REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Application Guidelines

General and Fiscal Guidelines
Revised December 2014

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Contents

Review and Approval of Grant Products

Email Bulletins

The Division of Grants Administration publicizes a variety of grant-related information via email bulletins, including the following:

- RFA announcement letters
- Summaries of errata notices
- Grant deadlines
- Grant information

To subscribe to Division of Grants Administration bulletins, go to the [TEA Updates] page of the TEA website and submit your request to sign up. On the Quick Subscribe page, select the Grants Administration and Federal Program Compliance (GAFPC) topic from the Grants category.

Shared Services Arrangements

A shared services arrangement (SSA) is an agreement between two or more school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and/or ESCs. The SSA provides services for all of the entities involved. Such entities may desire to enter into an SSA for the performance and administration of a program in order to maximize the use of funds and services to be provided. In every SSA, a fiscal agent is designated to be ultimately responsible for conducting administrative duties. An eligible entity, as defined in the Program Guidelines, Shared Services Arrangement, must serve as the fiscal agent for an SSA.

All listed members of the SSA must positively certify their agreement to the listed requirements and conditions by signing Schedule #3 ^{2} Certification of Shared Services. Each participant should carefully review the certification statement before signing. Only after all participants have approved the contents of the application can the fiscal agent perform a final certification and submission of the SSA grant application to TEA.

Excluded Entities

The following entities are excluded from providing services through an SSA:

- Colleges/universities
- Community-based organizations
- Councils of governments
- Other local governments, such as cities and counties

7KHVH RWKHU HQWLWLHV PD\ FRQWUDFW ZLWK WKH 66$¶V ILVFDO collaborative partnership with the fiscal agent to conduct grant activities. Such contractors or partners will not be members of the SSA.

Applicants for an application available on the TEA web-based eGrants system must use eGrants to apply for the funds. Paper applications will not be accepted. You must provide the requested information complete and according to the instructions. For competitive grants, applicants will not be permitted to add further information past the due date for submission. Incomplete applications will not be considered for funding.

Any item described above if that item applies to a state or national parent organization, together with a statement by the parent organization that the applicant is a local nonprofit affiliate

Any of the above documentation submitted must be in the name of the applicant to be eligible for consideration. A grant will not be awarded to a nonprofit organization that cannot demonstrate nonprofit status at the time of application submittal.

For-Prof

Bill 9 was codified in the Texas Education Code, Chapter 22, Subchapter C, Criminal History Records.

Applicants may elect to use additional resources and other sources of financial support to help maximize the effectiveness of the program goals and objectives. So long as they do not violate the supplement, not supplant provision, applicants are strongly encouraged to coordinate their participation in federal, state, and local programs to eliminate duplication of resources.

Obligation of Funds

Program funds shall not be obligated for expenditure before the beginning date of the grant or after the ending date of the grant unless pre-award costs are expressly permitted for the individual grant program. Funds may be requested only for those items that are reasonable and necessary for accomplishing the objectives of the program as defined in this RFA and for implementing activities as described.

In some instances, goods or services delivered near the end of the grant period may be viewed by TEA as not necessary to accomplish the objectives of the current grant program, but TEA will evaluate such expenditures on a case-by-case basis. Please note that a TEA monitor or an auditor may disallow those expenditures if the grantee is unable to (1) document the need for the expenditures, (2) demonstrate that program beneficiaries receive benefit from the late expenditures, or (3) negate the D S S H D U D Q F H R I ³ V W R F N S L O L Q J ´ V X S S O L H V R U H T X L S P H Q W

An obligation occurs depending upon the expenditure, as described in tpro

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APPLICATION

Cost of Equipment Insurance

Equipment purchased with federal funds must be insured. The actual cost of insurance for equipment purchased with funds from this grant program may be charged as a direct cost to the grant so long as the insurance costs are not contained in any other comprehensive casualty insurance that may be held by the grantee.

