

PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT TO IMPROVE SERVICES AND RESULTS FOR CHILDREN  
WITH DISABILITIES PROGRAM—

**ASSOCIATE DEGREE PRESERVICE PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT GRANTS TO SUPPORT  
PERSONNEL WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES.**

ALN 84.325N  
FISCAL YEAR 2023

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



# Note Regarding Webinar

- ▶ Slides are for guidance only and information has been summarized due to logistics of the webinar.
- ▶ Please read the entire Notice Inviting Applications (NIA).
- ▶ Please review the recorded webinar titled “**Applying for Office of Special Education Programs Discretionary Grants**” for additional information related to submitting an application.
- ▶ If you would like to learn more about the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the programs that may support your work, please watch: **An Overview of the Office of Special Education Programs - YouTube**

# Reminders

- ▶ Informational Webinars do **not** take the place of reading through the entire application package.
  - Certain sections of the application package will be highlighted, but other important information will not be.
- ▶ Best practice tips may be provided, but please keep in mind this is a **peer-reviewed competition**.

# Applicant Package Contents

- ▶ Dear Applicant Letter
- ▶ Notice Inviting Applications
- ▶ Federal Register Notice
- ▶ Grants.gov System Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants
- ▶ Priority Description and Selection Criteria
- ▶ General Information
- ▶ Required Forms

# Application Timelines:

- ▶ NIA published in Federal Register on: **Thursday, February 23, 2023**
- ▶ Application deadline due no later than: **Monday, April 24, 2023**

# Today's Topics

- ▶ Purpose of the Personnel Preparation Program
- ▶ Absolute Priorities
- ▶ Definitions
- ▶ Contracts & Subgrants
- ▶ General Requirements
- ▶ NIA Narrative and Selection Criteria
- ▶ Resources for 325N applicants



# Purpose of the Personnel Development to Improve Services and Results for Children with Disabilities Program

The purposes of this program are to:

- (1) help address State-identified needs for personnel preparation in special education, early intervention, related services, and regular education to work with children, including infants, toddlers, and youth with disabilities; and
- (2) ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined through scientifically based research, to be successful in serving those children.

# Absolute Priority & Competitive Preference Priorities

This competition includes one absolute priority, which includes two competitive preference priorities within the absolute priority.

**Competitive Preference Priority 1**--Applications from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) (0 or 3 points).

**Competitive Preference Priority 2**--Partnership with HBCU Community Colleges, TCU Community Colleges, or other MSI Community Colleges (0 or 3 points).

Under Competitive Preference Priority 2, an applicant must have a letter of commitment that demonstrates at least one of its community college partners is an HBCU community college, TCU community college, or other MSI community college.



# Eligible Applicants, Number of Awards, Funding & Timeline

- ▶ **Anticipated Awards:** 10
- ▶ **Eligibility:** IHEs and private nonprofit organizations.
- ▶ **Funding:** For a single budget period of 12 months, we will not make an award exceeding: \$200,000.00
- ▶ **Timeline:** Project period is up to 60 months

# Defining Terms:

**Competencies** - For the purposes of this priority, “competencies” means what a person knows and can do--the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively function in a role (National Professional Development Center on Inclusion, 2011).

**Articulation Agreement** - An articulation agreement document is a formal commitment between two colleges or universities that lays out a transfer plan for coursework and credits to ensure students have a clear pathway to the next step in their education.

**Evidence-Based** - For the purposes of this priority, “*evidence-based*” means the proposed project component is supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale (34 CFR 77.1).

# Definitions (cont.)

“**Historically Black Colleges and Universities**” means colleges and universities that meet the criteria set out in 34 CFR 608.2.

“**Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities**” has the meaning ascribed to it in section 316(b)(3) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA).

“**Minority-Serving Institution**” means an institution that is eligible to receive assistance under sections 316 through 320 of part A of title III, under part B of title III, or under title V of the HEA. For purposes of this priority, the Department will use the FY 2022 Eligibility Matrix to determine MSI eligibility.

# SUBGRANTS

An IHE or non-profit organization that receives a grant under this program may award subgrants—to directly carry out project activities described in its application—to the following types of entities:

IHEs, nonprofit organizations suitable to carry out the activities proposed in the application, and other public agencies.

The grantee may award subgrants to entities it has identified in an approved application or that it selects through a competition under procedures established by the grantee.

# Indirect Cost Rate:

- ▶ Indirect Cost Rate Information: This program uses a training indirect cost rate of 8 percent.

