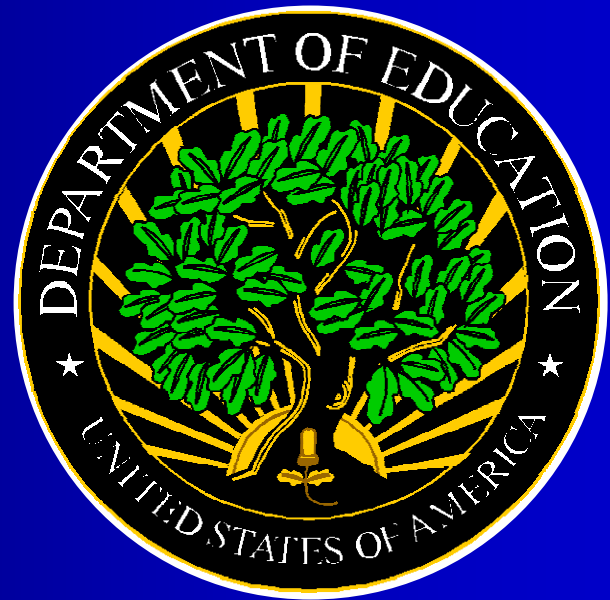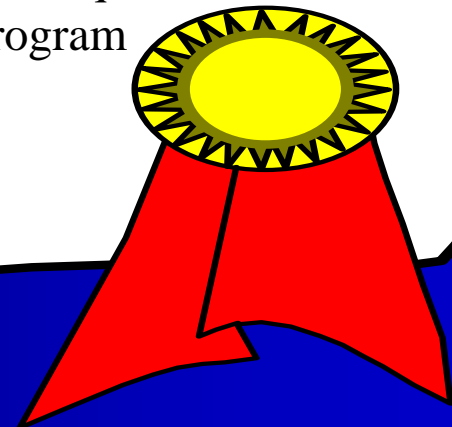# Educational Opportunity Centers Program

