

Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) Program 84.116G

FY 2024 Pre-Application Webinar June 20, 2024 2:00pm (ET)

SESSION WILL BE RECORDED



This session will be recorded. By participating in this training, you authorize the department to:

- (1) Record your participation, appearance and likeness, and
- (2) Distribute the recording, including your participation, appearance, and likeness, to department employees and to post the recording on internal department websites.

DISCLAIMER



- The purpose of this webinar is to provide information about the Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) grant program and to discuss the requirements in the CEVSS Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for the FY 2024 grant competition.
- Do not rely solely on the information in this webinar.
- Please refer to the NIA and Application Package published on May 28, 2024, for additional information governing the competition.

https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/05/28/2024-11658/applications-for-new-awards-centers-of-excellence-for-veteran-student-success-program

AGENDA



- Welcome & Introductions
- Overview
- Eligibility
- Competition Priorities
- Selection Criteria
- Logic Model

- ApplicationRequirements
- Grants.gov
- Resources
- Contact Information
- Q&As

OVERVIEW



The purpose of this program is to encourage institutions of higher education (IHEs) to develop model programs to support veteran student success in postsecondary education by coordinating services to address the academic, financial, physical, and social needs of veteran students.

ELIGIBILITY



Who May Apply:

Institutions of Higher Education

AWARD INFORMATION



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Estimated available funds: \$8,910,000

Estimated number of awards: 12

Estimated Range of Award: \$650,000 to \$750,000

Maximum Amount: \$750,000

Project Period: 3 years (36 months)

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in subsequent years from the list of unfunded applications from this competition.

PRIORITIES



This competition includes *one* absolute priority **and** *three* competitive preference priorities.

The applicant must address the absolute priority in order to be considered for funding. The applicant has the option of choosing whether or not to address the competitive preference priorities for which they may receive additional points.

Include your response(s) to the priorities within the Application Narrative portion of the application.

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY



We consider only applications that meet the **Absolute Priority**.

The priority is:

Projects that include the following required activities:

- (a) Establishing a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success on the campus of the institution to provide a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive support services for veteran students;
- (b) Establishing a veteran student support team, including representatives from the offices of the institution responsible for admissions, registration, financial aid, veterans' benefits, academic advising, student health, personal or mental health counseling, career advising, disabilities services, and any other office of the institution that provides support to veteran students on campus;

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY



- (c) Providing a coordinator whose primary responsibility is to coordinate the model program;
- (d) Monitoring the rates of veteran student enrollment, persistence, and completion; and
- (e) Developing a plan to sustain the Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success after the grant period.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES



Three Competitive Preference Priorities:

An applicant may address one, all, or none of the competitive preference priorities.

- We award up to an additional 5 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets Competitive Preference Priority 1;
- We will award an additional 2 points to an application that meets Competitive Preference Priority 2; and
- We will award up to an additional 5 points to an application depending on how well the application meets Competitive Preference Priority 3.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 1



Competitive Preference Priority 1: Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs (up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to improve students' social, emotional, academic, and career development, with a focus on underserved students, through developing and supporting educator and school capacity to support social and emotional learning and development that is trauma-informed, such as addressing exposure to community-based violence and trauma specific to military- or veteran-connected students.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 2



Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (2 points).

Under this priority, an applicant must demonstrate that the project will be implemented by one of the following entities:

- (1) Community colleges (as defined in the notice);
- (2) Historically Black colleges and universities (as defined in the notice);
- (3) Tribal Colleges and Universities (as defined in the notice); or
- (4) Minority-serving institutions (as defined in the notice).

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 3



Competitive Preference Priority 3: Applications From New Potential Grantees Increasing Postsecondary Education Access, Affordability, Completion, and Post-Enrollment Success (up to 5 points).

