

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No. 84.031]

**Strengthening Institutions Programs;
Notice Inviting Applications for New
Awards for Fiscal Year 1998**

Purpose of Program: Provide grants to eligible institutions of higher education to improve their academic quality, institutional management, and fiscal stability in order to increase their self-sufficiency.

This grant program should be seen as an opportunity for applicants to support those elements of the National Education Goals that are relevant to their unique missions.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: March 17, 1998.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: April 9, 1998.

Applications Available: Applications will be mailed by January 26, 1998 to the office of the president of all institutions that will receive an application to be designated as an eligible institution under the Strengthening Institutions Program.

Available Funds: \$17,000,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$327,000 to \$350,000 per year for five-year development grants; \$30,000 to \$35,000 for one-year planning grants.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$338,500 per year for five-year development grants; \$32,500 for one year planning grants.

Estimated Number of Awards: 48 development grants; 14 planning grants.

Project Period: 60 months for development grants; 12 months for planning grants.

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

Special Funding Considerations: In tie-breaking situations described in 34 CFR 607.23 of the Strengthening Institutions program regulations, the Secretary awards one additional point under § 607.23 to an application from an institution that has an endowment fund for which the current market value, per full-time equivalent (FTE) student, is less than the average, per FTE student, at similar type institutions; and one additional point to an application from an institution that has expenditures for library materials, per FTE student, that are less than the average, per FTE student, at similar type institutions.

For the purposes of these funding considerations, an applicant must be able to demonstrate that the current market value of its endowment fund, per FTE student, or expenditures for library materials, per FTE student, is less than the following national average for base year 1995-96:

	Average market value of endowment fund, per FTE	Average library expenditures for materials, per FTE
Two-year Public Institutions	\$1,332	\$45
Two-year Non-profit, Private Institutions	11,567	121
Four-year Public Institutions	2,829	165
Four-year Non-profit Private Institutions	42,579	254

If a tie still remains after applying the above, the Secretary determines that institutions will receive an award according to a combined ranking of two year and four-year institutions. The ranking is established by awarding points for combined FTE averages of library expenditures and endowment values by similar type institutions. Institutions whose combined FTE averages of library expenditures and endowment values are the lowest are ranked higher in strict numerical order.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Department of Education General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 82, 85, and 86; and (b) the regulations for this program in 34 CFR Part 607.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Please note that 34 CFR 607.9(b)(2), (3) and (4) have been superseded by § 313(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA). Accordingly, please disregard those sections, which are found in appendix VI of the application.

In making awards for fiscal year 1998, the Secretary will give priority for grants to the highest ranked applicants who are not or were not recipients of an individual Strengthening Institutions Program development grant on or after October 1, 1997. While institutions that are or were recipients of individual Strengthening Institutions Program development grants on or after October 1, 1997 may submit applications if they wish, those applications will be reviewed only if funds are available after all priority applications are funded. The Secretary *does not* anticipate having any funds available after all priority applications are funded.

In § 312 of the FY 1998 appropriation bill, Congress authorized the use of up to 20% of grant funds awarded to an institution under the Part A-Strengthening Program for endowment building. Any institution seeking to use Part A funds for endowment building purposes *shall indicate that intention* in its application and shall abide by the

departmental regulations in 34 CFR Part 628 governing the Endowment Challenge Grant program. Only institutions requesting and competing successfully for new individual development grants in Fiscal Year 1998 may use up to 20% of the funds for endowment building; non-competing continuation grantees are not eligible for endowment building.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Blanca Westgate, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Portals Building, Suite CY-80, Washington, D.C. 20202-5335. Telephone: (202) 708-8839. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternate format (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed in the preceding paragraph.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternate format, also, by contacting that person. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternate format the standard forms included in the application package.

Electronic Access to This Document

Anyone may view this document, as well as all other Department of Education documents published in the **Federal Register**, in text or portable document format (pdf) on the World Wide Web at either of the following sites:

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

<http://www.ed.gov/news.html>

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 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**.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1057.

Dated: January 16, 1998.

David A. Longanecker,

*Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary
Education.*

[FR Doc. 98-1560 Filed 1-22-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P