•

# General Requirements

- a) Recipients of funding under this competition must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities (see section 606 of IDEA).
- b) Each applicant for, and recipient of, funding must, with respect to the aspects of their proposed project relating to the absolute priority, involve individuals with disabilities, or parents of individuals with disabilities ages birth through 26, in planning, implementing, and evaluating the project (see section 682(a)(1)(A) of IDEA).



# Competition Information:

- ▶ Expected Project Outcomes and Activities
- ▶ Application Narrative and Selection Criteria
- ▶ Project Assurances
- ▶ General Requirements

# Expected Project Outcomes:

1. Increased capacity of community college faculty to design and deliver curriculum content that prepares associate degree students to work with young children with disabilities and their families, including those who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations, and support their full and equitable participation, development, and learning in early childhood programs.
  
2. Increased number of early childhood program personnel with associate degrees who have the competencies to work with young children with disabilities and their families, including those who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations, and support their full and equitable participation, development, and learning in early childhood programs.



# Expected Project Outcomes (cont.):

3. Increased collaboration between 4-year institutions of higher education (IHEs) and community colleges to support articulation agreements and career pathways in early intervention and early childhood special education, to increase the number of associate degree graduates who enter bachelor's degree programs.

# Selection Criteria *FY 2023, CFDA 84.325N*

1. Significance **(10 points)**
  2. Quality of the Project Services **(45 points)**
  3. Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan **(20 points)**
  4. Adequacy of Resources **(10 points)**
  5. Quality of the Project Evaluation **(15 points)**
- 100 points**

# Significance NIA Narrative:

- 1) Address the **need in the field for early childhood program personnel with associate degrees who have the competencies to serve young children with disabilities and their families**, including those who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations, and support their full and equitable participation, development, and learning in early childhood programs; and
- (2) Address the **need for community college faculty to have the capacity to design and deliver content that will prepare associate degree students to serve young children with disabilities and their families**, including those who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations, and support their full and equitable participation, development, and learning in early childhood programs.

# Significance Selection Criteria:

- (i) The extent to which the proposed project will prepare personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated; and
- (ii) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

▶ **10 Points**

# Quality of Project Services – NIA Narrative

- (1) **Develop or refine a process** to effectively enhance and redesign associate degree programs to achieve the intended outcomes of the proposed project.

(i) How it **proposes to develop partnerships with a minimum of three community colleges to enhance and revise the associate degree curricula within these community colleges to prepare early intervention, early childhood special education, and early childhood education personnel** to equitably serve children ages birth through five with disabilities and their families, including those who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations. (In States where the age range for certification of early childhood personnel is other than birth through age 5 (e.g., birth through age 3, birth through age 5, ages 3 through 5), we defer to the age range in such State's certification); and

- ▶ **Note:** If an applicant has been awarded an Associate Degree Preservice Program Improvement Grant to Support Personnel Working with Young Children with Disabilities (Assistance Listing Number 84.325N) grant previously, **the applicant may not partner with the same community colleges and must propose different community college partners, to expand the number of community colleges with enhanced programs of study.**

# Quality of Project Services: NIA Narrative (cont.)

(ii) **Its proposed approach to partner with community colleges to enhance or redesign the associate degree programs' curricula by incorporating evidence-based practices into courses and by providing at least one practicum experience** in a setting that serves young children with disabilities and their families, including young children and families who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations.

Must describe:

- (A) The approach the proposed project will use to identify and incorporate current research and EBPs in the development and delivery of the curriculum enhancement and redesign;
- (B) The knowledge and competencies students will acquire in the enhanced curriculum; and

# Quality of Project Services – NIA Narrative (cont.)

(C) How coursework and practicum experiences will enable the students to acquire competencies to:

- **support young children with disabilities**, including children who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations, with their development and learning;
- **implement culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and intervention practices;**
- **work collaboratively with other practitioners; engage and communicate effectively with families;** and
- **support children’s full and equitable participation** in inclusive early childhood programs;

# Quality of Project Services: NIA Narrative (cont.)

- (2) Provide professional development to faculty in the community colleges to develop their capacity** to enhance or redesign their associate degree program and implement the new content to prepare associate degree students to work with young children with disabilities and their families, including those who are multilingual and from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse populations; and
- (3) Partner with community colleges to support the development of joint articulation agreements to create career pathways for associate degree students** in early intervention and early childhood special education.