Projects that are designed to increase postsecondary access, affordability, completion, and success for underserved students by supporting the development and implementation of student success programs that integrate multiple comprehensive and evidence-based services or initiatives, such as academic advising, structured/guided pathways, career services, credit-bearing academic undergraduate courses focused on career, and programs to meet basic needs, such as housing, childcare and transportation, student financial aid, and access to technological devices.

OTHER ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS



- (A) Outreach and recruitment of such students.
- (B) Supportive instructional services for such students, which may include--
 - (i) personal, academic, and career counseling, as an ongoing part of the program;
 - (ii) tutoring and academic skill-building instruction assistance, as needed; and
 - (iii) assistance with special admissions and transfer of credit from previous postsecondary education or experience.
- (C) Assistance in obtaining student financial aid.
- (D) Housing support for veteran students living in institutional facilities and commuting veteran students.
- (E) Cultural events, academic programs, orientation programs, and other activities designed to ease the transition to campus life for veteran students.
- (F) Support for veteran student organizations and veteran student support groups on campus.
- (G) Coordination of academic advising and admissions counseling with military bases and national guard units in the area.
- (H) Other support services the institution determines to be necessary to ensure the success of veterans in achieving educational and career goals.

SELECTION CRITERIA



The points assigned to each criterion are:

	Selection Criteria	Maximum Points
1	Need for the Project	(10 Points)
2	Significance	(10 Points)
3	Quality of the Project Design	(30 Points)
4	Quality of the Project Personnel	(15 Points)
5	Adequacy of Resources	(20 Points)
6	Quality of the Project Evaluation	(15 points)
	Total	100 Points

NEED FOR THE PROJECT (up to 10 points)



The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- 1) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project (up to 3 points).
- 2) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure (up to 4 points).
- 3) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses (up to 3 points).

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT (up to 10 points)



The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- 1) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population (up to 5 points).
- 2) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project (up to 5 points).

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN (up to 30 points)



The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- 1) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale (as defined in the notice). (up to 7 points).
- 2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable (up to 7 points).
- 3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs (up to 8 points).
- 4) The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance (up to 8 points).

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT PERSONNEL (up to 15 points)



The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project.

- 1) The extent to which 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 (up to 5 points).
- 2) In addition, the Secretary considers:
 - a) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator (up to 5 points).
 - b) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel (up to 5 points).

^{*}Note: For selection criterion (d), Quality of project personnel, applicants are encouraged to include in their application that they are committed to paying their staff a living wage for the local area and providing benefits.

ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES (up to 20 points)



The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources of the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- 1) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization (up to 6 points).
- 2) The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served and to the anticipated results and benefits (up to 7 points).
- 3) The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to such support (up to 7 points).

QUALITY OF PROJECT EVALUATION (up to 15 points)



The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers:

- 1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project (up to 4 points).
- 2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies (up to 4 points).
- 3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance (up to 3 points).
- 4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well implemented, produce promising evidence about the project's effectiveness (up to 4 points).

LOGIC MODEL



Logic model (also referred to as a theory of action) means a framework that identifies key project components of the proposed project (i.e., the active "ingredients" that are hypothesized to be critical to achieving the relevant outcomes) and describes the theoretical and operational relationships among the key project components and relevant outcomes.

The <u>Education Logic Model (ELM)</u> application is a downloadable, browser-based application that will help you build a logic model by answering a series of questions.

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/rel/Products/Region/pacific/Resource/100677

EVIDENCE FORM



As defined in the NIA, "demonstrates a rationale" means a key project component included in the project's logic model is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve relevant outcomes.

To receive the maximum points under the Quality of the Project Design criterion, your project must demonstrate a rationale. You demonstrate a rationale by creating a logic model for your project; the logic model should include a project component that is informed by research. Therefore, on the Evidence Form, you should mark "Demonstrates a Rationale".

EVIDENCE FORM



Applicants should complete all 3 columns of the Evidence Form (OMB No. 1894-0001).

