Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences

Assistance Listing Number (ALN): 84.305B

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Product of the National Center for Education Research

Letter of Intent Due:	October 26, 2023	https://iesreview.ed.gov/LOI/LOISubmit
Application Package Available:	September 28, 2023	https://www.grants.gov/
Application Deadline:	11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on January 11, 2024	https://www.grants.gov/
Possible Start Dates:	August 1 – September 1, 2024	
All applicants must also read the companion IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) for information on how to prepare and submit applications electronically through Grants.gov.		

Table of Contents

Part I: Overview and General Requirements

A. Purpose of the Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences

Through its National Center for Education Research (NCER), the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) supports a program of field-initiated research to build knowledge and understanding of education practice and policy. IES was established by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA – P.L. 107-279), in part to improve academic achievement and attainment and access to educational opportunities for all learners (ESRA, § 111.b.1.B), with a particular focus on low-performing learners (ESRA, § 115.a.1) and those lacking access to high-quality educational opportunities (ESRA, § 115.a.2.A and 115.a.2.B). In carrying out this mission, we are committed to ensuring that our work is objective, secular, neutral, and nonideological; free of partisan political influence; and free of racial, cultural, gender, or regional bias (ESRA, § 111.b.2.B).

In this request for applications (RFA), NCER invites applications for training projects that will contribute to its Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences (ALN 84.305B, Research Training). The specific purpose of IES-supported training programs is to further the training of education researchers, including state and local education agency staff. In doing so, IES aims to increase the quality, accessibility, use, and relevance of education research.

For FY 2024, IES is accepting applications for research training under three programs:
- [Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Education Research](#) (Early Career Program)
- [Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority-Serving Institutions](#) (Early Career MSI Program)
- [Methods Training for Education Researchers](#) (Methods Training Program)

IES training programs prepare individuals to conduct rigorous education research supported by IES across its research competitions, advance knowledge within the field, and address issues important to education policymakers and practitioners. As part of the programs, IES supports
- Training that recruits and mentors students and researchers from diverse backgrounds to encourage their entry into and success in education research careers
- Training that includes new ideas, approaches, and perspectives to address long-standing education issues
- Training that helps researchers, including state and local education agency research staff, acquire skills necessary to obtain, generate, and evaluate evidence needed for policy and programmatic decisions

IES aims to fund rigorous research that helps solve significant education problems and that is relevant to the teaching and learning needs of the diverse population of the United States. NCER's ability to support high-quality research depends on the field's ability to train and support talented researchers, statisticians, and evaluators that reflect this diversity. IES strives to ensure that the researchers we fund are drawn from the entire pool of talented individuals who bring different backgrounds, perspectives, interests, and experiences to address complex education problems (https://ies.ed.gov/aboutus/diversity.asp). IES also seeks to enhance the diversity of the education research workforce by offering professional development and training opportunities for individuals at multiple career stages in a variety of institutions and education settings across the country. IES encourages applications from minority-serving institutions.

All applications for the FY 2024 Research Training Programs are expected to incorporate training that supports researchers' understanding of and ability to use IES-wide Standards for Excellence in Education Research (SEER; https://ies.ed.gov/seer/), as applicable, when carrying out education research. These principles include
- Pre-registering studies
- Making research findings, methods, and data available to others
- Addressing inequities in learners' opportunities, access to resources, and outcomes
- Identifying core intervention components
- Documenting intervention implementation and contrast to inform use in other settings
- Analyzing costs

- Focusing on outcomes meaningful to learners' success (learning outcomes, opportunities in education, or success from education)
- Facilitating generalization of study findings

B. Overview of the Training Programs

1. Programs

Your application **must** be directed to one of the three training programs listed below and meet the requirements set out for the relevant program as described in Part II to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

The **Early Career Development and Mentoring Program in Education Research** (Early Career Program) provides support to early career faculty employed by institutions of higher education or early career researchers at non-academic research organizations who are developing education research careers. The awards provide support for research (including salary for protected time to conduct research) and career development that includes training under the guidance of an experienced mentor or mentors. These early career researchers are expected to conduct independent research of the type supported by IES, take on leadership positions within research teams, and clearly communicate their findings to multiple audiences.