# Quality of the Project Services – Selection Criteria

- i. the Secretary considers the **quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access** and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.
- ii. The extent to **which the goals, objectives, and outcomes** to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.
- iii. The extent to which **the services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration** of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services.
- iv. The extent to which the **training or professional development services** to be provided by the proposed project are of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration to lead to improvements in practice among the recipients of those services.

**45 points**

# Quality of Project Personnel and Management Plan: NIA Narrative

- (1) The proposed project will **encourage applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability**, as appropriate;
- (2) The project director and key project personnel **have the qualifications and experience** to carry out the proposed activities and achieve the project's intended outcomes;
- (3) The project director and other key project personnel **will manage the components** of the project;
- (4) The **time commitments** of the project director and other key project personnel **are adequate** to meet the objectives of the proposed project;
- (5) The proposed **management plan will ensure that the products and services provided are of high quality**, relevant, and useful to recipients; and
- (6) The proposed project will benefit **from a diversity of perspectives**, including students in the program, families of young children in early childhood programs, early childhood educators, faculty, and community partners, among others, in its development and operation

# Quality of Project Personnel & Management Plan - Selection Criteria

- ▶ The applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are **members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented** based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.
- ▶ The **qualifications**, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel;
- ▶ The **adequacy of the management plan** to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks;
- ▶ The extent to which **the time commitments** of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project; and
- ▶ The **adequacy of mechanisms** for ensuring high-quality products and services from the proposed project.

**20 points**

# Adequacy of Resources: NIA Narrative

d) Demonstrate, in the narrative section of the application under

“Adequacy of resources,” how-

(1) The applicant and any key partners have adequate resources to carry out the proposed activities; and

(2) The budget is adequate for meeting the project objectives.

# Adequacy of Resources – Selection Criteria

In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The **adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies**, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization; and
- (2) The extent **to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance** of the proposed project.

**10 points**

# Quality of Project Evaluation – NIA Narrative

(1) Evaluate how well the goals or objectives of the proposed project have been met. To meet this requirement the applicant must describe--

(i) The **relevant outcomes to be measured for the project, particularly the acquisition of faculty and scholars' competencies**; and

(ii) The **evaluation methodologies, data collection methods, and data analyses** that will be used; and

(2) Collect, analyze, and use disaggregated data on scholars supported by the project to inform the proposed project on an ongoing basis.

# Quality of Project Evaluation – Selection Criteria

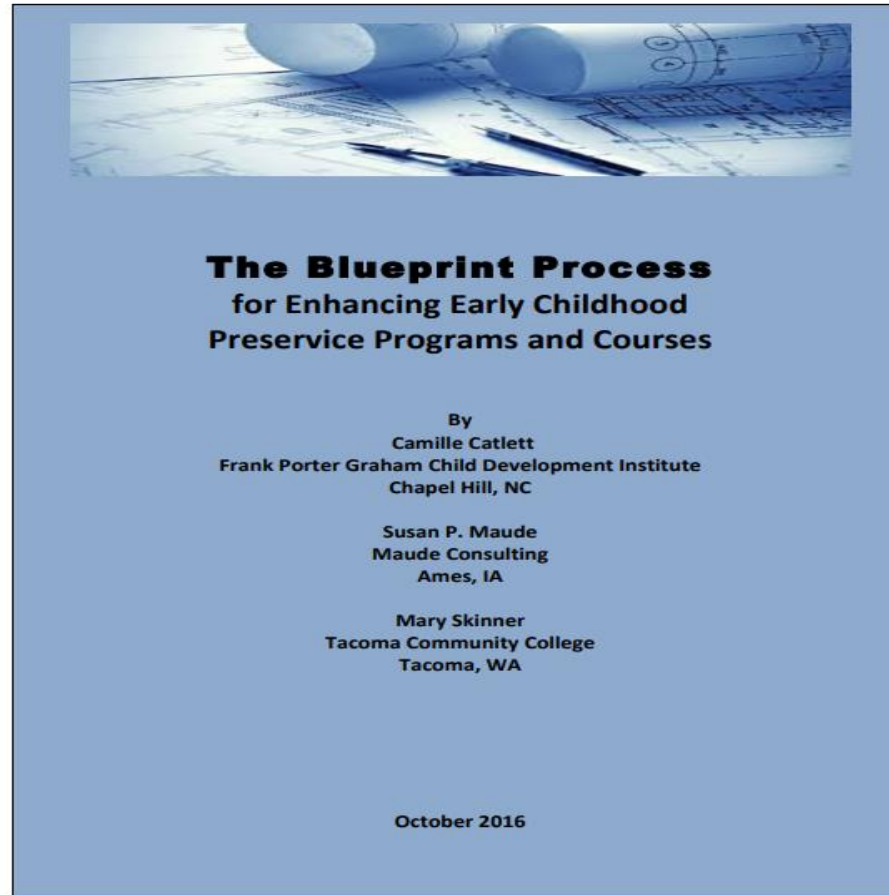
In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (i) The extent to which the **methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate** to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project; and
- (ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation **will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment** of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