Column A (Research/Citation), you should provide the complete citation in APA, MLA, or another scholarly format. The citation should include the name(s) of the author(s), publication date, journal name or URL, title of study, and monograph or volume number, if applicable. If providing a URL, please ensure that the link is active, as Peer Reviewers are not permitted to consult outside sources when reviewing applications. Alternatively, you may also include a copy of the study or report in question.

Column B (Relevant Outcome[s]/Relevant Finding[s]), indicate the finding(s) of the study or report that is related to your project component (for example, "the study indicates that use of "A" mentoring program shows positive gains over "X" number of years/months.")

Column C (Project Component/Overlap of Populations and/or Settings), indicate the project component that you are including based on the results of the study and the specific population(s) and setting(s) to which the intervention will be applied. For example, the "A" mentoring program has been found successful with [demographic/age/gender/grade level] students in [rural, urban, suburban] and/or [other] settings.

For additional information, see the instructions and examples provided on Pages 2-4 of the Evidence Form.

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PERFORMANCE MEASURES



Under 34 CFR 75.110, the Secretary has established the following performance measures for the CEVSS Program:

The extent to which the project is institutionalized at the end of the project period; **and** the extent to which funded projects increase enrollment, persistence, and completion rates of veteran students at their institutions.

If funded, you will be required to collect and report data in your project's annual performance report (34 CFR 75.590).

REQUIREMENTS



Indirect Cost Rate Information: This program uses an unrestricted indirect cost rate. For more information regarding indirect costs, or to obtain a negotiated indirect cost rate, please see: www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html.

Administrative Cost Limitation: This program does not include any program-specific limitation on administrative expenses. All administrative expenses must be reasonable and necessary and conform to Cost Principles described in 2 CFR part 200 subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

Cost Sharing or Matching: This competition does not require cost sharing or matching.

What are Indirect Costs?



Indirect costs (2 CFR 200.414) are general administrative costs incurred for a common or joint purpose that provide equitable benefit to Federal and non-Federal cost objectives.

There isn't an all-inclusive lists of indirect costs. Depending on the prevailing circumstances, any costs may be either indirect or direct.

Examples include: a portion of operation and maintenance, facilities, grounds; and salaries of administrators and services, such as accounting, human resources, and procurement.

Indirect vs Direct Costs



Direct costs (2 CFR 200.413) can be identified specifically with particular cost objectives such as a grant, contract, project, function or activity.

Direct costs examples include:

- Salaries and wages (2 CFR 200.430) (including vacations, holidays, sick leave, and other excused absences of employees working specifically on objectives of a grant or contract i.e, direct labor costs).
- Other employee fringe benefits (2 CFR 200.431) allocable on direct labor employees.
- Consultant services (2 CFR 200.459) contracted to accomplish specific grant/contract objectives.
- Travel (2 CFR 200.475) programmatic (direct)
- Materials, supplies and equipment (2 CFR 200.453) purchased directly for use on a specific grant or contract.
- Communication costs (2 CFR 200.421) identifiable with a specific award or activity.

What are considered administrative costs?



Administrative costs encompass grant expenses associated with administering the grant. These costs can be both personnel and non-personnel, and both direct and indirect. Generally, direct administrative (2 CFR 200.413(b) & (c))costs differ from indirect (2 CFR 200.414) charges in that the latter are considered organization-wide costs.

- Examples of direct administrative costs are salaries, benefits, and other expenses of the recipient's staff that perform the following functions:
- -Overall program management, program coordination, and office management functions including the salaries and related costs of the executive director, project director and/or project evaluator;
- -Preparing program plans, budgets schedules, and related amendments;
- -Monitoring of programs, projects, subrecipients and related systems and processes;
- -Developing systems and procedures, including management information systems, for assuring compliance with program requirements;
- Preparing reports and other documents related to the program requirements;
- -Evaluating program results against stated objectives; and
- -Divisional level administrative services such as program specific accounting, auditing or legal activities.