Use and Disposition of Equipment Purchased with Grant Funds

Equipment purchased with state or federal grant funds must be used in the grant project for which it was acquired for as long as the equipment is needed, whether or not the grant continues to be funded by state or federal funds. Unless TEA indicates otherwise, once the equipment is no longer needed, its use may be transferred to support another state or federally funded grant. In this situation, equipment purchased with federal funds must be used in another federally funded program, and equipment purchased with state funds must be used in another state-funded program. Use for the original grant should always take priority over other uses.

Only the grant funds used to purchase equipment may be used to pay for rep

After grant funds are awarded, they must be expended in accordance with the approved budget. For instance, if the grantee budgeted for laptops and decides that tablet computers would be a more cost-effective means of serving the same need, the grantee must submit an amendment to the more features generally associated with laptop computers. The primary distinction, finally, came to be price, with netbooks being less expensive than laptops.

Type of Entity	Applicable Cost Principles

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team.

A reviewer who violates either of these assurances faces the following potential consequences:

- Nullification of the entire grant competition
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- ,QHOLJLELOLW\ RI WKH UHYLHZHU¶V RUJDQL]DWLRQ WR DSSO\

Each competitive application is reviewed to determine the capability of the applicant to implement its proposed program. In reviewing the information submitted and in recommending competitive applications for funding, the review committee and TEA staff consider the following criteria: Clearly Outstanding, Exceeds Expectations, Meets Standard, Needs Improvement, or Not Addressed. When rating each indicator, the review committee members select a criterion rating which has an appropriate point value assigned.

Priorities for Funding

In some grant programs, points are available to applicants that meet certain priorities for funding defined in statute or by TEA. These points are beyond those available through either the standard or specific review criteria. In general, applicants must receive a certain percentage of points available through the standard and/or specific review criteria, before priority points will be awarded, to be eligible for funding. Any priorities for funding (priority points) defined for the program will be listed in the Program Guidelines, Priorities for Funding.

Selection for Funding

See the Eligibility for Funding section for information regarding requirements applicants must meet before becoming eligible to receive funds.

Applications for competitive grants are considered and selected on the basis of total points scored during review and, if applicable, as the result of any oral interviews, but awards are contingent upon availability of funds. In some cases, only applications that receive at least 70 percent or another minimum percentage of points established by TEA, whichever is greater, will be considered for funding. Grant awards are generally made starting with the highest-scoring application and continuing to the next highest-scoring application until funds are exhausted or until the applications with the minimum percentage score or higher are funded, whichever is the case.

It is important that a diverse group of students and districts be represented in the operation of grant programs. Therefore, after all applications have received a final score, some additional factors may instructions for each form, and the approved application as negotiated by TEA and will constitute the binding agreement between the parties.

To be eligible to receive an approved application, NOGA, and subsequent funding, applicants must not be on warrant hold by the Texas comptroller of public accounts, and must not owe TEA a refund for any discretionary grant.

Amending the Application

If selected for funding, grantees must submit any amendments to the approved application in accordance with the instructions for submitting amendments (see the SAS: Schedule #4—Request for Amendment and the associated instructions for paper grants or Schedule GS2300 for eGrants). Amendments may be submitted by any of the following means:

- By fax to (512) 463-9811 or (512) 463-7915
- By mail to the Document Control Center, Division of Grants Administration, Texas Education Agency, 1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin TX 78701-1494
- In person to the second-floor visitor reception desk at the William B. Travis Building in downtown Austin (1701 N. Congress Ave., Austin TX 78701-1494)

Grantees may not amend the grant application in a way that alters the basic program intent, goals, or objectives to the extent that the program would no longer be the program that received the application score and was subsequently recommended for funding.

Regardless of how a grantee distributes the funds among the class/object codes, the grantee is still responsible for carrying out the scope and objectives of the grant as described in the approved application.

TEA reserves the right to reject unnecessary amendments without reviewing and approving them.

Amendment Justification

Grantees are permitted to rebudget within the approved direct cost budget (as established on Schedule #6—Program Budget Summary for paper grants or the Schedule BS60XX—Program Budget Summary and Support for eGrants) to meet unanticipated requirements and to make certain changes to the approved budget without written amendment. However, some changes do require

Review the program guidelines for the grant to determine whether pre-award costs are permitted and to learn the period during which they are allowable.