## 2005

**Pre-Application Workshop
Washington, DC
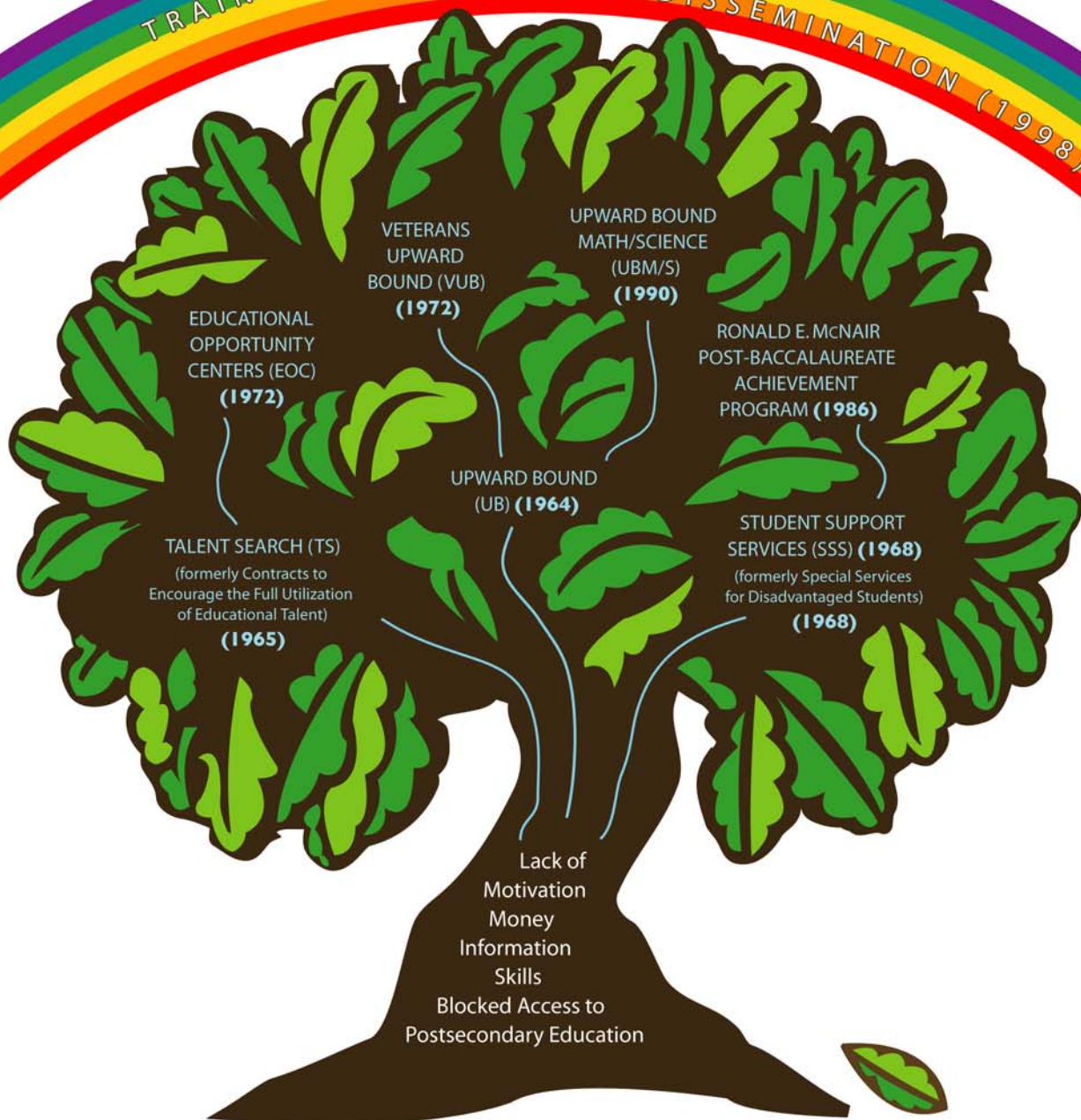July 12, 2005**

# How Did We Get Here?

The **Federal TRIO Programs** are educational opportunity outreach programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds. TRIO consists of seven outreach and support programs targeted to serve and assist low-income, first generation college, and students with disabilities to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to post-baccalaureate programs. **Educational Opportunity Centers (EOC) Program** was the fourth TRIO program created in 1972 under the Higher Education Act of 1964. **EOC** programs provide counseling and information on college admissions to qualified adults who want to enter or continue a program of postsecondary education.

TRAINING (1976)

DISSEMINATION (1998)

UPWARD BOUND
MATH/SCIENCE
(UBM/S)
(1990)

VETERANS
UPWARD
BOUND (VUB)
(1972)

EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY
CENTERS (EOC)
(1972)

RONALD E. McNAIR
POST-BACCALAUREATE
ACHIEVEMENT
PROGRAM (1986)

UPWARD BOUND
(UB) (1964)

TALENT SEARCH (TS)
(formerly Contracts to
Encourage the Full Utilization
of Educational Talent)
(1965)

STUDENT SUPPORT
SERVICES (SSS) (1968)
(formerly Special Services
for Disadvantaged Students)
(1968)

Lack of
Motivation
Money
Information
Skills
Blocked Access to
Postsecondary Education

# TRIO Legislation Highlights

**Title IV – Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended**

**Chapter 1 – Federal TRIO Programs**

**Section 402A – 402H**

- Combinations of Eligible Entities
- Four or Five Year Grants
- Minimum Funding Levels
- Rank-Order Funding
- Multiple Applications – Different Target Area or Target Schools
- Coordination with Other Programs for Disadvantaged Students
- 10 Technical Assistance Workshops
- Low-Income Documentation

http://www.ed.gov/programs/trioeoc/legislation.html

# Educational Opportunity Centers

## Regulations
## Title 34 CFR – Part 644

- No NEW changes or revisions to the EOC regulations.

- View or obtain a copy at the following website address:

http://www.ed.gov/programs/trioeoc/legislation.html

# What's NEW?

- Electronic Submission via Grants.gov

- 50-Page Limit

- Mandatory Objectives

# Grantee Requirements

- Participant eligibility:
  - Two-thirds low- income and first generation college student.