SUBGRANTEES



A grantee under this competition may **not** award subgrants to entities to directly carry out project activities described in its application.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS



An applicant that receives a grant award will be required to submit annual progress reports and a final report as a condition of the award. The reports will document the extent to which project goals and objectives are met.

Information about the annual performance report data collection form can be viewed at

HTTPS://HEPIS.ed.gov/.

GEPA

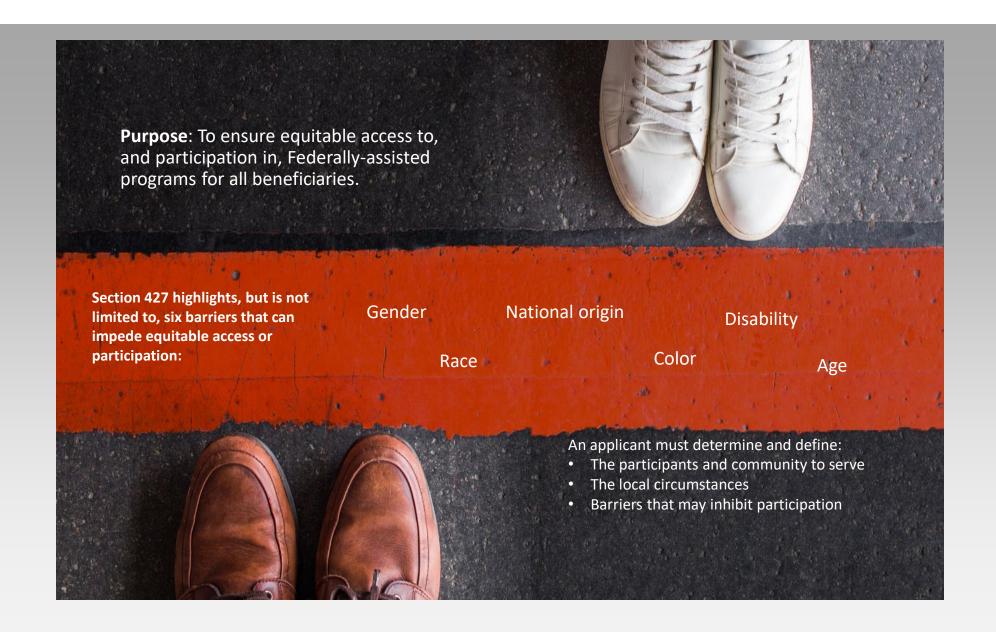


Section 427 of GEPA requires all applicants for new awards to include in their applications a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its federally-assisted programs for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. The provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age.

A general statement of an applicant's nondiscriminatory hiring policy is not sufficient to meet this requirement. Applicants must identify potential barriers and explain steps they will take to overcome these barriers.

NOTE: Applicants for new awards must include information in their applications to address this provision in order to receive funding under this program.

General Overview of GEPA Section 427



GEPA Section 427 Standard Form Changes

Original Form

- One overall general requirement
- 2. Flexibility to determine and define the barriers to "equitable access" and "equitable participation"
- 3. Discretion in how to describe plans to address the identified barriers
- 4. Description may be provided in a separate narrative or in connection with related topics in the application

Updated Form

- Applicants respond to four questions with specificity
- 2. Flexibility to determine and define the barriers to "equitable access" and "equitable participation"
- 3. A timeline for meeting targeted milestones for removing identified barriers



Updated GEPA Form Has Four Questions

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS: EQUITY FOR STUDENTS, EDUCATORS, AND OTHER PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1228a) applies to applicants for grant awards under this program.

ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW GRANT AWARDS MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

se	respond to the following requests for information:
l .	Describe how your entity's existing mission, policies, or commitments ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the proposed project or activity.
2.	Based on your proposed project or activity, what barriers may impede equitable access and participation of students, educators, or other beneficiaries?
3.	Based on the barriers identified, what steps will you take to address such barriers to equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity?
ı.	What is your timeline, including targeted milestones, for addressing these identified barriers?

