



The Application Guidance Document

What it is and why it's important

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Funders call guidance different names

- Call for Applications/Proposals
- Request for Proposals (RFP)
- Request for Applications (RFA)
- Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)
- Notice Inviting Applications (NIA)



Funder's Guidance

The funder's application guidance document contains important information about the funding opportunity and specific instructions on how to prepare an application and how to submit it.





Federal education grant guidance follows regulations



For example, the U.S. Department of Education's grant guidance flows from the Education Department General Administrative Regulations, or EDGAR.



For example: EDGAR § 75.101

Requires that grant guidance include the following

- (i) Information about the program
- (ii) The application form to use.



Required information to help applicants

- Amount of funds available for grants
- Estimated number and amounts of grants
- Maximum award amounts of grants, if appropriate
- Project period that will be approved (multi-year or not)
- Any program priorities and implementation method (See EDGAR§ 75.105 *Annual priorities*)

More information to help applicants

- Location of applicable regulations
- Statutory authority for the program
- Deadlines date for applications (set under § 75.102 and 34 CFR 79.8)
- If a pre-application is required, applicable details and instructions.



Guidance includes important details

1. Overview of funding program
2. Instructions for submitting an application
3. Instructions for what to include in application
4. Review process and selection criteria.

Always read the Overview or Introduction

- Purpose/intention of program
- Any priorities for funding cycle
- Brief overview of guidance contents
- May convey changes since previous funding cycle.





For Example

The 2010 RFP for the Carol M. White Physical Education Program issued by US Department of Education indicated a change...

I. Overview



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your interest in applying for a grant under the Carol M. White Physical Education Program (PEP). This program, authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, is intended to assist local educational agencies and community-based organizations to initiate, expand, or enhance physical education programs to help students meet their state standards for physical education. Furthermore, we encourage applicants to develop and implement effective programs and partnerships that promote lifelong physical activity practices and healthy eating habits.

The FY 2010 PEP program represents a departure from past years and seeks to align the program with current knowledge, research, and best practices. Applicants will be required to design projects that address their specific needs and align with existing related initiatives in the field. Efforts that may be supported through PEP include: providing professional development and training for staff, incorporating evidence-based physical education and nutrition education curricula, and providing cognitive, social, cooperative skill-building activities. The U.S. Department of Education recognizes the vital role a healthy lifestyle plays in the lives of our nation's students. As a result, we are pleased to present this opportunity for applicants to strengthen and enhance programs that support a broader, strategic vision for encouraging healthy physical education and nutrition habits.

We look forward to receiving your application for support under the Carol M. White Physical Education Program.

Sincerely,

/s/

Kevin Jennings
Assistant Deputy Secretary

I. Overview

“The FY 2010 PEP program represents a departure from past years and seeks to align the program with current knowledge, research, and best practices. Applicants will be required to design projects that address their specific needs and align with existing related initiatives in the field...”



Attention to detail is important

- Technical requirements for an application
- Required submission procedure





Know the details

- ✓ Type font and size
- ✓ Page limits/file size limits
- ✓ Page margin/format requirements
- ✓ Eligibility to apply
- ✓ Required matching funds/cost share
- ✓ Project term



Understand the submission process

- Deadline for submitting application
- Electronic or other submission process
- Any alternative process available





Ask these Questions *Before* You Start

- ? Are you eligible to apply?
- ? Is the project/program a priority for your organization? Will it be in future years?
- ? Can you manage the cost-share, if required?
- ? Can you continue the project/program after funding ends?
- ? What are your leveraging opportunities?
- ? Do you have the resources to administer the grant?



Consider other questions

? Are you ready to submit?

(i.e. registered in SAM and active in Grants.gov)

? Can you meet the submission deadline?

- Is there time to register to submit (if necessary)?
- Who else should be on the application development team? Is there time to discuss/create partnerships, etc., if applicable?
- Is there enough time to prepare a thoughtful, thorough, and competitive application package?



Understand how your application will be reviewed

The guidance will present the specifics:

- **Review Process**
- **Selection Criteria**



Details of the review process are important

- How funder will conduct the review
- Timeframe for announcing awards
- Appeals process





Understanding the selection criteria is critical to your success

Specific information funder is looking for:

- Core content items
- Headings and subheadings

Will include other details, such as the points available for scoring each application section.

Regulations specify general selection criteria

For example,

EDGAR § 75.210:

- Need for project
- Significance
- Quality of the project design
- Quality of project services



Regulations specify general selection criteria

For example, EDGAR § 75.210 continued:

- Quality of project personnel
- Adequacy of resources
- Quality of management plan
- Quality of the project evaluation.



Let the guidance guide you!

- Read guidance carefully and completely
- If you are eligible and ready to apply:
 - Re-read guidance
 - Constantly consult guidance as you draft, revise, and compile all parts of your application.





SCDE Goal: **High quality proposals and programs**

Submit high quality grant proposals that

- parallel the funder's mission
- adhere to applicable laws and regulations
- fulfill the funder's selection criteria.



If the guidance...



- refers to a resource or includes a hyperlink, *use it*



- includes a checklist, *use it*



- does not include a checklist, *create one.*



Use guidance for internal review

- Use selection criteria to develop review tool
- Have internal reviewers use tool to review application draft
- Use these reviews to
 - assess how you're responding
 - determine what else is needed and what needs revising.





Remember!

Your ability to follow funder's guidance *to the letter* is the funder's *first* indication that you can successfully carry out your proposed project, should they choose to fund it.





Contact us with any questions

Grants Program

Division for Legal Affairs

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We're here to assist and support!