- Minimum 1,000 EOC participants per year

- Recordkeeping (participant files)

- Full-time project director unless a waiver is requested

# Low-Income Individual

An individual from a family whose taxable income for the preceding year did not exceed 150 percent of an amount equal to the poverty level determined by using criteria of poverty established by the Bureau of the Census.

The Federal Low-Income Levels are updated each year.

# First Generation College Student

- An individual both of whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate degree; or

- In the case of any individual who regularly resided with and received support from only one parent, an individual whose only such parent did not complete a baccalaureate degree.

# What Should Be in a Participant File?

- **Proof of Student Eligibility:**

  - Proof of citizenship

  - Copy of W-2 or filed tax forms, or

    - Signed statement from parent to verify low-income status

  - Signed statement from parent to verify first generation status

  - **Needs Assessment**

  - Use intake forms, standardized test, interest inventory forms and other assessment tools to produce a documented needs assessment and a plan to meet that need.

# What Should Be in a Participant File?

- ## Services Provided

  -List all services provided to and contacts made with each participant.  These services should be a part of the documented plan to meet the assessed needs of the participant.

  - ## Educational Progress

  -Document the objectives achieved by the participant.

  - **Participant files must be kept by the project for three years after the project performance end date.**

  - **Participant files should be kept in a locked, secure location.**

# Program Goals

- To provide information regarding financial and academic assistance to pursue postsecondary programs


- To provide assistance in applying for admission to institutions which offer postsecondary programs

# EOC
# Services Provided

- Provide academic, career, and personal counseling

- Provide tutoring and mentoring services

- Prepare for college entrance examinations

- Completing college admissions and financial aid applications

# EOC
# Services Provided

- Provide activities designed for students with limited English proficiency.

- Provide assistance for secondary school re-entry or entry into a GED program or other alternative program.

- Provide public information campaigns and career workshops.

# Who is Eligible to Receive a Grant?

- An institution of higher education

- A public or private agency or organization

- A combination of institutions, agencies, or organizations (consortium)

- A secondary school under exceptional circumstances

# Who Can Be Served?

U.S. citizens

Permanent resident of the United States, Guam, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Micronesia or Marshall Islands

Individuals who are at least 19 years of age

Any veteran, regardless of age

# Application Process

- Submit application on Grants.gov

- Prescreening

- A panel of three reviewers, who are not federal employees, will evaluate the application.

- The panel will prepare an evaluation of the application and assign points to each selection criteria. The highest score an application may receive is 100.

- Scores from the three reviewers will be averaged to determine one numeric score for the application.

# Application Process

- Currently funded applicants are eligible to receive up to **15 Prior Experience (PE)** points. If applicable, PE points are added to the numeric score of the application to get a final score.

- Final scores are ranked in order, highest to lowest, on a funding slate.

- Applications are awarded down the funding slate until all funds are used.

- All awards are funded for four or five years. Applications that score in the top 10% will receive a five year award.

# 2001 EOC Competition

- Applications Received:      322

- Applications Funded:      139

- 5 Year Awards:      86

- First Time funded applicants:    57


- Cut off Score:      99.67

# Questions and Answers

# Grant Writing Warnings

➢ Applicants may not use federal funds to prepare an application.
  ➢ This includes costs incurred to attend this pre-application workshop.

➢ Federal funds may not be used to lobby.

➢ Applicants who knowingly do business with someone who has been debarred faces the possibility of cost disallowances, grant termination, and suspension and debarment from federal government procurement and non-procurement transactions.

**http://www.epls.gov/epls/servlet/EPLSSearchMain/1**

# Selection Criteria

| Section | Maximum Points |
|---|---|
| Need | 24 |
| Objectives | 8 |
| Plan of Operation | 30 |
| Applicant/Community Support | 16 |
| Quality of Personnel | 9 |
| Evaluation Plan | 8 |
| Budget | 5 |
| **Total** | **100** |

# Need for the Project

## Maximum 24 Points

# Need

- High number or percent of low-income families **AND**

- High number or percent with education below the baccalaureate level **AND**

- High need on the part of residents of the target area for further education and training from programs of postsecondary education in order to meet changing employment trends **AND**

- Unaddressed educational or socio-economic problems of adults

# **Objectives**
Maximum 8 Points

# Objectives

**The Department has provided four Mandatory Objectives:**

- **MUST** include all four Mandatory Objectives in your application

- **MUST** provide the percentage at which your project proposes to achieve each Mandatory Objective.