Requesting Pre-Award Costs

In order for the grantee to be reimbursed for pre-award costs, pre-award costs must generally be requested in the originally approved grant application (including adding the request

- Insurance that protects the grantee
- Direct administrative costs included in an approved direct cost allocation plan

The authorizing statute or TEA may limit the amount of funds that may be budgeted to administer the program, including direct administrative costs and indirect costs, to no more than 5% (or another amount specified in statute) of the total grant awarded for any fiscal year. Refer to the Program Guidelines: Limitation of Administrative Funds, to determine if administrative costs are limited for this grant.

Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are calculated and reimbursed based on actual expenditures when reported in the expenditure reporting system, regardless of the amount budgeted and approved in the grant application.

For guidance on indirect costs, refer to the Indirect Cost Handbook, posted in the Handbooks and Other Guidance section of the Division of Grants Administration Administering a Grant page.

To calculate the maximum indirect costs that can be claimed for a grant, complete the Maximum Indirect Costs Worksheet, posted on the Division of Federal Fiscal Compliance and Reporting Indirect Cost Rates page.

Financial Management Requirements

Fiscal control and accounting procedures must permit the tracing of funds to a level of expenditure adequate to establish that funds have been used in accordance with the approved grant application. The applicant must maintain effective control over and accountability for all funds, property, and other assets.

Budgeted expenditures are shown by class/object code. ISDs, open-enrollment charter schools, and ESCs are required to maintain records on all expenditures by budget function, class/object code, and year of entitlement (appropriation), in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Accountability System Resource Guide (FASRG).

All nonprofit and for-profit applicants for federally funded grants must demonstrate the capability to comply with federal financial management and accounting standards.

TEA reserves the right to conduct a pre-award audit or post-award audit to determine if a grantee maintains a proper financial management system and to deny or terminate the award if it is determined that the grantee does not maintain a proper financial management system.

Failure to comply with federal financial management standards will result in audit exceptions and the disallowance of all expenditures paid from the grant.

Financial Accounting System

7KH DSSOLFDQW¶V ILQDQFLDO PDQDJHPHQW V\VWHP PXVW PHHW the standards and must provide for accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of each grant project. The financial management system records must adequately identify the funding source and use of funds and must contain information pertaining to grant awards, authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, outlays (expenditures), income, and interest. Refer to the Information for Organizations Selected for a Review page of the TEA website for sample general

Expenditure Reimbursement Requests Requiring Manual Approval

In order to comply with federal regulations (Office of Management and Budget [OMB] Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122), the Texas Education Agency (TEA) monitors expenditure reimbursement requests through a manual review and approval process. If a reimbursement request requires manual approval, TEA staff contacts the grantee and asks for a simple narrative justification for the request. TEA will not ask for detailed supporting documentation unless the circumstances require it.

For more detailed information on the manual D S S U R Y D O S U R F H V V U H I H U W R ³ ([S H Q G 5 H L P E X U V H P H Q W 5 H T X H V W V 5 H T X L U L Q J 0 D Q X D O $ S S U R Y D O ´ S R V W Expenditure Reporting Guidance section of the Division of Grants Administration [Administering a Grant](#) page.

Cash Management

Administrative requirements for grants stipulate that grantees must request cash (i.e., grant payments) as close as possible to the time of making disbursements. Pursuant to the requirements in 34 CFR 74.21 and .22 and 80.20 and .21, payment requests must be timed in accordance with the actual, immediate cash requirements of the grantee.

Grantees should not have more cash on hand than is Q H F H V V D U \ W R P H H W W K U H H G D \ V ¶ Therefore, grantees should request only that amount that will be paid out within three business days once the payment is received from TEA. Grantees may request payment only for obligations incurred during the grant period. > BDC BT 1 0 0 1 406.27 Tm [(> BDC BT 1 f* Q Q BT0>3<0044>4<0051>4<0

Nongovernmental entities such as IHEs and nonprofit organizations are subject to Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations Part 74 (34 CFR Part 74).

