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[FR Doc. 03-24648 Filed 9-29-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No. 84.116N]

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education—Special Focus Competition (Institutional Cooperation and Student Mobility in Postsecondary Education Among the United States, Canada and Mexico); Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

Purpose of Program: To provide grants or enter into cooperative agreements to improve postsecondary education opportunities by focusing on problem areas or improvement approaches in postsecondary education.

Eligible Applicants: Institutions of higher education or combinations of institutions of higher education and other public and private nonprofit institutions and agencies.

Applications Available: December 10, 2003.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: April 16, 2004.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: July 15, 2004.

Estimated Available Funds: \$300,000.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$30,000, \$200,000—\$215,000 for four-year duration of grant.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$30,000 for FY 2004. \$210,000 for four-year duration of grant.

Estimated Number of Awards: 10.

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

Project Period: Up to 48 months.

Page Limit: The application narrative is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. You must limit your narrative to the equivalent of no more than twenty (20) double-spaced pages using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 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 the title page, the budget section, including

the narrative budget justification, the assurances and certifications, the resumes, the bibliography, or the letters of support.

Our reviewers will not read any pages of your application narrative that—

- Exceed the page limit if you apply these standards; or
- Exceed the equivalent of the page limit if you apply other standards.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 82, 85, 86, 97, 98, and 99.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This program is a Special Focus Competition to support projects addressing a particular problem area or improvement approach in postsecondary education. The competition also includes an invitational priority to encourage proposals designed to support the formation of educational consortia of American, Canadian, and Mexican institutions of higher education to encourage cooperation in the coordination of curricula, the exchange of students and the opening of educational opportunities throughout North America. The invitational priority is issued in cooperation with Canada and Mexico. Canadian and Mexican institutions of higher education participating in any consortium proposal responding to the invitational priority may apply, respectively, to Human Resources Development Canada and the Mexican Department of Public Education for additional funding under separate Canadian and Mexican competitions.

Priority

We are particularly interested in applications that meet the following invitational priority.

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

Invitational Priority: Projects that support consortia of institutions of higher education that promote institutional cooperation and student mobility among the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Aligning Your Proposal to the Review Criteria

The success of this Special Focus Competition depends upon (1) the extent to which funded projects are being replicated—*i.e.*, adopted or adapted by others; and (2) the manner in which projects are being institutionalized and continued after grant funding. These two results

constitute FIPSE's indicators of the success of our program.

If funded, you will be asked to collect and report data from your project on steps taken toward these goals. Consequently, applicants are advised to include these two outcomes in conceptualizing the design, implementation, and evaluation of the proposed project. Consideration of FIPSE's two performance outcomes is an important part of many of the review criteria discussed below. Thus, it is important to the success of your application that you include these objectives. Their measure should be a part of the project evaluation plan, along with measures of objectives specific to your project.

Methods for Applying Selection Criteria

We give equal weight to the listed criteria. Within each of the criteria, we give equal weight to each of the factors.

Selection Criteria

In evaluating applications for grants under this program competition, we use selection criteria chosen from those listed in 34 CFR 75.210 of EDGAR.

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.

Pilot Project for Electronic Submission of Applications

In FY 2004, the Department is continuing to expand its pilot project for electronic submission of applications to include additional formula grant programs and additional discretionary grant competitions. The Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education [84.116N] is one of the programs included in the pilot project. If you are an applicant under the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, you may submit your application to us in either electronic or paper format.

The pilot project involves the use of the Electronic Grant Application System (e-Application). Users of e-Application will be entering data on-line while completing their applications. You may not e-mail a soft copy of a grant application to us. If you participate in

this voluntary pilot project by submitting an application electronically, the data you enter on-line will be saved into a database. We request your participation in e-Application. We shall continue to evaluate its success and solicit suggestions for its improvement.

If you participate in e-Application, please note the following:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- When you enter the e-Application system, you will find information about its hours of operation. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to initiate an e-Application package.

- 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 the Title Page which substitutes for ED 424 in the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, the Budget Summary Sheet which substitutes for ED 524 in the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, and all necessary assurances and certifications.

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

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement, which will include a PR/Award number (an identifying number unique to your application).

- Within three working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424 in the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

1. Print the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424, from e-Application.

2. The institution's Authorizing Representative must sign the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424.

3. Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard copy signature page of the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424.

4. Fax the signed Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424, to the Application Control Center at (202) 260-1349.

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

- *Application Deadline Date*

Extension in Case of System

Unavailability: If you elect to participate in the e-Application pilot for the Program for North American Mobility in

Higher Education and you are prevented from submitting your application on the application deadline date because the e-Application system is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day in order to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery. For us to grant this extension—

1. You must be a registered user of e-Application, and have initiated an e-Application for this competition; and

2. (a) The e-Application system must be unavailable for 60 minutes or more between the hours of 8:30 and 3:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date; or

- (b) The e-Application system must be unavailable for any period of time during the last hour of operation (that is, for any period of time between 3:30 and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time) on the application deadline date.

The Department must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension or to confirm the Department's acknowledgement of any system unavailability, you may contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** or (2) the e-GRANTS help desk at 1-888-336-8930.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

For Applications Contact: Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), PO 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: <http://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 84.116N.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., 8th Floor, Washington, DC 20006-8544. Telephone: (202) 502-7500 or via Internet: <http://www.ed.gov/FIPSE>.

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 contact number listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

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

Electronic Access to This Document

You may view this document, as well as all other Department of Education documents published in the **Federal Register**, in text or Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) on the Internet at the following site: <http://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.

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.access.gpo.gov/nara/index.html>.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1138-1138d.

Dated: September 25, 2003.

Sally Stroup,

Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.

[FR Doc. 03-24794 Filed 9-29-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RIN 1820 ZA31

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priority.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services establishes a final priority for one new award under the Assistive Technology Act (AT Act) Technical Assistance Program (TA) for NIDRR. The Assistant Secretary may use this priority for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2003 and later years. We take this action to focus attention on an area of national need. We intend this priority to measure and improve the outcomes of the Assistive Technology (AT) State