



**U.S. Department of Education
State Tribal Education Partnership (STEP)
Grant Program
CFDA 84.415A**

Technical Assistance Webinar

Date: April 30, 2015

Time: *2:00 pm – 3:30 pm ET*

Agenda

- 1. Background**
- 2. Program Purpose**
- 3. Program Overview**
- 4. Priorities and Requirements**
- 5. Application Submission and Format:**
 - ✓ **Project Narrative:**
 - **Priorities,**
 - **Requirements, and**
 - **Selection Criteria**
 - ✓ **Budget Narratives**
 - ✓ **Signed Preliminary Agreement**
 - ✓ **Resumes and other attachments**
- 6. Questions**

Overview

Bill Mendoza

Executive Director for the White House Initiative
on American Indian and Alaska Native Education

	STEP Grants	NYCP Grants
Eligible Applicant(s)	TEAs	Tribe (or TEA), LEA, SEA, Indian Org, Indian IHE
Purpose of Program	Build TEA capacity; build relationship with LEA and SEA	Community-wide effort to improve student outcomes through a partnership
Program Length	4 years	4 years
Total Amount Available in FY15	\$2 million	\$3 million
Requirements for Collaboration	Agreement with LEA, SEA	Partnership must include LEA or BIE-funded school, tribe
Requirements and Restrictions	TEA will perform administrative functions for at least one ESEA formula-grant program in eligible schools (but will not receive those ESEA grants)	Project is based on results of a local needs assessment
Direct Services to Students?	No.	Yes.

Program Purpose

- The purpose of the new STEP program is the same as the 2012 Pilot:
 - (a) promote increased collaboration between TEAs and the SEAs and LEAs that serve students from affected tribes, and
 - (b) build the capacity of TEAs to conduct certain administrative functions under certain ESEA formula grant programs for eligible schools, as determined by the TEA, SEA, and LEA. *For more on “capacity-building, see FAQ # 3.*

This grant program is authorized under Section 7131(a)(4) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 7451(a)(4).

Program Overview

Eligible Applicants:	TEAs	
Funds Available:	\$1,950,000	
Range of Award Per Project Year:	\$150,000 - \$300,000	Single TEA
	\$300,000 - \$500,000	Consortium
Project Period:	48 Months	
Estimated # of Awards:	Up to 6	
Application Deadline:	June 15, 2015	

Priorities

The new STEP program includes two absolute priorities:

1- Applicant must be an established TEA.

2- Applicant must be a TEA with limited prior experience.

Definition

Established TEA means a TEA that:

- (a) Previously received a STEP grant, or
- (b) Has an existing prior relationship with an SEA or LEA as evidenced by a prior written agreement between the TEA and SEA or LEA, and meets two or more of the following criteria:
 - (i) Has an existing tribal education code;
 - (ii) Has administered at least one education program (for example, a tribally operated preschool or afterschool program) within the past five years; or
 - (iii) Has administered at least one Federal, State, local, or private grant within the past five years.

Requirements

Preliminary Agreement : *For a complete list, please read the NIA.*

- (a) An explanation of how the parties will work collaboratively to:
 - (1) Administer selected ESEA formula grant programs in eligible schools; and
 - (2) Cooperate on administering other educational programs or services as agreed to by the parties. *Examples could include after-school or pre-school programs, curriculum development, professional development, etc.*
- (b) The primary ESEA formula grant program(s) for which the TEA will assume SEA-type or LEA-type administrative functions;
- (c) A description of the primary SEA-type or LEA-type administrative functions that the TEA will assume;
- (d) The training and other activities that the SEA or LEA, as appropriate, will provide for the TEA to gain the knowledge and skills needed to administer ESEA formula programs;
- (e) The assistance that the TEA will provide to the SEA or LEA, as appropriate, to facilitate the project, such as cultural competence training;

Requirements

Preliminary Agreement Cont'd:

(f) A statement concerning student data that:

(1) Acknowledges that access by the TEA to data on students who are tribal members is important to building the capacity of the TEA, and, depending on the project design, may be one of the factors the Secretary considers in determining whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project for the purpose of making continuation awards; and

