

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year 1998

AGENCY: Department of Education.

SUMMARY: On June 4, 1997, the President signed into law Public Law 105-17, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, amending the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

This notice provides closing dates and other information regarding the transmittal of applications for fiscal year 1998 competitions under Special Education—Technology and Media Services for Individuals with Disabilities program authorized by IDEA, as amended.

This notice supports the National Education Goals by helping to improve results for children with disabilities.

Waiver of Rulemaking

It is generally the practice of the Secretary to offer interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. However, section 661(e)(2) of IDEA makes the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) inapplicable to the priorities in this notice. In order to make awards on a timely basis, the Secretary has decided to publish these priorities in final under the authority of section 661(e)(2).

General Requirements

(a) Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities (see Section 606 of IDEA);

(b) Applicants and grant recipients funded under this notice must involve individuals with disabilities or parents of individuals with disabilities in planning, implementing, and evaluating the projects (see Section 661(f)(1)(A) of IDEA);

(c) Projects funded under these priorities must budget for a two-day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, D.C. during each year of the project; and

(d) In a single application, an applicant is required to address only one absolute priority in this notice.

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

Special Education—Technology and Media Services for Individuals With Disabilities [CFDA No. 84.327]

Purpose of Program: The purpose of this program is to promote the development, demonstration, and utilization of technology and to support educational media activities designed to

be of educational value to children with disabilities. This program also provides support for some captioning, video description, and cultural activities.

Eligible Applicants: State and local educational agencies; institutions of higher education; other public agencies; private nonprofit organizations; outlying areas; freely associated States; and Indian tribes or tribal organizations.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86; and (b) The selection criteria included in regulations for these programs in 34 CFR 332.32 for the Closed Captioned Educational Programming priority; and in 34 CFR 333.21 for the Using Research to Help Children Learn to Read, and the Accessible Formats for Educational Materials priorities.

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

Priority: Under section 687 of IDEA and 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), the Secretary gives an absolute preference to applications that meet any one of the following priorities. The Secretary funds under these competitions only those applications that meet these absolute priorities:

Absolute Priority 1—Using Research to Help Children Learn to Read (CFDA 84.327B)

The purpose of this priority is to demonstrate the use of existing publicly funded telecommunication systems to provide the public, families, and teachers with research-based information and on early diagnosis of, intervention for, and effective strategies for teaching reading to young children with disabilities who demonstrate difficulties learning to read. For the purposes of this priority, the term "young" children refers to children through grade four.

Priority: The Secretary establishes an absolute priority to enhance and expand the capabilities of an existing entity to disseminate research findings on early diagnosis, intervention, and effective strategies for teaching reading to young children with disabilities who demonstrate difficulties learning to read. To receive a grant under this priority applicants must demonstrate a proven track record for dissemination of information on effective research to practice efforts through electronic formats.

Activities conducted by this project should:

(1) Create awareness in parents and teachers about the teaching and learning

problems of young children that have been addressed through research;

(2) Create awareness in parents and teachers about how to design an effective teaching strategy to improve reading results of children with disabilities such as developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, and sensory disabilities;

(3) Create awareness in the general public about the accomplishments and contributions made by persons who demonstrate difficulties learning to read despite the significant challenges that these individuals faced as young children in schools; and

(4) Include dissemination of research-based solutions that can be used to address these challenges.

The project funded under this priority must—

(a) Establish a panel of expert research advisors: from the Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP); from other Federal agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services' National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and National Institute on Mental Health; and from foundations such as the National Academy of Science (NAS) and the National Science Foundation (NSF). The panel also shall include practitioners, family members of students who demonstrate difficulties learning to read, and individuals who experience difficulties learning to read in their youth. The panel will advise the work of the project and assist the project in identifying effective, research-based practices to improve reading results of young children with disabilities who demonstrate difficulties learning to read. The final membership of the panel shall be discussed with, and approved by, OSEP.

(b) Use innovative strategies to interest parents and practitioners in the research-based findings in a way that promotes the use of this information in their homes and classrooms. To accomplish this, the program must—

(1) Develop strategies for information exchange and dissemination to match identified parent and practitioner needs with existing research-based solutions. The vehicles for this information exchange could include, but are not limited to: web sites, chat rooms, listservers, and bulletin boards.

(2) Provide information to families and practitioners that describes effective strategies for diagnosing, teaching, and working with young children with disabilities who demonstrate difficulties learning to read. The topics of such products could include, but are not limited to: early interventions; class-

wide peer tutoring; learning, study and organization strategies; using technology to improve content learning; facilitating language development in young children with disabilities; and vocabulary and comprehension interventions for children with disabilities who demonstrate difficulties learning to read.