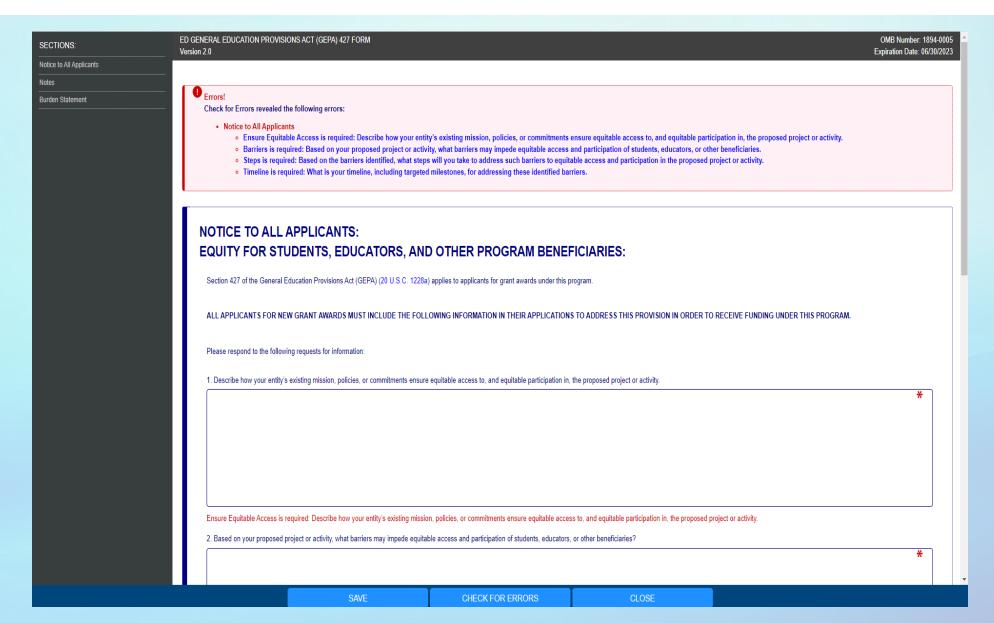
Applicants must respond to each question on the standard form and submit the form with its grant application package or State plan.

For Grants.gov application submissions:

- 1. The updated form is integrated into Grants.gov and no longer needs to be uploaded as PDF.
- 2. The form is electronic and each text box response allows 4,000 characters.
- 3. An error message is received if a response is missing and the form can not be saved. (see next slide)



Sample Error Message





GEPA Form Instructions

- Applicants may identify any barriers that may impede equitable access and participation in the proposed project or activity, including, but not limited to, barriers based on economic disadvantage, gender, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, language, migrant status, rural status, homeless status or housing insecurity, pregnancy, parenting or caregiving status, and sexual orientation.
- Applicants are not required to have mission statements or policies that align with equity in order to submit an application.
- Applicants may have already included some or all this required information in the narrative sections of their applications or their State Plans. In responding to this requirement, for each question, applicants may provide a cross-reference to the section(s) and page number(s) in their applications or State Plans that includes the information responsive to that question on this form or may restate that information on this form.



GEPA Form Instructions continued

- Applicants must respond to each question using the associated text box. Each text box allows approximately 4000 characters; therefore, if copying and pasting into the text box from another document be sure to check that everything copied.
- Applicants should use the "check for errors" button before they save the form. Applicants will receive an error message if any response is missing and will not be able to submit the application due to the missing information.
- Applicants that have already undertaken steps to address barriers must still provide an explanation and/or description of the steps already taken in each text box, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.
- Applicants that believe no barriers exist must still provide an explanation and/or description to each question to validate that perception, as appropriate, to satisfy the GEPA Section 427 requirement.