(2) Commits the parties to making their best efforts to:

(i) Participate in training and technical assistance, provided or through the Department, on the requirements of section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (commonly referred to as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, or FERPA) and on the possible ways in which the TEA could be provided access to tribal student data consistent with FERPA; and

(ii) Reach agreement on and include, as part of the Final Agreement to be submitted during year 1 of the grant, a provision on data sharing that is consistent with FERPA, if data sharing is required by the project design;

Requirements

Preliminary Agreement Cont'd:

(g) The names of at least one LEA and two or more eligible schools, at least one of which must be a public school, that are expected to participate in the project;

(h) An explanation of how the STEP funds will be used to build on existing activities or add new activities rather than replacing tribal or other funds; and

(i) Signatures of the authorized representatives of the TEA, SEA, participating LEA(s), and any BIE-funded tribally controlled school that is included in the project.

Requirements- Eligible Schools

- **Projects must include at least two eligible schools, at least one of which must be a public school or public charter school.**
- **All schools included in the project must receive services or funds for the specific ESEA formula grant program(s) selected by the applicant.**
- **For projects that include one or more BIE-funded tribally-controlled schools, the applicant TEA must include in its application evidence that it submitted a copy of the application to BIE.**

For more on BIE-funded tribally-controlled schools, see FAQs 22-25.

Requirements- ESEA Programs

➤ **Projects must include at least one State-administered ESEA formula grant program:**

- (a) Improving Academic Achievement of the Disadvantaged (title I, part A);**
- (b) School Improvement Grants (section 1003(g));**
- (c) Migrant Education (title I, part C);**
- (d) Neglected and Delinquent State Grants (title I, part D);**
- (e) Improving Teacher Quality State Grants (title II, part A);**
- (f) English Learner Education State Grants (title III, part A);**
- (g) 21st Century Community Learning Centers (title IV, part B); and**
- (h) Indian Education Formula Grants (title VII, part A)**

Note: if (h) is selected, you must also select one from (a)-(g). Also see FAQ# 5

Questions?

Application Submission Procedures

- The deadline for submission of program applications through Grants.gov is **June 15, 2015**.
- This program requires the electronic submission of applications-- specific requirements and instructions can be found in the Federal Register notice.
- Apply at <http://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.
- Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted no later than 4:30:00 pm, Washington, DC time.
- Please note that Grants.gov may experience a scheduled maintenance outage. Check <https://www.grants.gov>

Application Submission Procedures

- Please carefully read the application submission procedures of the application package in its entirety.
- Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.
- Do NOT e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us.
- You must attach any narrative sections of your application as files in a pdf (Portable Document) format. If you upload a file type other than a pdf file, or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material.
- Contact Grants.gov if you need additional information on uploading files.

Application Submission Procedures

- Grants.gov cannot process an application that includes two or more files that have the same name within a grant submission.
- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this application package.
- 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.

Application Format

- Please organize your application in the manner described in the “Electronic Application Submission Checklist” in the application package (**see page 26**).
- Your application narrative is limited to the equivalent of no more than 50 pages, double-spaced, using 12 pt. font. This limit does not include:
 - Cover sheet
 - Project abstract (up to 2 pages)
 - Budget narrative
 - Required forms
 - Resumes
 - Appendices

Questions?

Selection Criteria

Selection Criteria	Maximum Points
Need for Project	5 points
Quality of the Project Design	35 points
Adequacy of Resources	5 points
Quality of the Management Plan	25 points
Quality of Project Personnel	15 points
Quality of Project Evaluation	15 points
Total points:	100

Need for Project

- ❖ The extent to which the goals and objectives in the preliminary agreement, including the TEA capacity-building activities, address identified educational needs of the Indian students to be served. (5 points)