(c) Develop a national public awareness campaign that—

(1) Disseminates its products through publicly funded telecommunications systems;

(2) Highlights the accomplishments and contributions of persons who demonstrate difficulties learning to read who have benefitted from early diagnosis, interventions, and effective teaching strategies, and move the general public from a basic understanding of disabilities related to difficulties learning to read to an understanding of the significant contributions that persons who demonstrate difficulties learning to read make to our society;

(3) Features research-based solutions to the challenges that young children with disabilities who demonstrate difficulties learning to read encounter in schools and information on how these disabilities affect other areas of learning, such as mathematics and language acquisition.

(d) Provide an independent evaluation to determine if the project is reaching its intended audiences.

(e) Create partnerships within the existing OSEP technical assistance infrastructure, such as the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHY) and the Technical Assistance Alliance for Parent Centers (the Alliance), to avoid duplication of efforts.

(f) Implement an external review process in which experts review products for technical accuracy and clarity. The expert review process shall be discussed with, and approved by, OSEP.

Project Period: 36 months.

Maximum Award: The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding \$500,000 for any single budget period of 12 months. The Secretary may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Page Limits: Part III of the application, the application narrative, is where an applicant addresses the selection criteria that are used by reviewers in evaluating the application. An applicant must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 60 double-spaced pages, using the following standards: (1) A

“page” is 8½” x 11” (on one side only) with one-inch margins (top, bottom, and sides). (2) All text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs, must be double-spaced (no more than 3 lines per vertical inch). If using a proportional computer font, use no smaller than a 12-point font, and an average character density no greater than 18 characters per inch. If using a nonproportional font or a typewriter, do not use more than 12 characters to the inch.

The page limit does not apply to Part I—the cover sheet; Part II—the budget section (including the narrative budget justification); Part IV—the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, resumes, bibliography, and letters of support. However, all of the application narrative must be included in Part III. If an application narrative uses a smaller print size, spacing, or margin that would make the narrative exceed the equivalent of the page limit, the application will not be considered for funding.

Absolute Priority 2—Closed Captioned Educational Programming (CFDA 84.327E)

Background: The Congress has expressed concern that hundreds of hours of non-commercial educational programming are being produced for classroom use, but that the programming is not fully accessible through closed captions. This priority supports cooperative agreements to continue and expand the closed captioning of widely available educational and instructional programming that is shown on national broadcast, DBS (Direct Broadcast Satellite), or basic cable television networks, and that is suitable for use in the classroom. Captioning provides a visual representation of the audio portion of the programming and enables students who are deaf or hard of hearing to participate in this educational experience with their non-disabled peers.

Priority: To be considered for funding under this competition, a project must—

(1) Include criteria that takes into account the preference of educators, students, and parents for particular educational programs, the diversity of this type of programming available, and the contribution of programs to the general educational experiences of students who are deaf or hard of hearing;

(2) Identify the extent to which the commercial-free programming to be

captioned under this project may be taped for later classroom use;

(3) Identify the extent to which the programming is widely available;

(4) Identify the total number of hours captioned and the cost per hour for each of the programs captioned;

(5) Identify for each program to be captioned the source of private or other public support and the projected dollar amount of that support, if any;

(6) Identify the method of captioning to be used for each program and identify the cost per hour for each method used;

(7) Demonstrate the willingness of program providers or owners of programs to permit captioning of their programs;

(8) Provide assurances from program providers or owners of programs stating the extent to which programs captioned under this project will air, and will continue to air, without re-captioning;

(9) Implement procedures for monitoring the extent to which the project provides full and accurate captioning and uses this information to make refinements in captioning operations; and

(10) Make captions available at no cost to providers or owners of programming, who may use, reformat, or otherwise adapt these captions for future airings or other distributions.

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Maximum Award: The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding \$125,000 for any single budget period of 12 months. The Secretary may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Page Limits: Part III of the application, the application narrative, is where an applicant addresses the selection criteria that are used by reviewers in evaluating the application. An applicant must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 40 double-spaced pages, using the following standards: (1) A “page” is 8½” x 11” (on one side only) with one-inch margins (top, bottom, and sides). (2) All text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs, must be double-spaced (no more than 3 lines per vertical inch). If using a proportional computer font, use no smaller than a 12-point font, and an average character density no greater than 18 characters per inch. If using a nonproportional font or a typewriter, do not use more than 12 characters to the inch.

The page limit does not apply to Part I—the cover sheet; Part II—the budget section (including the narrative budget

justification); Part IV—the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, resumes, bibliography, and letters of support. However, all of the application narrative must be included in Part III. If an application narrative uses a smaller print size, spacing, or margin that would make the narrative exceed the equivalent of the page limit, the application will not be considered for funding.