- **MUST** provide evidence to show why each Mandatory Objective is ambitious, but attainable.

- The four Mandatory Objectives **MAY NOT** be changed or rewritten in any way

- **YOU MAY** include other process and outcome objectives, but not required. Points will not be added or subtracted if additional objectives are included.

# Objectives

- The Objective selection criteria is worth eight points.

- All eight **points** will be applied to whether or not your objectives are *ambitious but attainable within each budget period and the project period given the project funds and other resources*.

- Applicant must provide evidence to show why the percentage that your project proposes to achieve each objective is ambitious but attainable.

# Mandatory Objectives

1.  **Enrollment in High School Equivalency Program:**

    __% of "non-college ready" project participants who enroll in a program leading to a high school equivalency certificate.

2.  **Student Financial Aid:**

    __ % of "college ready" project participants will apply for financial aid during each budget period.

3. **Postsecondary Education Application for Admissions:**

    __ % of "college ready" participants will apply to postsecondary school during each budget period.

# Mandatory Objectives

## 4. Postsecondary Education Enrollment:

___ % of "college ready" project participants will enroll in a program of  postsecondary education during each budget period (or during the next fall term).

**College ready:** a participant who: 1) is a high school senior; 2) is enrolled in an alternative education program whose academic level is equivalent to a high school senior; 3) is a high school graduate; or 4) has obtained a high school equivalency certificate.

**Enrolled:**  a participant who has completed the registration requirements and who has started attending classes

# Plan of Operation
## Maximum 30 Points

# Plan of Operation

- Inform the target area of the goals, objectives, and the eligibility requirements for participation in the project

- Identify and select eligible participants without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, or disability

- Assess participant's needs for services

# Plan of Operation

- Provide services to meet participants needs and achieving the objectives of the program

- Ensure efficient administration of the project including: management plan, organizational structure, and staff responsibilities

# General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)
(GEPA - Section 427)

- Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-382)

- Applies to all applicants seeking federal funding

- Six types of barriers identified:
  - Race
  - Gender
  - National Origin
  - Color
  - Disability
  - Age

# General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)
## (GEPA - Section 427)

- Carefully read the provisions included in the application booklet.

- Include in the Table of Contents.

- Address in "*Plan of Operation*" section

- Must be presented as a separate narrative section.

- Must be succinct, clearly identifiable and brief.

Educational Opportunity Centers

# Applicant and Community Support

## Maximum 16 Points

# Applicant and Community Support

- Describe the facilities, equipment, supplies, other in-kind and direct contributions committed by the applicant

- Describe the resources, other in-kind and direct contributions secured through written commitments from schools, community organizations, and others

- Summarize commitments in a list or chart

- Do NOT include letters of support or commitment in the application

# Quality of Personnel

- Describe the minimum qualifications required of the project director and major job responsibilities

- Describe the minimum qualifications required of the other project personnel and major job responsibilities

- Describe the applicant's plan to employ personnel who have succeeded in overcoming barriers similar to those being served in the target population

- Do NOT include resumes or job descriptions in the application

Educational Opportunity Centers

# **Evaluation Plan**
## Maximum 8 Points

# Evaluation Plan

- Appropriately addresses the project's objectives

- Uses specific and quantifiable methods to measure the success of the project:
    - Formative: progress made toward achieving objectives
    - Summative: achievements made at the end of the each program year

- Provides for the disclosure of unanticipated outcomes including unattained objectives and a plan to implement corrective measures.