Governmental entities such as ISDs, ESCs, and open-enrollment charter schools are subject to 34 CFR Part 80.

Return of Interest Earned from Payments to IHEs and

All applicants must address the special needs of students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers to equitable participation, including those based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age.

Private Nonprofit School Participation

If the authorizing statute requires, the following private nonprofit school participation requirement shall apply to the federally funded grant program. Before completing and submitting the application, the applicant must contact the private nonprofit schools located within its boundaries, notifying them of the opportunity to participate in the program. Schedule #19² Private Nonprofit School Participation for paper grants or Schedule PS3500² Private Nonprofit School Participation for eGrants must be completed and submitted with the application.

Generally, in accordance with the specific program statute, private nonprofit schools must be consulted in the planning and development of the project. Both children and teachers from private nonprofit schools must be assured equitable participation in all services, materials, equipment, and teacher training.

Private Nonprofit School Initial Contact

(DFK \HDU LQ D PDQQHU WKDW LV ³WLPHO\ DQG PHDQLQJIXO´ generally, as described in NCLB, Title IX, Part E, Section 9503 [a] [4]), the applicant must contact the private nonprofit school officials located within its boundaries to determine if they wish their teachers or students to receive services. Only secular, neutral, and nonideological services, materials, and equipment may be provided to participants. Such participation usually includes training opportunities for teachers of private nonprofit school children but not for the hiring of any substitute teacher used in the classroom while the private school teacher attends the training. In all cases, the applicant makes the final decision with respect to the services to be provided to private school participants.

Before completing and submitting this application, the applicant must contact officials of private nonprofit schools located within its boundaries to ascertain if these officials would like teachers or children enrolled in their schools to participate in the purposes and benefits of this grant program.

How the services will be academically assessed, and how the results of that assessment will be used to improve those services

What size and scope of the equitable services are to be provided to the eligible private nonprofit school children, and what proportion of funds is to be allocated for such services

How and when the applicant will make decisions about the delivery of services to such children, including a thorough consideration of the views of the private nonprofit school officials on the provision of services through a contract with potential third -party providers

How, if the applicant disagrees with the views of the private nonprofit school officials on the provision of services through a contract, the applicant will provide in writing to these officials an analysis of the reasons why the organization has chosen not to use a contractor

Equitable Services

Many program statute require equitable services to be provided to participating1410(zatio)-4(n)4( )13(h)-4(a)4(s

APPLICATION

Interim Expenditure Reports

As good grant management practice, semi-annual and other interim expenditure reports should be filed in ER within 15 days of the end of each reporting period as specified in the program guidelines. Grantees are encouraged to adhere to expenditure report due dates to ensure funds are being spent in a timely manner WR EHQHILW WKH SURJUDP¶V LQWHQGHG beneficiaries according to the established timelines in the grant. TEA does not require interim expenditure reports on any certain schedule.

When reporting interim expenditures, grantees shall not request more than 90% of the total grant award. Once grantees file their final expenditure report, they may request up to 100% of the award amount.

Final Expenditure Report

Grantees reporting by class/object code in ER will enter the total of the final cumulative expenditures in ER, even if that total expended amount is less than 100% of the grant award. However, only 90% of final expenditures will be paid to the grantee pending verification that TEA KDV UHFHLYHG WKH ILQDO SURJUDP HYDOXDWLRQ UHSRUW LI DSS program evaluation report in approvable form, ER will automatically generate the final 10% payment to the grantee.

The final expenditure report must be filed in ER within 30 days after the ending date of the grant. (See the Program Guidelines, Grant Timeline.) The total project cumulative costs of the grant, as

In the event that the ER system is closed, contact the Cash Management/Fund Control Unit in the Division of Grants Administration at (512) 463-8525 for further instructions.

If the grantee discovers expenditures that are less than the amount initially reported, it must submit a revised final expenditure report in ER immediately. Refunds must then be submitted to TEA within 30 days, as described in the following section.