Absolute Priority 3—Accessible Formats for Educational Materials (CFDA 84.327R)

Background: The purpose of this priority is to provide textbooks and other educational materials in accessible formats for students at all educational levels who are visually or print disabled. These materials will help provide equal educational opportunities to these students and lessen some of the barriers they face in the classroom.

Priorty: To be considered for funding under this priority, the projects must—

(1) Handle all requests for educational materials from students who are visually or print disabled at all educational levels at no cost;

(2) Obtain statements of eligibility by disability for each requestor;

(3) If access to materials is provided through section 121 of the Copyright Act, as amended, provide publishers rights to copies of any master tapes or disks and rights to market the cassettes or disks as they see fit;

(4) Apply new technology for producing and distributing educational materials in accessible formats for individuals who are blind or otherwise print disabled, such as electronic text or digital audio synchronization;

(5) Distribute the materials that are produced through means such as audio tapes, diskettes, CD-ROMs, or the Internet;

(6) Handle associated administrative and circulation functions such as any returned cassettes, disks, CD-ROMs, or preservative re-recording;

(7) To the extent that funds are not sufficient to meet the demand for free

materials, place a priority on providing materials, such as supplemental reading textbooks and workbooks, that are not otherwise required to be provided by educational agencies or institutions; and

(8) Coordinate and collaborate with publishers, software developers, other manufacturers of accessible materials for individuals who are visually impaired or otherwise print disabled, disability and educational organizations, and government agencies to ensure effective coordination and nonduplication of effort.

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Maximum Award: The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding \$1,500,000 for any single budget period of 12 months. The Secretary may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the **Federal Register**.

Page Limits: Part III of the application, the application narrative, is where an applicant addresses the selection criteria that are used by reviewers in evaluating the application. An applicant must limit Part III to the equivalent of no more than 40 double-spaced pages, using the following standards: (1) A “page” is 8½” x 11” (on one side only) with one-inch margins (top, bottom, and sides). (2) All text in the application narrative, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs, must be double-spaced (no more than 3 lines per vertical inch). If using a proportional computer font, use no smaller than a 12-point font, and an average character density no greater than 18 characters per inch. If using a nonproportional font or a typewriter, do not use more than 12 characters to the inch.

The page limit does not apply to Part I—the cover sheet; Part II—the budget section (including the narrative budget justification); Part IV—the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract, resumes, bibliography, and letters of support. However, all of the

application narrative must be included in Part III. If an application narrative uses a smaller print size, spacing, or margin that would make the narrative exceed the equivalent of the page limit, the application will not be considered for funding.

For Applications and General Information Contact: Requests for applications and general information should be addressed to the Grants and Contracts Services Team, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., room 3317, Switzer Building, Washington, D.C. 20202–2641. The preferred method for requesting information is to FAX your request to: (202) 205–8717. Telephone: (202) 260–9182.

Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the TDD number: (202) 205–8953.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of this notice or the application packages referred to in this notice in an alternate format (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the Department as listed above. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternate format the standard forms included in the application package.

Intergovernmental Review

All programs in this notice (except for Research and Innovation Projects) are subject to the requirements of Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR Part 79. The objective of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism by relying on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

In accordance with the order, this document is intended to provide early notification of the Department's specific plans and actions for those programs.

INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT—APPLICATION NOTICE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998

CFDA No. and name	Applications available	Application deadline date	Deadline for intergovernmental review	Maximum award (per year)*	Page limit**	Estimated number of awards
84.327B Using Research to Help Children Learn to Read	6/12/98	7/24/98	9/22/98	\$500,000	60	1
84.327E Closed Captioned Educational Programming	6/12/98	7/24/98	9/22/98	125,000	40	5
84.327R Accessible Formats for Educational Materials ...	6/12/98	7/24/98	9/22/98	1,500,000	40	1

*The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that proposes a budget exceeding the amount listed for each priority for any single budget period of 12 months.

**Applicants must limit the Application Narrative, Part III of the Application, to the page limits noted above. Please refer to the “Page Limit” section of this notice for the specific requirements. The Secretary rejects and does not consider an application that does not adhere to this requirement.

Electronic Access to This Document

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<http://ocfo.ed.gov/fedreg.htm>

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To use the pdf you must have the Adobe Acrobat Reader Program with Search,

which is available free at either of the previous sites. If you have questions about using the pdf, call the U.S. Government Printing Office at (202) 512-1530 or, toll free at 1-888-293-6498.

Anyone may also view these documents in text copy only on an electronic bulletin board of the Department. Telephone: (202) 219-1511 or, toll free, 1-800-222-4922. The documents are located under Option

G—Files/Announcements, Bulletins, and Press Releases.

Note: The official version of a document is the document published in the **Federal Register**.

Dated: May 28, 1998.

Judith E. Heumann,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

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