The **Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority Serving Institutions** (Early Career MSI Program) provides support specifically to early-career faculty employed by minority-serving institutions (MSIs) who are developing education research careers. The awards provide support for research (including salary for protected time to conduct research) and career development that includes training under the guidance of an experienced mentor or mentors. The program also offers the option to request additional support for the direct costs of grant management and administration. These early career researchers at MSIs are expected to conduct independent research of the type supported by IES, take on leadership positions within research teams, and clearly communicate their findings to multiple audiences.

The **Methods Training for Education Researchers Program** (Methods Training Program) funds training to help current education researchers, including state and local education agency research staff, maintain and upgrade their research and analysis skills to conduct rigorous and relevant education research.

2. Award Limits

Applications to the Research Training Programs competition **must** conform to the following limits on award duration and cost and **should reflect the actual time and amount of funding necessary to conduct your proposed scope of work**, rather than the maximums allowable by IES.

Training Program	Maximum Grant Duration	Maximum Grant Award
Early Career Program	4 Years	$400,000
Early Career MSI Program	4 Years	$600,000
Methods Training Program	3 Years	$800,000

C. Getting Started

1. Technical Assistance for Applicants

IES provides technical assistance to applicants that addresses the appropriateness of project ideas for this competition and substantive issues concerning research training in the education sciences. IES program officers work with applicants though a variety of formats up until the time of Grants.gov submission.

If you submit a letter of intent (LOI) on the IES Peer Review website (https://iesreview.ed.gov/LOI/LOISubmit), a program officer will contact you regarding your proposed project. IES also offers webinars (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/webinars/index.asp) and virtual office hours (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/technicalassistance.asp) for general guidance on grant writing and submitting your application and choosing the appropriate competition, topic, and project type. Contact the NCER

program officer responsible for the training program you are interested in at any point in the application planning and preparation process prior to submission to discuss your research idea and whether it is a good fit for this or any other IES research grant program. The program officers are:

- Early Career Program: Jennifer Schellinger (Jennifer.Schellinger@ed.gov)

- Early Career MSI Program: Katina Stapleton (Katina.Stapleton@ed.gov)

- Methods Training Program: Lara Faust (Lara.Faust@ed.gov)

2. RFA Organization and the IES Application Submission Guide:

To submit a compliant, responsive, and timely application, you will need to review two documents:

1. *This RFA* provides information on how to prepare an application that is compliant and responsive to the requirements: Part I provides an overview of the NCER Training Programs. Part II provides detail on the requirements of each training program. Part III provides information about general formatting and the other narrative content for the application, including required appendices. Part IV provides information on competition regulations and the review process. Part V provides **a checklist that you can use to ensure that you have included all required application elements to advance to scientific peer review.** Part VI provides the codes that you will enter in Item 4b of the SF 424 Application for Federal Assistance form.

2. *The IES Application Submission Guide* (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) provides important information about submission procedures and IES-specific guidance and recommendations to help you ensure your application is complete and received without errors on time through Grants.gov.

We strongly recommend that both the principal investigator (PI) and the authorized organization representative (AOR) read both documents, whether submitting a new or revised application.

3. Ensuring Your Application is Forwarded for Scientific Peer Review

Only compliant and responsive applications received before the date and time deadline are peer reviewed for scientific merit and practical significance. The PI and the AOR should work together to ensure that the application meets these criteria.

(a) On-time submission

- Received and validated by Grants.gov no later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on January 11, 2024 (see the separate IES Application Submission Guide at https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp)

(b) Compliance

- Includes the **required training program narrative** (see Part II)
- Adheres to all formatting requirements (see Part III)
- Adheres to all page limit maximums for the training program narrative and appendices. IES will remove any pages above the maximum before forwarding an application for scientific peer review
- Includes all **required appendices** (see Part III)
  - Appendix A: Dissemination Plan
  - Appendix B: Response to Reviewers (Resubmissions only)
  - Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects
  - Appendix D: Letters of Agreement from Training Partners

(c) Responsiveness

- Meets the **General Requirements** for the selected Training Program (see Part II)
- Meets the **Training Program Narrative Requirements** for the selected Training Program (see Part II)

D. Changes in the FY 2024 Request for Applications

Everyone involved in preparing and submitting an application, whether new or revised, should carefully read all relevant parts of this RFA. Major changes to the FY 2024 RFA for the Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences (ALN 84.305B) competition are listed below and described fully in the relevant sections of the RFA.