Educational Opportunity Centers

# **Budget**
## Maximum 5 Points

# Budget

- All **NEW** projects will receive a maximum of $220,000 for the first year.
- Current grantees will receive a maximum of $220,000 or 3 percent greater than current funding (whichever is greater).
- Provide a budget summary and budget narrative for the first year only.
- Cost must be reasonable in relation to the objectives.
- Refer to "Part III First Year Budget Guidance" in application booklet.
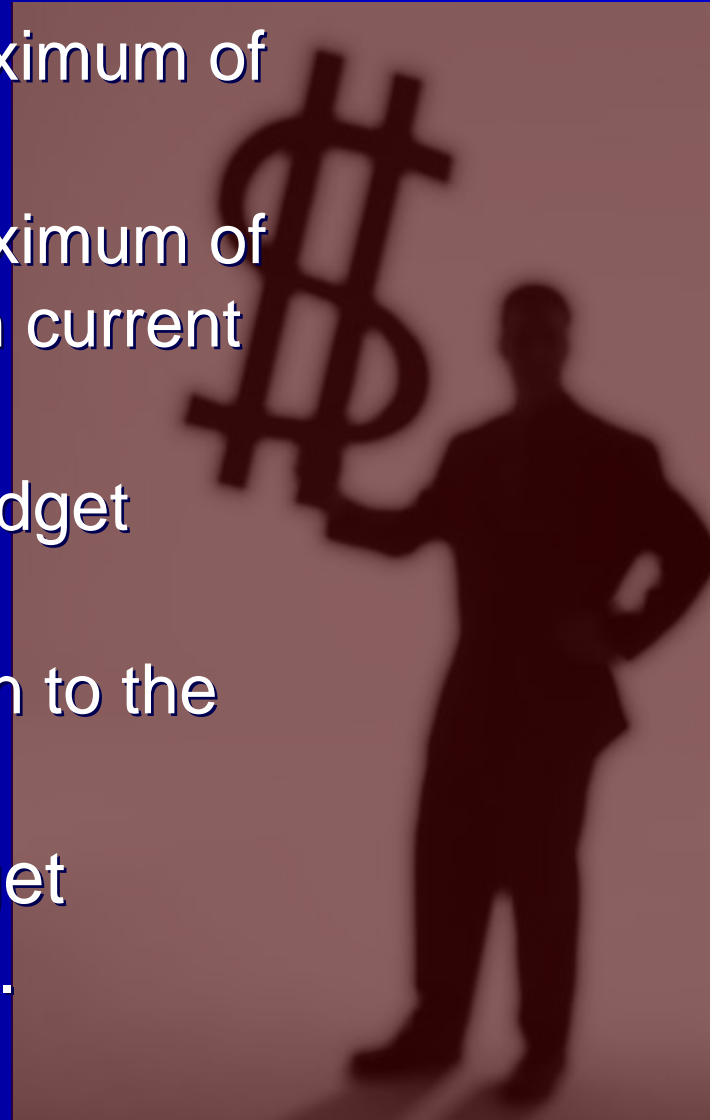
# Allowable Costs

- Transportation, meals, and, if necessary, lodging for participation in authorized activities

- Purchase of testing materials

- Fees for college admissions or entrance examinations if no waiver is available or if paid to a third party

- In-service training of project staff

- Rental of building space, if not available at the site and if space is not owned by the grantee

- Purchase of computer hardware, software, or other equipment if necessary to meet the objectives of the project

# Unallowable Costs

- Tuition, stipends, and other forms of direct financial support for participants

- Fees for applying for financial aid

- Research not directly related to the evaluation or improvement of the project

- Construction, renovation, or remodeling of any facilities

# Questions and Answers

# Program Assurances

- Two-thirds of students served must be low-income, first generation, potential college students

- Individuals receiving service from another EOC will not receive services under the proposed project

- Located in a setting accessible to the individuals proposed to be served by the project

