

The Department of Education encourages applicants that are completing a paper application to use certified or at least first-class mail when sending the application by mail to the Department. Paper applications that are mailed must be received no later than May 21, 2004 to assure funding for the Award Year 2004–2005.

Paper Applications Delivered By Hand: Paper applications that are hand-delivered must be delivered to Mr. Greg Gerrans, LEAP Program Manager, Financial Partners Services, U.S. Department of Education, Federal Student Aid, 830 First Street, NE., room 111H1, Washington, DC 20002. Hand-delivered applications will be accepted between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. daily (Eastern time), except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Paper applications that are hand-delivered must be received by 4:30 p.m. (eastern time) on May 21, 2004 to assure funding for the Award Year 2004–2005.

Applicable Regulations: The following regulations are applicable to the LEAP and SLEAP programs:

- (1) The LEAP and SLEAP program regulations in 34 CFR part 692.
- (2) The Student Assistance General Provisions in 34 CFR part 668.
- (3) The Regulations Governing Institutional Eligibility in 34 CFR part 600.
- (4) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR 75.60 through 75.62 (Ineligibility of Certain Individuals to Receive Assistance), part 76 (State-Administered Programs), part 77 (Definitions that Apply to Department Regulations), part 79 (Intergovernmental Review of Department of Education Programs and Activities), part 80 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and local Governments), part 82 (New Restrictions on Lobbying), part 84 (Governmentwide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Financial Assistance)), part 85 (Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement)), part 86 (Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention), and part 99 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy).

Electronic Access to This Document

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To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about

using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1–888–293–6498; or in the Washington, DC area at (202) 512–1530.

Note: 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 on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1070c *et seq.*

Dated: April 16, 2004.

Theresa S. Shaw,
Chief Operating Officer, Federal Student Aid.
[FR Doc. 04–9050 Filed 4–20–04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Overview Information; Special Education—Research and Innovation To Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—Initial Career Awards; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.324N.

DATES: *Applications Available:* April 22, 2004.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: May 26, 2004.

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

Estimated Available Funds: \$300,000.
Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$75,000.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$75,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. The Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services 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 36 months.

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: To produce, and advance the use of, knowledge to improve the results of education and early intervention for infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (*see* sections 661(e)(2) and 672 of IDEA).

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.

Background: There is a need to enable individuals in the initial phases of their careers to initiate and develop promising lines of research that would improve results for children with disabilities and their families through better early intervention services for infants and toddlers, and special education and related services for children with disabilities. Support for research activities among individuals in the initial phases of their careers is intended to develop the capacity of the early intervention and special education research community to more effectively meet the needs of children with disabilities and their families. The priority established in this notice also provides support for a broad range of field-initiated research projects—focusing on the special education and related services for children with disabilities and early intervention for infants and toddlers—consistent with the purpose of the program as described in section 672 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Statement of Priority: This priority is: Grants to eligible applicants for the support of individuals in the initial phases of their careers to initiate and develop promising lines of research consistent with the purposes of the program. For purposes of this priority, the initial phase of an individual's career is considered to be the first three years after completing a doctoral program and graduating (*i.e.*, for FY 2004 awards, projects may support individuals who completed a doctoral program and graduated no earlier than the 2000–2001 academic year).

At least 50 percent of the initial career researcher's time must be devoted to the project.

Projects must—

(a) Pursue a line of research that is developed either from theory or a conceptual framework. The line of research must establish directions for designing future studies extending beyond the support of this award. The project is not intended to represent all inquiry related to the particular theory or conceptual framework; rather, it is expected to initiate a new line or advance an existing one;

(b) Include, in design and conduct, sustained involvement with one or more nationally recognized experts. Such

experts must have substantive or methodological knowledge and expertise relevant to the proposed research. The experts do not have to be at the same institution or agency at which the project is located, but the interaction with the project must be sufficient to develop the capacity of the initial career researcher to effectively pursue the research into mid-career activities;

(c) Prepare procedures, findings, and conclusions in a manner that advances professional practice by informing other interested researchers; and

(d) Disseminate project procedures, findings, and conclusions to appropriate research institutes and technical assistance providers.

(e) The projects funded under this priority must budget for a two-day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, DC during each year of the project.

(f) The project's Web site, must include relevant information and documents in an accessible form.

Within this absolute priority, we are particularly interested in applications that address the following invitational priority.

Invitational Priority: Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1) we do not give an application that meets this invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

This priority is:

Projects that include, in the design and conduct of the research project, a practicing teacher or clinician, in addition to the required involvement of nationally recognized experts.