Refund to TEA

If the final expenditure report indicates that a refund is due to TEA, within 30 days of notification that a refund is due, the grantee must submit a refund check to the following address:

Texas Education Agency² MSC
P.O. Box 13717
Austin TX 78711-3717

Write the name of the grant program and the NOGA ID number on the refund check and note the reason for the refund (e.g., due to an internal audit or an annual audit).

Request to Extend Reporting Deadline

An LEA that misses the deadline for a final or revised final expenditure report has 30 days to request an extension of the deadline. If there is no opportunity for a revised final expenditure report, the LEA has 10 days after the final expenditure reporting deadline to submit the request. All requests for extensions to expenditure reporting deadlines must be submitted using the Request to Extend Expenditure Reporting Deadline form. The form is posted on the [Request to Extend Expenditure Reporting Deadline](#) page of the TEA website.

Grantees are reminded that meeting required deadlines is a responsibility of all grantees. Regardless of this procedure, failure to meet expenditure reporting deadlines may result in loss of IXQGV DQG FRXOG FDXVH WKH JUD-QWHH´WR EH LGHQWLILHG DV

Requests for expenditure deadline extensions are not granted automatically. TEA staff will evaluate each request on a case-by-case basis, with the decision to extend a deadline remaining completely ZLWKLQ 7(\$¶V GLVFUHWLRQ 5HTXHVWV are number of factors related to the HG E\ ZHL request itself, the individual grant program, and the time at which the request is submitted. TEA reserves the right to review all supporting documentation, such as the general ledger, in determining whether a request will be granted.

TEA will notify the LEA of the approval or denial of the request. As a corrective action, any LEA whose request for an expenditure reporting deadline extension is granted is advised that in the future, it must comply with expenditure reporting deadline requirements.

If TEA extends the ending date of the grant period after the start of the grant, there may be no opportunity for requesting to extend the expenditure reporting deadline.

Submission of Audit Reports for Federal Discretionary Grants

The following requirements apply only to recipients of federal discretionary and federal discretionary continuation grants from TEA. A continuation grant is a grant that is awarded in any subsequent year following the initial grant award.

OMB Circular A-133 Single Audits

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Annual Audits (Where an A-133 Audit Is Not Required)

All grantee organizations other than ISDs, ESCs, and open-enrollment charter schools that were not required to have a Single Audit conducted under the Single Audit Act (OMB Circular A-133) must submit a copy of

A grantee identified as high-risk will be notified in writing by TEA of the special conditions imposed and the process for removing the high-risk status and special conditions.

Pursuant to the provisions in 34 CFR 80.43, if a grantee materially fails to comply with any term of an award, whether stated in a federal statute or regulation, an assurance, in a grant application, or elsewhere, TEA may take one or more of the following enforcement actions as appropriate in the circumstances:

- Temporarily withhold cash payments pending correction of the deficiency or more severe enforcement action
- Disallow all or part of the cost of an activity or action not in compliance
- Wholly or partly suspend or terminate the current award
- Withhold further awards for the program
- Take other remedies that may be legally available

If an enforcement action is imposed, TEA will notify the grantee in writing of the actions imposed and the process for remedying the noncompliance or removing the enforcement actions.

TEA reserves the right not to award a discretionary grant to a high-risk grantee or to a grantee that is materially noncompliant with the terms and conditions of another award. If a grantee is identified as high risk by TEA during the grant period, TEA reserves the right to begin procedures immediately to terminate the grant. The grantee will be reimbursed for allowable expenditures up through the date of notification of high-risk status.

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations (34 CFR) 80.43(b) and 74.62(b) provide the Texas Education Agency (TEA) with statutory authority for its procedure for hearing appeals related to enforcement actions. 34 CFR 76.401 provides TEA with statutory authority for its procedure for hearing appeals related to the disapproval of an application for grant funding.

The procedure for the hearing of appeals arising under federal law and regulations is codified in Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part II, Subchapter CC, §157.1083

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Per TAC §157.1082, applicants have the opportunity for a hearing when TEA disapproves or withholds grant funds, such as any of the following:

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