- Will not use the EOC project to recruit students to the grantee institution
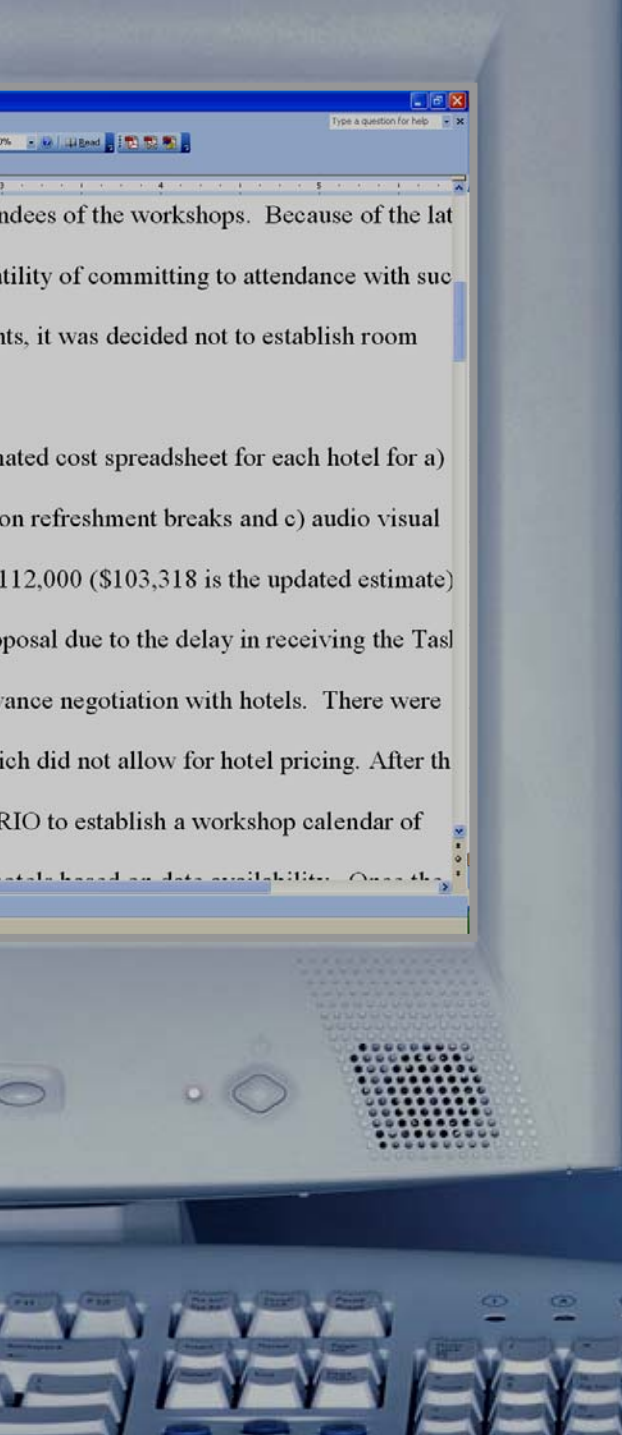
# Formatting

- **Include a Table of Contents**

- **Narrative section limited to 50 pages**
  - Page limit does not apply to:
    - Application Face Sheet
    - Table of Contents
    - EOC Profile Form
    - Budget Summary Form
    - Assurances

