

requested by other participants, and the provision of on-site support services, including the provision of reasonable accommodations upon request. Projects must include a description of a process and methods that will result in high quality input on the IRI documents presented for review.

Intergovernmental Review

This program is subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. One of the objectives of the Executive order is to foster an intergovernmental partnership and a strengthened federalism. The Executive order relies on processes developed by State and local governments for coordination and review of proposed Federal financial assistance.

This document provides early notification of our specific plans and actions for this program.

Applicable Program Regulations: 34 CFR parts 385 and 389.

Electronic Access to This Document

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Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 772.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.264A-3 Rehabilitation Continuing Education Programs)

Dated: October 17, 2003.

Robert H. Pasternack,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 03-26701 Filed 10-22-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No.: 84.264A-3]

Rehabilitation Continuing Education Programs (RCEP)—Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI); Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2004

Purpose of Program: The Rehabilitation Continuing Education Programs—

(a) Train newly employed State agency staff at the administrative, supervisory, professional, paraprofessional, or clerical levels in order to develop needed skills for effective agency performance;

(b) Provide training opportunities for experienced State agency personnel at all levels of State agency practice to upgrade their skills and to develop mastery of new program developments dealing with significant issues, priorities, and legislative thrusts of the State and Federal vocational rehabilitation program; and

(c) Develop and conduct training programs for staff of—

(1) Private rehabilitation agencies and facilities that cooperate with State vocational rehabilitation units in providing vocational rehabilitation and other rehabilitation services;

(2) Centers for independent living; and

(3) Client assistance programs.

For FY 2004, the competition for new awards focuses on projects designed to meet the priorities we reference in the PRIORITIES section of this application notice.

Eligible Applicants: States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education.

Applications Available: October 31, 2003.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: January 8, 2004.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: March 8, 2004.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$42,629,000 for the Rehabilitation Training Programs for FY 2004, of which an estimated \$190,000 would be allocated for this competition. The actual level of funding, if any, depends on final congressional action. However, we are inviting applications to allow enough time to complete the grant process if Congress appropriates funds for this program.

Estimated Range of Awards: \$75,000–\$125,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$80,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 3. We expect to fund two awards under

Priority 1 and one award under Priority 2.

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

Project Period: Up to 60 months.

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 45 pages, using the following standards:

(1) A page is 8.5" by 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

(2) 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.

(3) 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, or the letters of support. 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.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86. (b) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR parts 385 and 389.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

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

Selection Criteria: In evaluating an application for a new grant under this competition, we use the selection criteria in 34 CFR 385.31 and 389.30. The selection criteria to be used for this competition will be provided in the application package for this competition.

Priorities

This competition focuses on projects designed to meet the priorities in the notice of final priorities for this program, published elsewhere in this issue of the **Federal Register**.

For FY 2004, these priorities are absolute priorities. Under 34 CFR

75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet one or more of the priorities.

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 Rehabilitation Continuing Education Programs (RCEP)—Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI), CFDA number 84.264A-3, is one of the programs included in this project. If you are an applicant under RCEP—IRI, 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 RCEP—IRI at: <http://www.grants.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 letter in your search.

For Applications Contact: 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: <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 84.264A-3.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package

in an alternative format by contacting the Grants and Contracts Services Team, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3317, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2550. Telephone: (202) 205-8207. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternative format the standard forms included in the application package.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Christine Marschall, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3325, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2649. Telephone: (202) 205-8926 or via Internet: Christine.Marschall@ed.gov.

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Robert H. Pasternack,
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[FR Doc. 03-26702 Filed 10-22-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-P