**15 points**

# Resources: Publication

<https://fpg.unc.edu/publications/blueprint-process-enhancing-early-childhood-preservice-programs-and-courses>





# Resources: Discretionary database

▶ <https://publicddb.osepideastthatwork.org/#>

Office of Special Education Programs

## Discretionary Grants Database

Enter Keyword  and/or select search criteria

State

Disability

Age of Children

Program

Type of Competition

SEARCH

RESET



UCONN CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## The Early Childhood Personnel Center



<https://ecpcta.org>

Resources include:

- Enhancing pre-service learning systems in early childhood intervention.
- Community College Curriculum and Resources

# Logic Model & Evaluation Resources

- ▶ OSEP also provides information on developing performance measures and **logic models** to assist you in preparing a quality application.
  
- ▶ **Evaluation resources** from Center to Improve Project Performance (CIPP) can help you plan for your external evaluation and help you create strong performance measures.

# Helpful Resources for Planning from CIPP

- ▶ [Developing a State Comprehensive Systems of Personnel Development](#)
- ▶ [A System Framework for Building High-Quality Early Intervention and Preschool Special Education Programs](#)
- ▶ [Enhancing State Early Childhood System Infrastructure to Ensure Quality Services](#)

# Additional Requirements

Projects funded under this program must—

- ▶ Budget for a three-day project directors' meeting in Washington, D.C., during each year of the project;

Note: The project must reallocate unused travel funds no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period if the two- and one-half day project director's conference is conducted virtually.

# GPR: Performance Measures

These measures include:

- ▶ (1) the percentage of preparation programs that incorporate scientifically based research or EBPs into their curricula;
- ▶ (2) the percentage of scholars completing the preparation program who are knowledgeable and skilled in EBPs that improve outcomes for children with disabilities;
- ▶ (3) the percentage of scholars who exit the preparation program prior to completion due to poor academic performance; and
- ▶ (4) the percentage of scholars completing the preparation program who are working in the area(s) in which they were prepared upon program completion.

# Format and Page Limit Recommendations

The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We recommend that you (1) limit the application narrative to no more than 70 pages and (2) use 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, reference citations, and captions, as well as all text in charts, tables, figures, graphs, and screen shots.
- ▶ Use a font that is 12 point or larger.
- ▶ Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

**Other Narrative Attachments** (Upload and attach to Optional Project Narrative File).

Upload the attachments as PDF or Microsoft Word documents (a read only, flattened PDF format is recommended) in the order they should appear in the application.

Suggested order...

1. Reference List
2. Appendix A (See Dear Applicant letter and priority)
3. Other Appendices (See below)
4. Resumes/Vitae
5. Letters
6. Supplementary Information



# Letters of Commitment

- ▶ Include in Appendix B any letters of commitment obtained from partner community colleges. Any letters of commitment should include information on the racial and ethnic demographics of students who attend the community college;
- ▶ Note: The project must reallocate unused travel funds no later than the end of the third quarter of each budget period if the two- and one-half day project director's conference is conducted virtually.

# Note

The Project Narrative Attachment Form should include the narrative (text) that addresses each of the selection criteria, listed elsewhere in this document. The selection criteria will be used to evaluate applications submitted for this competition. The narrative has recommended formatting and page limits (check the Page Limits section of this document for formatting and page limit recommendations for the competition to which you are applying). The table of contents and list of priority requirements, if applicable, do not count toward the recommended narrative page limit.

# Final Piece of Advice

Consider having a novice reader review your draft application.

- ▶ Have them look for missing details.
- ▶ Unclear ideas.
- ▶ Undefined terms.
- ▶ And whether you have painted a vivid picture of what you plan to do.

# THANK YOU!

**Julia.Martin.Eile@ed.gov**

202-245-7431

**Grants.gov Support Desk:**

Email at: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

1-800-518-4726

**Grants.gov Training:**

<https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>