Project Design

- ❖ (1) The extent to which the proposed project would recognize and support tribal sovereignty. (5 points)
- ❖ (2) The extent to which the preliminary agreement defines goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project that are likely to be achieved by the end of the project period. (10 points)
- ❖ (3) The extent to which the proposed project would build relationships and better communication among the TEA, SEA, and LEA, as well as families and communities, to the benefit of Indian students in the selected schools, including by enhancing the cultural competency of SEA and LEA staff. (10 points)
- ❖ (4) The extent to which the proposed project would enhance the capacity of the TEA to administer ESEA formula grants during the grant period and beyond. (10 points)

Adequacy of Resources

- ❖ the extent to which the TEA has established, prior to developing the preliminary agreement, a relationship with either the SEA or an LEA that will enhance the likelihood of the project's success. (5 Points)

Quality of Management Plan

- ❖ The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. (10 points)
- ❖ (2) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (5 points)
- ❖ (3) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of the services, or others, as appropriate. (10 points)

Note: In addressing the third sub-element of the Quality of the Management Plan selection criteria, applicants may want to consider describing the involvement of the SEA and LEA in the project, in addition to the input of other affected groups, as appropriate.

Quality of Project Personnel

- ❖ The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition:
 - (1) The extent to which the proposed project director has experience in education and in administering Federal grants. (5 points)
 - (2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (5 points)
 - (3) The extent to which the training or professional development services to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services. (5 points)

Quality of Project Personnel- Cont'd

Note:

- ✓ Section 7(b) of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act requires that to the greatest extent feasible, a grantee must give to Indians preference and opportunities in connection with the administration of the grant, and give Indian organizations and Indian-owned economic enterprises, as defined in section 3 of the Indian Financing Act of 1974 (25 U.S.C. 1452(e)), preference in the award of contracts in connection with the administration of the grant.
- ✓ In addressing the third sub-element of the Quality of Project Personnel selection criterion, applicants may want to consider including the context of training or PD among all three entities--TEA, SEA, and LEA. For example, the SEA or LEA could provide training to TEA staff with regard to Federal grant administration, and the TEA could provide training to SEA and LEA staff with regard to cultural competence.

Quality of Project Evaluation

- (1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. (5 points)
- (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies. (5 points)
- (3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes (5 points)

Note: A strong evaluation plan should be included in the application narrative and should be used, as appropriate, to shape the development of the project from the beginning of the grant period. The plan should include benchmarks to monitor progress toward specific project objectives and also outcome measures to assess the impact on teaching and learning or other important outcomes for project participants. More specifically, the plan should identify the individual or organization that has agreed to serve as evaluator for the project and describe the qualifications of that evaluator.

Quality of Project Evaluation- Cont'd

Note continued:

The plan should describe the evaluation design, indicating:

- (1) what types of data will be collected;
- (2) when the various types of data will be collected;
- (3) what methods will be used;
- (4) what instruments will be developed and when;
- (5) how the data will be analyzed;
- (6) when reports of results and outcomes will be available; and
- (7) how the applicant will use the information collected through the evaluation to monitor progress of the funded project and to provide accountability information both about success at the initial site and effective strategies for replication in other settings. Applicants are encouraged to devote a level of resources to project evaluation appropriate to the size and scope of the grant.

Questions?

Tips: Project Narrative, Priorities, Requirements

- Describe how STEP grant will be used to build TEA capacity
- Include relevant content from your preliminary agreement that could be important to address selection criteria

For example:

- The goals, objectives and outcomes you plan to accomplish over the project period
- Explain the SEA-type or LEA-type functions the TEA will perform as it relates to enhancing TEA capacity to administer ESEA formula grants
- Describe the impact of TEA's performance and its connection to students' academic outcomes

Budget

Your STEP Grant budget and budget narrative should:

- **Provide an itemized budget breakdown for each year of the project**
- **Use the Budget grant categories as shown in the ED Form 524**
- **Clearly explain how these funds will be used**
- **Indicate the total amount of funds that will be expended, as shown in the ED 524 Form**
- **Include the required travel costs**
- **Include a copy of signed indirect cost agreement covering the current grant year. This agreement is negotiated with the US Department of Interior which is designated as your cognizant agency for indirect cost negotiation.**

Tips

Your budget should be:

- **Reasonable (2 CFR 200.404):** Costs that would be prudent and generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the grant
- **Allowable (2 CFR 200.403):** Costs as identified by the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Cost Principles at [2 CFR 200](#). For more information, please read the [FAQs about the Cost Principles](#). Also, costs that are not prohibited by state or local law
- **Allocable (2 CFR 200-405):** Chargeable to this grant; not an indirect cost to be shared among programs/projects

For examples of unallowable costs, see STEP FAQs 24 and 27.