- **No Appendices**
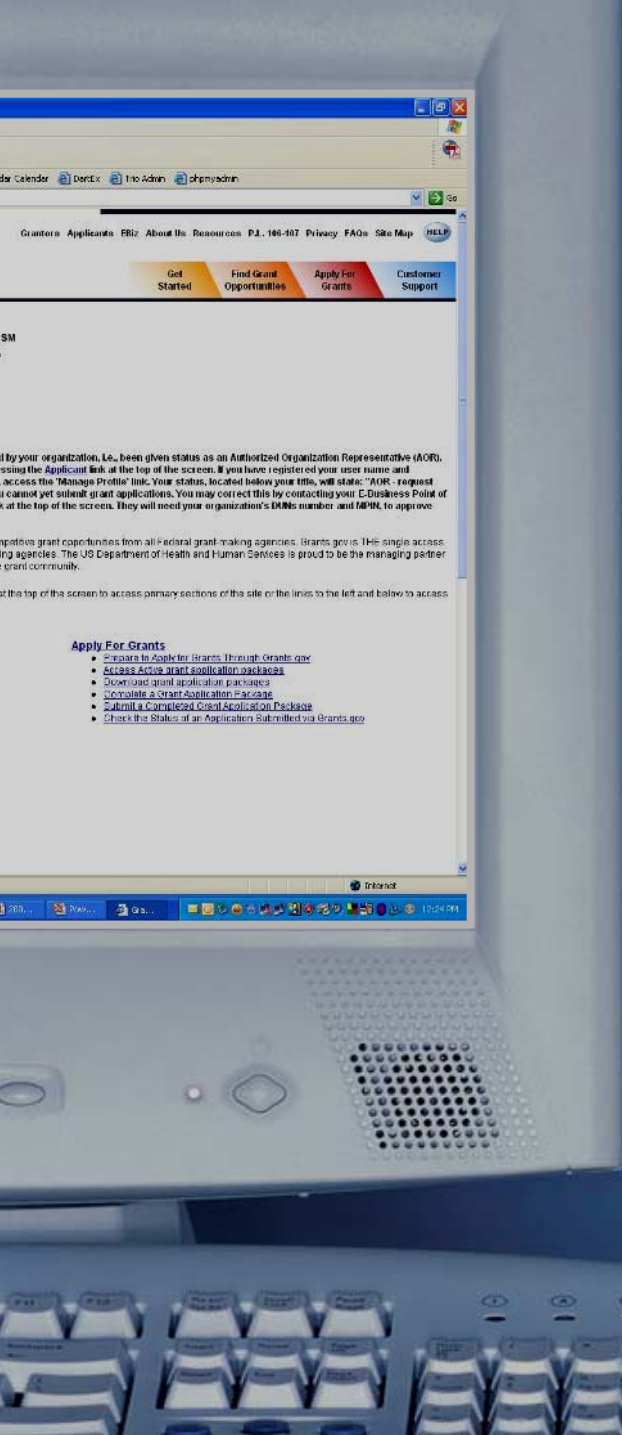
# Formatting

- **Double space** all text in the application including titles and headings. **Single space** all text in charts, tables, figures graphs, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions.

- Use a **12 point** sized Times New Roman font.

# Exceptions for Electronic Submission

**You may qualify for an electronic submission waiver if:**

-You do not have Internet access

-You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system

**If you are submitting a waiver, you must:**

-Mail or fax a written statement to the Department explaining your need for a waiver.

-If mailing, your letter must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

# Exceptions for Electronic Submission

Submit all Electronic Submission Waivers to:

Geraldine Smith

US Department of Education

1990 K Street, NW, Room 7000

Washington, DC  20006-8510

202-502-7857 fax

# Applications **WILL NOT** Be Read if:

- **Closing Date is NOT Met**
- **50 Page Limit is Exceeded**
- **A Paper Copy is Submitted without a Waiver of Electronic Submission**
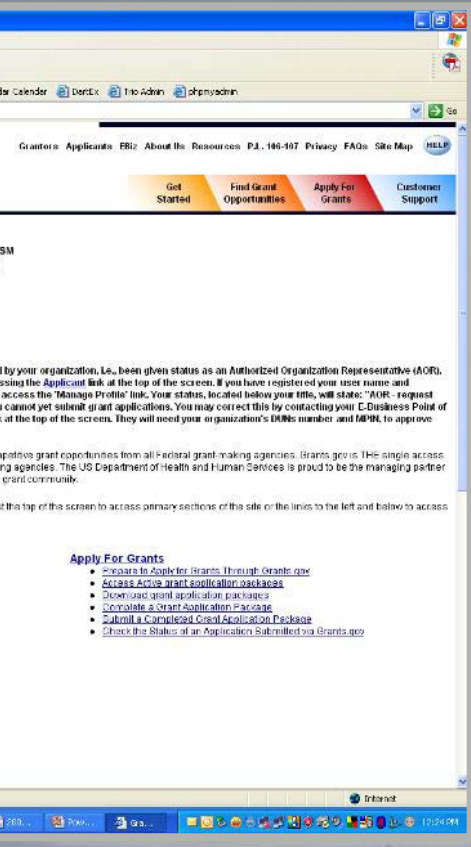
# Questions and Answers

# *What is Grants.gov?*
# **www.grants.gov**

- A NEW e-government initiative in the President's Management Agenda - one of 24 government-wide e-Gov initiatives.