- There are now two grant programs focused specifically on providing research and mentoring experiences for early career researchers. Both early career grant programs will support research (1) to develop evidence about improving academic achievement and attainment, and access to educational opportunities for learners or (2) to develop and disseminate statistical and methodological products for use by education researchers.
  - o A new **Early Career Development and Mentoring Program in Education Research** (Early Career Program) has been established to support early-career researchers employed by any U.S. research institution (academic or non-academic) who are developing education research careers. Early career researchers will be funded to carry out the type of research conducted under NCER research grants and to receive the training and mentoring needed to support the development of their research careers. The PI **must** have completed a doctoral degree or postdoctoral position no earlier than April 1, 2018, and no later than the start of the award period.
  - o For the FY24 **Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority-Serving Institutions** (Early Career MSI Program) the maximum funding available for mentors has increased, and applicants to the Early Career MSI Program may request additional funds to support direct costs of grant administration and management. The PI **must** have completed a doctoral degree or postdoctoral position no earlier than April 1, 2018, and no later than the start of the award period. The only exception to this requirement is for applicants resubmitting an Early Career MSI application from FY 2023. Such applicants **must** have completed their doctoral degree or postdoctoral position no earlier than April 1, 2017.

- **Increased Emphasis on Open Science Principles** – throughout the RFA, we highlight IES requirements that support the goals of open science and the various opportunities afforded to IES grantees to share their research findings broadly and to encourage transparency in education research.
  - o **Requirement for Grantees to Use Persistent Identifiers (PIDs)** – in August 2022, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) issued a Memorandum on Ensuring Free, Immediate, and Equitable Access to Federally Funded Research (https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/08-2022-OSTP-Public-Access-Memo.pdf). This updated open access policy will go into effect by December 31, 2025. In anticipation of these changes and consistent with National Security Presidential Memorandum 33 (NSPM-33; see https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/010422-NSPM-33-Implementation-Guidance.pdf) that establishes policies for federal funding agencies that protect national security while supporting open science, we are requiring that all key personnel for funded projects obtain a PID such as ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor Identification; https://orcid.org/) prior to award.
  - o **Recommendations to Incorporate Additional Open Science Practices** – where appropriate, we have added information throughout the RFA to encourage other open science practices, including pre-registration of projects, planning and budgeting to support curation of data and analysis codes to facilitate ease of data sharing, and budgeting for publication of findings in open access journals.

Part II: Training Program Requirements and Recommendations

A. Applying to a Training Program

For the FY 2024 Research Training Programs, you **must** submit your application to one of the three research training programs. You must identify your chosen program on the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance form (Item 4b) in the Application Package for this competition (see the IES Application Submission Guide, https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp). IES **strongly encourages** you to contact the relevant program officer to discuss the appropriateness of your proposed program for submission under a specific training program topic.

The training programs differ by eligible applicant institutions, eligible trainees, types of training opportunities, and expected outcomes. **For each training program**, refer to the following:

- The **Purpose** section for the types of research training each training program supports.
- The **General Requirements** section for each training program that describes eligible applicants, the principal investigator, and other requirements specific to the program.
- The **Training Program Narrative Requirements** section for each training program that describes the specific content that you must address.
- The **Award Limits** section for duration and cost maximums and additional parameters.
- The **Recommendations for Strong Applications** section for recommendations to improve the quality of your application. Peer reviewers use these recommendations in their evaluation of the quality of your application. IES strongly encourages you to incorporate the recommendations into your Training Program Narrative and relevant appendices.

Each training program name is linked to the program page on the IES website, where you can find more information and view the abstracts of previously funded projects.

NCER's training programs aim to prepare participants to conduct the type of work that NCER supports through its research grant programs. Thus, NCER training programs **cannot prepare participants to conduct research primarily on students with or at risk for disabilities.** Such applications will be deemed non-responsive to this competition and will not be forwarded for peer review. NCER training programs may prepare fellows to conduct research that includes **subgroups of children, youth, or adults with or at risk for disabilities,** but such subgroups **must not be the primary focus** of the training program or research projects. The only exception to this is for training programs that prepare participants to conduct research on learners enrolled in or who would qualify for adult education programs with or at risk for disabilities. If you are interested in preparing participants to conduct research **primarily on students with or at risk for disabilities from birth through K-12 or in postsecondary education**, you should refer to training grant programs run by the National Center for Special Education Research (https://ies.ed.gov/ncser/).

