The Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Estimated Number of Awards: 4.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* An IHE that offers a court reporting program that: (1) Has a curriculum capable of training realtime writers qualified to provide captioning services; (2) is accredited by an accrediting agency or association recognized by the Secretary; and (3) is participating in student aid programs under Title IV of the HEA.

2. (a) *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

(b) *Supplement-Not-Supplant:* This program includes a supplement-not-supplant requirement. Under section 872(c)(4) of the HEA, grant amounts awarded under this program must supplement and not supplant other Federal or non-Federal funds of the grant recipient for purposes of promoting the training and placement of individuals as realtime writers.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address to Request Application Package:* You can obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs).

To obtain a copy via the Internet, use the following address: www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html.

To obtain a copy from ED Pubs, write, fax, or call the following: ED Pubs, U.S.

Department of Education, P.O. Box 22207, Alexandria, VA 22304. Telephone, toll free: 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (703) 605-6794. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call, toll free: 1-877-576-7734.

You can contact ED Pubs at its Web site, also: www.EDPubs.gov or at its email address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this program or competition as follows: CFDA number 84.116K.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the program contact person listed in this section.

2. *Content and Form of Application Submission:* Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this program. 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. Any application addressing the competitive preference priorities must address them in the abstract and the narrative. For purposes of determining compliance with the page limit, each page on which there are words will be counted as one full page. You must limit the application narrative to no more than 15 pages, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.
- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, *except* titles, headings, footnotes, endnotes, quotations, references, and captions. Charts, tables, figures, and graphs in the application narrative may be single spaced.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger; or, no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). However, you may use a 10 point font in charts, tables, figures, graphs, footnotes, and endnotes.
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424) and the Department of Education Supplemental Information for the SF 424 Form; the one-page Abstract; Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524); or Part IV, the Assurances and Certifications. The page

limit also does not apply to a Table of Contents, if you include one. However, the page limit does apply to all of the project narrative section in Part III.

If you include any attachments or appendices not specifically requested, these items will be counted as part of the program narrative [Part III] for purposes of the page limit requirement.

We will reject your application if you exceed the page limit.

3. *Submission Dates and Times:*

Applications Available: March 23, 2012.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: May 7, 2012.

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to section IV.7. *Other Submission Requirements* of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: June 6, 2012.

4. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under Executive Order 12372 is in the application package for this program.

5. *Funding Restrictions:* Under section 872(c)(3) of the HEA, a grantee under this program may not use more than five percent of the grant amount to pay administrative costs associated with activities funded by the grant. We reference regulations outlining additional funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

6. *Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and Central Contractor*

Registry: To do business with the Department of Education, you must—

a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);

b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), the Government's primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active CCR registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet. A DUNS number can be created within one business day.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow 2–5 weeks for your TIN to become active.

The CCR registration process may take five or more business days to complete. If you are currently registered with the CCR, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your CCR registration on an annual basis. This may take three or more business days to complete.

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined at the following Grants.gov Web page: www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.

7. *Other Submission Requirements:* Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. *Electronic Submission of Applications*

Applications for grants under the Training for Realtime Writers Program, CFDA number 84.116K, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not email an

electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement *and* submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under *Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement*.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Training for Realtime Writers Program at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.116, not 84.116K).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received—that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system—after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your

application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at <http://www.G5.gov>.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a PDF (Portable Document) read-only, non-modifiable format. Do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable PDF or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department.) The Department then will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send a second notification to you by email. This second notification indicates that the Department has received your application and has assigned your application a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).

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

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you

an extension until 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system because—

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system; and
- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevent you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed

statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Frederick Winter, Training for Realtime Writers Program, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street NW., Room 6142, Washington, DC 20006-8544. FAX: (202) 502-7877.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.116K), LBJ Basement Level 1, 400 Maryland Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20202-4260.

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

(1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark. (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.

(3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.

(4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

- (1) A private metered postmark.
- (2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application, by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address: U.S. Department of Education, Application Control Center, Attention: (CFDA Number 84.116K), 550 12th

Street, SW., Room 7041, Potomac Center Plaza, Washington, DC 20202-4260.

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications:

If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department—

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and—if not provided by the Department—in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. *Selection Criteria:* The selection criteria for this program are from 34 CFR 75.210 and are listed in the application package.

2. *Review and Selection Process:* We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary also requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. *Special Conditions:* Under 34 CFR 74.14 and 80.12, the Secretary may impose special conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 34 CFR parts 74 or 80, as applicable; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. *Award Notices:* If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and

send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN). We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements:* We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the *Applicable Regulations* section in this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section in this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. *Reporting:* (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

4. *Performance Measures:* The Department has established the following Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) performance measure for the Training for Realtime Writers Program: The number and percentage of participants who have completed the program who are employed as realtime writers.

This measure constitutes the Department's indicator of success for this program. Consequently, we advise an applicant for a grant under this program to give careful consideration to this measure in conceptualizing the approach and evaluation for its proposed project.