Waiver of Proposed Rulemaking

Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed priorities. However, section 661(e)(2) of IDEA makes the public comment requirements inapplicable to the absolute priority in this notice.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1461 and 1472.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 80, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to IHEs only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$300,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$75,000.

Maximum Award: We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding \$75,000 for a single budget period of 12 months. The Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services 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 36 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. *Eligible Applicants:* SEAs; LEAs; IHEs; other public agencies; nonprofit private organizations; outlying areas; freely associated States; and Indian tribes or tribal organizations.

2. *Cost Sharing or Matching:* This competition does not involve cost sharing or matching.

3. *Other: General Requirements—*

(a) The projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (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).

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. *Address to Request Application Package:* Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Telephone (toll free): 1-877-433-7827. fax: (301) 470-1244. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call (toll free): 1-877-576-7734.

You may also contact ED Pubs at its Web site: www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html or you may contact ED Pubs at its e-mail address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA Number 84.324N.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) by contacting the person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

CONTACT in section VII of this notice.

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 competition.

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. You must limit part III to the equivalent of no more than 30 pages using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" × 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, including titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use a font that is either 12-point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per 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, the resumes, the bibliography, the references, the letters of support, or the appendix. However, you must include all of the application narrative in part III.

We will reject your application if—

- You apply these standards and exceed the page limit; or
- You apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit.

3. *Submission Dates and Times:*

Applications Available: April 22, 2004.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: May 26, 2004. The dates and times for the transmittal of applications by mail or by hand (including a courier service or commercial carrier) are in the application package for this competition. The application package also specifies the hours of operation of the e-Application Web site.

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

4. *Intergovernmental Review:* This program is not subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79.

5. *Funding Restrictions:* We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the *Applicable Regulations* section of this notice.

6. *Other Submission Requirements:* Instructions and requirements for the transmittal of applications by mail or by hand (including a courier service or commercial carrier) are in the application package for this competition.

Application Procedures

Note: Some of the procedures in these instructions for transmitting applications differ from those in the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) (34 CFR 75.102). Under the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553) the Department generally offers interested parties the opportunity to comment on proposed regulations. However, these amendments make procedural changes only and do not establish new substantive policy. Therefore, under 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(A), the Secretary has determined that proposed rulemaking is not required.

Governmentwide Grants.gov Project for Electronic Submission of Applications

We have been accepting applications electronically through the Department's e-Application system since FY 2000. In order to expand on those efforts and comply with the President's Management Agenda, we are participating as a partner in the new governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site in FY 2004. The Special Education—Research and Innovation To Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—Initial Career Awards competition—CFDA Number 84.324N is one of the competitions included in this project. If you are an applicant under the Special Education—Research and Innovation To Improve Services and Results for Children With Disabilities—Initial Career Awards competition, you may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format.

The project involves the use of the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). If you use Grants.gov, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit the application via the Grants.gov site. You may not e-mail an electronic copy of a grant application to us. We request your participation in Grants.gov.

If you participate in Grants.gov, please note the following:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- 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. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the application process through Grants.gov.
- To use Grants.gov, you, as the applicant, must have a D-U-N-S Number and register in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). You should allow a minimum of five days to complete the CCR registration.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor

will we penalize you if you submit an application in paper format.

- You may submit all documents electronically, including all information typically included on the Application for Federal Education Assistance (ED 424), Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

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

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement from Grants.gov that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. The Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you a second confirmation, which will include a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number) unique to your application.

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

- If you experience technical difficulties on the application deadline date and are unable to meet the 4:30 p.m. (Washington, DC time) deadline, print out your application and follow the instructions included in the application package for the transmittal of paper applications.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Research and Innovation to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities—Initial Career Awards competition at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

Note: Please note that you must search for the downloadable application package for this program by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search.

V. Application Review Information

Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this competition are listed in 34 CFR 75.210 of EDGAR. The specific selection criteria to be used for this competition are in the application package.

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 also notify you informally.

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 of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the *Applicable Regulations* section of 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:** 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 specified by the Secretary in 34 CFR 75.118.