GEPA Section 427 Resources

- PDF version of Section 427 form and instructions <u>GEPA 427</u> <u>Form Instructions for Application Package (ed.gov)</u>
- Computer-based training, <u>Ensuring Equitable Opportunities</u>
 Under the GEPA Section 427
- GEPA Section 427 form Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- The Department of Education Equity Action Plan at <u>ED.gov/equity</u>
- Comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form may be addressed to Kelly Harris at Kelly.Harris@ed.gov.

Application Checklist

- ☐ Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424)
- ☐ Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424
- ☐ Department of Education Information Non-Construction Programs Form Budget Information (ED Form 524)
- ☐ One-page Program Abstract (Use "ED Abstract Form")
- ☐ Project Narrative for proposed grant (Use "Project Narrative Attachment Form")
- ☐ Budget Narrative (Use "Budget Narrative Attachment Form")

- ☐ Other Attachments Form (Use "Other Attachments Form")
 - Narrative summaries of key personnel
 - Short position descriptions for staff to be hired
 - References cited in proposal narrative
 - Project director resume
 - Evidence Form (OMB No. 1894-0001)
- ☐ Assurances/Certifications
 - GEPA Section 427 Form (Mandatory)
 - Grants.gov Lobbying Form (ED-80-0013)
 - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) OPTIONAL

Applying Through Grants.gov

- Electronic submission required through grants.gov. The application uploading process is time consuming. Please submit your application several days before the closing date.
- If you experience problems with submitting your application, please contact:
 - Support Desk e-Mail: support@Grants.gov
 - Support Desk Telephone: (800) 518-4726
 Contact Telephone Hours: 24 hours, 7 days a week, except Federal holidays
 - Grants.gov Self-Service Knowledge Base web portal at: https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants
- Also, refer to the "Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants" section found in the application package.

GRANTS.GOV SUBMISSION

• STEP 1 – REGISTER EARLY:

- 1) Grants.gov registration may take 7 to 10 business 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 Registration steps are complete.
 - Detailed information on the Registration Steps may be found at http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html. Once your registration is active, it will take 24-48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov, and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov.

GRANTS.GOV SUBMISSION

STEP 2 – SUBMIT EARLY

1) We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the last day to submit your application. Grants.gov will put a date/time stamp on your application and then process it *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, and the time it takes Grants.gov to process the application will vary as well. If Grants.gov rejects your application (see step three below), you will need to resubmit successfully to Grants.gov before 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on the July 29, 2024.

GRANTS.GOV SUBMISSION

STEP 3 – VERIFY SUBMISSION IS OK

- You will want to verify that Grants.gov received your application submission on time and that it was validated successfully. Log in to Grants.gov and click on the Track My Application Link. For a successful submission, the date/time received should be earlier than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on July 29, 2024, AND the application status should be: Validated, Received by Agency, or Agency Tracking Number Assigned.
- If the date/time received is later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time, on July 29, 2024, 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.

RECOMMENDED PAGE LIMIT



We recommend that you limit the application narrative to no more than 50 pages and 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, except titles, headings, footnotes, quotations, references, and captions.
- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch).
- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial.

The recommended page limit does not apply to the cover sheet; the budget section, including the narrative budget justification; the assurances and certifications; or the one-page abstract.

DATES TO REMEMBER



- May 28, 2024 application period opened
- July 29, 2024 at 11:59:59pm ET application period closes
 - □If your application is late, we will notify you that we will not consider the application.
- Awards announced by December 31, 2024
 - □All applicants (ineligible, unsuccessful, and successful) will be notified in writing.
 - ☐ Start date for new awards will be January 1, 2025

RESOURCES



Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success (CEVSS) program website:

https://www2.ed.gov/programs/cevss/index/.html

Notice Inviting Applications (NIA):

https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/05/28/2024-11658/applications-for-new-awards-centers-of-excellence-for-veteran-student-success-program

CEVSS Application Package and Instructions:

www.grants.gov

Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR)

http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html

2 CFR Part 200

http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/uniform-guidance/index.html

CONTACT INFORMATION







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