

invitational priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Priority

Curriculum Modules: Experiential Activities To Enhance Rehabilitation Empowerment

For the purposes of this priority, empowerment is defined as individuals having the information, education, training, confidence, and high expectations needed to make effective employment and life-related decisions.

This priority supports projects that provide experiential activities that increase the amount of personal contact and experience of VR students with individuals with disabilities in non-counseling settings. This priority is intended to support the design, piloting, evaluation, and dissemination of course modules to be incorporated into rehabilitation training program curricula that enhance student understanding of the culture of individuals with disabilities and of the behaviors that enhance empowerment from the perspective of individuals with disabilities.

Projects funded under this priority must incorporate experiential activities in which students interact directly with persons with disabilities in situations other than traditional and hierarchical student counselor to consumer relationships.

Projects must include an evaluation of the impact of the course module or modules and a dissemination plan to be carried out in the last year of the project period.

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 387.

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(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.263A Experimental and Innovative Training)

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

Dated: February 20, 2003.

Robert H. Pasternack,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 03-4549 Filed 2-25-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No.: 84.263A]

Experimental and Innovative Training; Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003

Purpose of Program: The Experimental and Innovative Training program provides financial assistance for projects designed—

(1) To develop new types of training programs for rehabilitation personnel and demonstrate the effectiveness of these new types of training programs for rehabilitation personnel in providing rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities; and

(2) To develop new and improved methods of training rehabilitation personnel so that there may be a more effective delivery of rehabilitation services by State and other rehabilitation agencies.

Eligible Applicants: States and public or nonprofit agencies and organizations, including Indian tribes and institutions of higher education, are eligible for assistance under this program.

Applications Available: February 27, 2003.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: April 15, 2003.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: June 14, 2003.

Estimated Available Funds: The Administration has requested \$42,629,000 for the Rehabilitation Training program for FY 2003, of which an estimated \$400,000 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 to \$100,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: \$100,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: 4.

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

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

Page Limit: Part III of the application, the application narrative, 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 50 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, 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, 86, and 99. (b) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR parts 385 and 387.

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 387.30. The selection criteria to be used for this competition will be provided in the application package for this competition.

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

For FY 2003, this priority is an absolute priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet the priority.

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 2003, the U.S. Department of Education is continuing to expand its pilot project for electronic submission of applications to include additional formula grant programs and additional discretionary grant competitions. The Experimental and Innovative Training program, CFDA No. 84.263A, is one of the programs included in the pilot project. If you are an applicant under the Experimental and Innovative Training program, 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) portion of the Grant Administration and Payment System (GAPS). 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 improvement.

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

- Your participation is voluntary.
- You will not receive any 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. When you enter the e-Application system, you will find information about its hours of operation.

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

- 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 3 working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the Application for Federal Assistance (ED 424) to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

- (1) Print ED 424 from the e-Application system.

- (2) The institution's Authorizing Representative must sign this form.

- (3) Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard copy signature page of the ED 424.

- (4) Fax the signed ED 424 to the Application Control Center at (202) 260-1349.

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

- Closing Date Extension in Case of System Unavailability: If you elect to participate in the e-Application pilot for the Experimental and Innovative Training program and you are prevented from submitting your application on the closing date because the e-Application system is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of 1 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 a.m. and 3:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the 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 deadline date.

The Department must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension you must 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 Experimental and

Innovative Training program at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

We have included additional information about the e-Application pilot project (see Parity Guidelines between Paper and Electronic Applications) in the application package.

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 84.263A.

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: Edward R. Smith, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., (room 3318, Switzer Building), Washington, DC 20202-2649. Telephone: (202) 205-0136 or via Internet: Edward.Smith@ed.gov.

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

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Robert H. Pasternack,
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[FR Doc. 03-4550 Filed 2-25-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-U