- A NEW portal for all federal grant customers

- A NEW way to FIND, APPLY to grants online
  - The FIND function is a single source for finding grant opportunities, that helps applicants locate and learn more about funding opportunities in a standardized manner
  - The APPLY function is a single, secure and reliable source for applying for federal Grants online, simplifying the grant application process and reducing paperwork

www.grants.gov

# *Applying*

- Benefits the Applicant
  - Multiple Online help tools
  - Confirmation messages online and via e-mail
  - Collaboration possible by e-mailing Pure Edge package

- Uses downloadable electronic forms
  - Work and save application offline and logon to submit
  - Different from e-Application, where the applicant worked, saved, and submitted online

- One-time registration process
  - Can take five (5) or more days to complete
  - E-Authentication – no faxing of forms to ED
  - Register once and you can apply for all federal grants (not just ED)

# *Getting Ready for Grants.gov*

- Watch for Grant Opportunities posted on Grants.gov

  – The FIND function will have information on how to apply in the announcement

  – The APPLY function will have a link to the application

  Review ED Federal Register notices and application instructions carefully

  – Note the Due Date AND Time

  – Note instructions for submission and whether electronic submission is optional or mandatory

  Register - Complete the "Get Started Steps" for Grants.gov

- Download the Pure Edge Viewer

# *Tips to Submit Successfully*

- Review Grants.gov submission procedures and tips

- Register early

  - Do not wait for an opportunity to be published to register

  - Begin working on an application while completing Get Started Steps

  - Download the Pure Edge viewer from http://www.grants.gov to be able to download the application package

  - Confirm registration steps are complete

- Review Application Notices & Instructions carefully

  - Education accepts .doc, .rtf and .pdf file types

- Submit Early

- Submit with the correct DUNS number, the DUNS used in the Central Contractor Registry (CCR)

- Verify submission is OK

# *Register Early:*

- Grants.gov registration is a one-time process that may take five or more days to complete.

- You may begin working on your application while completing the registration process, but you cannot submit an application until all of the Get Started steps are complete.

For detailed information on the Get Started Steps, please go to: http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted

# REMEMBER:
## To Submit Early

- Do not wait until the last day to submit your application.

- Grants.gov will put a date and time stamp on your application after it is fully uploaded.

- The time it takes to upload an application will vary depending on a number of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection.

**Important: If you start uploading your application before 4:30 Washington, D.C. time on the application deadline date, and you do not finish uploading until after 4:30 pm, your application will be marked late.**

# *REMEMBER:*
## *To Verify Your Submission*

- Verify that Grants.gov and the Department of Education receive your Grants.gov submission on time and that it was validated successfully.

- To see the date and time your application was received, login to Grants.gov and click on the Check Application Status link.

- For a successful submission, the date and time received should be earlier than 4:30 pm on the deadline date, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.

# *E-mail Confirmations*

- You will receive a series of confirmations both online and via e-mail about the status of your application.

- Do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully

# *MAC & Dial Up Tips*

- Macintosh users

  – Need a Windows Emulator to use Grants.gov

- Dial Up Internet Connections

  – Uploading applications takes significantly longer than when using a high-speed connection, e.g. cable modem/DSL/T1

  – Can take a few minutes to a few hours to complete your grant submission using a dial up connection (depends on the application size)

- Exception to mandatory submission

  – See the Education submission procedures and tips and the Federal Register notice

  – Determine if you will need an exception to submit a paper application early

# *<u>Important Application Issues</u>*

- If the date and time received is later than 4:30 p.m. Washington D.C. time on the closing date, your application is late.

- If your application has a status of "Received" it is still awaiting validation by Grants.gov. Once validation is complete, the status will either change to "Validated" or "Rejected with Errors."

- If the status is "Rejected with Errors," your application has not been received successfully.

# *Don't Forget*

➤ You cannot submit an application until you have fully registered with Grants.gov.

➤ Do not wait until the last day to submit your application. If you start uploading your application before 4:30 p.m., Washington, D.C. time, on the application deadline date, and you do not finish uploading until after 4:30 p.m., your application will be marked late.

➤ Do not rely solely on e-mail to confirm whether your application has been received timely and validated successfully.

➤ The application status of a successful submission is: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.

➤ If the status is "Rejected with Errors," your application has not been received successfully.

# Grants.gov Customer Support

# 1-800-518-4726