4. **Performance Measures:** Under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), the Department is currently developing indicators and measures that will yield information on various aspects of the quality of the Research and Innovation to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities program. Included in these indicators and measures will be those that assess the quality and relevance of newly funded research projects. Two indicators will address the quality of new projects. First, an external panel of eminent senior scientists will review the quality of a randomly selected sample of newly funded research applications, and the percentage of new projects that are deemed to be of high quality will be determined. Second, because much of the Department's work focuses on questions of effectiveness, newly funded applications will be evaluated to identify those that address causal questions and then to determine what percentage of those projects use randomized field trials to answer the causal questions. To evaluate the relevance of newly funded research projects, a panel of experienced education practitioners and administrators will review descriptions of a randomly selected sample of newly funded projects and rate the degree to which the projects are relevant to practice.

Other indicators and measures are still under development in areas such as the quality of project products and long-term impact. Data on these measures will be collected from the projects funded under this notice. Grantees will also be required to report information on their projects' performance in annual reports to the Department (EDGAR, 34 CFR 75.590).

VII. Agency Contact**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Debra Sturdivant, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3527, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 205-8038.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the Grants and Contracts Services Team listed in this section.

VIII. Other Information

Electronic Access to This Document: You may 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) on the Internet at the following site: www.ed.gov/news/fedregister.

To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

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Dated: April 15, 2004.

Troy R. Justesen,

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 04-9051 Filed 4-20-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services; Overview Information; Training and Information for Parents of Children with Disabilities—Parent Training and Information Centers; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.328M.

DATES: Applications Available: April 22, 2004.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: May 26, 2004.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: July 26, 2004.

Eligible Applicants: Parent organizations. The full definition of Parent Organization is provided elsewhere in this notice in Section III. Eligibility Information.

Estimated Available Funds: \$4,144,360.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$275,000.

Maximum Award: For funding information regarding individual States, see the chart in the Award Information section of this notice.

Estimated Number of Awards: 15.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

Full Text of Announcement**I. Funding Opportunity Description**

Purpose Of Program: The purpose of this program is to ensure that parents of children with disabilities receive training and information to help improve results for their children.

Priority: In accordance with 34 CFR 75.105(b)(2)(iv), this priority is from allowable activities specified in the statute (see sections 661(e)(2) and 682 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)).

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.

Background: In order to allocate resources equitably, create a unified system of service delivery, and provide the broadest coverage for the parents and families in every State, the Assistant Secretary is making awards in five-year cycles for each State. In FY 2004, applications for 5-year awards will be accepted for the following States: Arizona; Delaware; District of Columbia; Indiana; Iowa; Massachusetts; Minnesota; Mississippi; Missouri; South Dakota; Virginia; Washington; and Wyoming. Awards may also be made to authorized entities in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the freely associated States. However, maximum funding levels have not been specified.

In addition to the State awards, the Secretary intends to fund one award that focuses on the needs of Native-American families who have children with disabilities and one award that focuses on the needs of military families who have children with disabilities. Each of these projects must have a national focus with strategies for outreach to their specific populations and coordination with the Parent Training Information (PTI) Centers and Community Parent Resource Centers (CPRCs) in the States.

Statement of Priority: This priority is: Awards to PTI Centers.

A PTI Center must—

(a) Provide training and information that meets the training and information needs of parents of children with disabilities in the area served by the PTI Center, particularly underserved parents and parents of children who may be inappropriately identified as having a disability when the child may not have a disability;

(b) Assist parents to understand the availability of, and how to effectively use, procedural safeguards under IDEA, including encouraging the use, and explaining the benefits, of alternative methods of dispute resolution, such as the mediation process described in IDEA;

(c) Serve the parents of infants, toddlers, and children with the full range of disabilities;

(d) Assist parents to—

(1) Better understand the nature of their children's disabilities and their educational and developmental needs;

(2) Communicate effectively with personnel responsible for providing special education, early intervention, and related services;

(3) Participate in decisionmaking processes and the development of individualized education programs and individualized family service plans;

(4) Obtain appropriate information about the range of options, programs, services, and resources available to assist children with disabilities and their families;

(5) Understand the provisions of IDEA and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) relating to the education of, and the provision of early intervention services to, children with disabilities; and

(6) Participate in school reform activities;

(e) Contract with the State educational agency, if the State elects to contract with the PTI Center, for the purpose of meeting with parents who choose not to use the mediation process to encourage the use, and explain the benefits, of mediation consistent with section 615(e)(2)(B) and (D) of IDEA;

(f) Establish cooperative relations with the CPRC or PTI Centers in their State in accordance with section 683(b)(3) of IDEA;

(g) Network with appropriate clearinghouses, including organizations conducting national dissemination activities under section 685(d) of IDEA, and with other national, State, and local organizations and agencies, such as protection and advocacy agencies, that serve parents and families of children with the full range of disabilities;