If funded, you will be required to collect and report data in your project's annual performance report (34 CFR 75.590).

5. *Continuation Awards:* In making a continuation award, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.253, the

extent to which a grantee has made "substantial progress toward meeting the objectives in its approved application." This consideration includes the review of a grantee's progress in meeting the targets and projected outcomes in its approved application, and whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget. In making a continuation grant, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Agency Contact

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Frederick Winter, Training for Realtime Writers Program, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., Room 6142, Washington, DC 20006-8544. Telephone: (202) 502-7632 or by email: frederick.winter@ed.gov.

If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to the program contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** in section VII of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available via the Federal Digital System at: www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site, you can view this document, as well as all other documents of this Department published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site.

You may also access documents of the Department published in the **Federal Register** by using the article search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically, through the advanced search feature at this site, you can limit your search to documents published by the Department.

Dated: March 20, 2012.

Eduardo M. Ochoa,

Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.

[FR Doc. 2012-7068 Filed 3-22-12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP)

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information

Strengthening Institutions Program

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2012.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.031A.

Dates:

Applications Available: March 23, 2012.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: April 23, 2012.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: June 21, 2012.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The SIP provides grants to eligible institutions of higher education (IHEs) to help them become self sufficient and expand their capacity to serve low-income students by providing funds to improve and strengthen the institution's academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability.

Priorities: This notice includes one competitive preference priority and three invitational priorities. The competitive preference priority is from the Department's notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the **Federal Register** on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR 27637).

Competitive Preference Priority: For FY 2012 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i) we award up to an additional five points to an application, depending on how well the application meets this priority.

This priority is:

Supporting Programs, Practices, or Strategies for Which There Is Strong or Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness

Projects that are supported by strong or moderate evidence. A project that is supported by strong evidence (as defined in this notice) will receive more points than a project that is supported by moderate evidence (as defined in this notice).

Note: In scoring this priority, applicants determined to have strong evidence will receive the full five points. Applicants determined to have moderate evidence will receive 2.5 points. The Department will screen applicants' response to this competitive preference priority in accordance with the requirements in this notice and determine which applications have met the evidence standards in the priority.

Invitational Priorities: For FY 2012 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, these priorities are invitational priorities.

These priorities are:

Invitational Priority 1—Increasing Postsecondary Success

Projects that are designed to address the following priority area:

Increasing the number and proportion of high-need students (as defined in this notice) who persist in and complete college or other postsecondary education and training.

Invitational Priority 2—Technology

Projects that are designed to improve student achievement or faculty effectiveness through the use of high-quality digital tools or materials, which may include preparing faculty to use the technology to improve instruction, as well as developing, implementing, or evaluating digital tools or materials.

Invitational Priority 3—Improving Productivity

Projects that are designed to significantly increase efficiency in the use of time, staff, money, or other resources while improving student learning or other educational outcomes (i.e., outcome per unit of resource). Such projects may include innovative and sustainable uses of technology, alternative staffing models, competency-based learning, use of open educational resources (as defined in this notice), or other strategies.

Definitions: The following definitions are from the notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs published in the **Federal Register** on December 15, 2010 (75 FR 78486), and corrected on May 12, 2011 (76 FR

27637), and apply to the priorities in this notice:

Carefully matched comparison group design means a type of quasi-experimental study (as defined in this notice) that attempts to approximate an experimental study (as defined in this notice). More specifically, it is a design in which project participants are matched with non-participants based on key characteristics that are thought to be related to the outcome. These characteristics include, but are not limited to:

(1) Prior test scores and other measures of academic achievement (preferably, the same measures that the study will use to evaluate outcomes for the two groups);

(2) Demographic characteristics, such as age, disability, gender, English proficiency, ethnicity, poverty level, parents' educational attainment, and single- or two-parent family background;

(3) The time period in which the two groups are studied (e.g., the two groups are children entering kindergarten in the same year as opposed to sequential years); and

(4) Methods used to collect outcome data (e.g., the same test of reading skills administered in the same way to both groups).

Note: The examples cited in this definition are indications of the types of comparisons applicants could make when designing a carefully matched comparison group study. Applicants might want to consider comparisons that are proper in the higher education context—such as comparing the same entering cohort of students.

Experimental study means a study that employs random assignment of, for example, students, teachers, classrooms, schools, or districts to participate in a project being evaluated (treatment group) or not to participate in the project (control group). The effect of the project is the average difference in outcomes between the treatment and control groups.

Note: The types of random assignment mentioned above are provided as examples. Applicants might want to consider random assignment that is relevant in the higher education context.

High-need children and high-need students means children and students at risk of educational failure, such as children and students who are living in poverty, who are English learners, who are far below grade level, or who are not on track to becoming college- or career-ready by graduation, who have left school or college before receiving, respectively, a regular high school diploma or a college degree or