More Tips

Before You Submit:

- Read the application package in its entirety including the NIA.
- Structure your narrative according to the selection criteria.
- Be clear, concise, and specific in your language.
- Read the Frequently Asked Questions section in this application package.
- Be judicious in your use of charts, graphs, tables and other graphics.
- Make sure your budget provides detailed descriptions about planned expenditures.
- Link your budget expenditures to the proposed activities.
- Proofread your proposal.
- Have a fresh pair of eyes read your proposal before submission.
- If you do not understand an instruction or requirement, contact Shahla Ortega (202-453-5602), shahla.ortega@ed.gov

Application Submission

Grants.gov submission tips:

- Register early – You must register in <https://grants.gov> to submit your grant application.
- Grants.gov registration involves many steps and takes time.
- Grants.gov registration also includes registration on SAM (www.sam.gov). Follow the instruction to register for this site.
- Submit early – Do not wait until the last day to submit your application.
- Verify that your submission is ok – make sure that Grants.gov receives your application on time and that it was validated successfully.

What Happens Next?

- All applications will be screened for eligibility.
- Any applicant deemed ineligible will be notified by the Department.
- All eligible applications will be evaluated by panels comprised of non-Federal reviewers with relevant expertise, using the selection criteria provided in the application.
- Federal staff will conduct budget reviews on the highest scoring applications and make funding recommendations to the Secretary.
- All State Education Partnership (STEP) Grant awards will be made by end of September 2015.

Attachments to Upload

- ✿ Individual Resumes for Project Directors & Key Personnel
- ✿ Preliminary Agreement signed by TEA, SEA, and participating LEAs
- ✿ Certification from the tribe that the applicant is an eligible TEA
- ✿ Current Indirect Cost Agreement
- ✿ For projects including a BIE funded school only: evidence of submission to BIE
- ✿ For consortium applicants only: a consortium agreement that meets the requirements of 34 CFR 75.128-.129
- ✿ Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF 424B)
- ✿ Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Standard Form LLL)
- ✿ Grants.gov Lobbying Form
- ✿ General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) Requirements– Section 427 (ED GEPA427 Form)
- ✿ Intergovernmental Review (Executive Order 12372)
 - ✿ State Single Point of Contact (SPOC) List
 - ✿ Does not apply to Federally-recognized tribes

Resource List

- Application: <http://www.Grants.gov>. For questions about application submission contact Grants.gov Contact Center at support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726
- To access STEP FAQs: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/step/faq.html>
- To Register in SAM: www.sam.gov.
- SAM.gov tips: <http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html>
- Federal Register Notice of Final Priorities: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-03-04/pdf/2015-04492.pdf>
- Federal Register Notice Inviting Applications: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2015/04/16/2015-08681/applications-for-new-awards-state-tribal-education-partnership-program>
- Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Cost Principles: [2 CFR 200](#). For more information, please read the [FAQs about the Cost Principles](#)
- Article on building capacity: <http://www.niea.org>, and <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1470558/>.
- Article on tribal priority for Indian education: http://www.niea.org/data/files/policy/ncai_niea_joint_priorities_revised_13july2010.pdf
- Tribal Education Department National Assembly (TEDNA): <http://tedna.org/>.
- Article on Sustainability: http://grantproseinc.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/GrantProse_Planning_for_Sustainability.pdf

Questions?

Contact

Shahla Ortega

Office of Indian Education

US Department of Education

email: shahla.ortega@ed.gov

phone: (202) 453-5602

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/step/applicant.html>

<http://www2.ed.gov/programs/step/faq.html>