Broadening Participation in the Education Sciences[1]**:** IES is interested in broadening institutional participation in its research training programs. IES encourages applications from minority-serving institutions (MSIs), alone or in combination with other institutions, that meet the eligibility criteria for the programs described in this RFA. MSIs include Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions, American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Predominantly Black Institutions, and Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions.

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[1] Section 114 of the Education Science Reform Act of 2002 charges IES with undertaking "initiatives and programs to increase the participation of researchers and institutions that have been historically underutilized in Federal education research activities of the Institute, including historically Black colleges or universities or other institutions of higher education with large numbers of minority students."

B. Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Education Research

Program Officer: Dr. Jennifer Schellinger (202-987-0765; Jennifer.Schellinger@ed.gov)

1. Purpose

The Early Career Development and Mentoring Program (Early Career Program) supports grants that prepare early career researchers at research institutions (academic and non-academic) to conduct high-quality education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners.

Each award will provide an individual early career researcher with funding to conduct research (including salary for protected time to conduct research), establish a longer-term research agenda, and obtain career development guidance and support, including training under the guidance of an experienced mentor or mentors. The Research and Career Development Plans are expected to be complementary as the proposed research and research agenda will inform which investigator skills need enhancement and the plan for training and mentoring will create a schedule to learn those skills.

This program is part of IES's larger effort to develop a pipeline of talented education researchers who bring fresh ideas, approaches, and perspectives to addressing the issues and challenges faced by the nation's diverse students and schools. IES seeks to support principal investigators' (PIs) preparation to conduct the type of research IES funds in its research grant programs.

Every Early Career project has two components:
- **Research Plan**: Early Career PIs are expected to both conduct research on an education issue important to practitioners and policymakers and develop a plan for future research that could be supported by NCER research grant programs. The purpose of this research may be (1) to build evidence about how to improve academic achievement and attainment and access to educational opportunities for learners or (2) to develop and disseminate statistical and/or methodological products (such as methods, software, toolkits, guidelines, compendia, and reviews) for use by education researchers. The research proposed is expected to be modest in scale compared to other IES research grant programs such as the Education Research Grant Program (84.305A) and the Statistical and Research Methodology in Education grant program (84.305D).
- **Career Development Plan:** Early Career PIs are expected to develop and implement a career development plan to support their professional development as independent researchers and to prepare them to carry out their research agenda. The career development plan will identify the mentorship and training activities that will support the PI as they conduct their research and develop their professional skillset.

PIs who complete an IES-funded Early Career grant will have completed research of the type supported by IES research grant programs; obtained the skills necessary to carry out this type of research as part of a longer-term research agenda; developed the ability to communicate their research findings effectively to researchers, education policymakers, practitioners, and the public; and developed grant and research project management skills including preparing future grant applications and research projects. In addition, Early Career PIs will have built professional skills and networks that support working with researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and other education stakeholders.

2. Award Limits

No more than $400,000 (direct and indirect costs) over no more than 4 years.

- The duration and budget you request should reflect the actual time and amount of funding necessary to conduct your proposed scope of work.

- **IES will not make an award under the Early Career Program that exceeds $400,000 or is longer than 4 years.**
- See the discussion of Indirect Cost Rate for training grants in <u>Section IV.</u>

3. General Requirements

Applications under the Early Career Program must meet the requirements listed below for (a) Eligible Applicants, (b) Principal Investigator, (c) Mentors, (d) Education Settings, and in **Section 3. Training Program Narrative Requirements** to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

(a) Eligible Applicants

For the Early Career Program, IES provides funds to the institutions of the PIs who submitted the application for support of their research and career development. The Early Career Program requires a research institution (academic or non-academic) to be the applicant. Institutions that have the ability and capacity to conduct rigorous research are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, non-profit and for-profit organizations and public and private agencies and institutions, such as colleges and universities.

(b) Principal Investigator (PI)

The Principal Investigator (PI) has the authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the research, including the appropriate use of federal funds and the submission of required scientific progress reports, and is the primary point of contact with IES. The PI is designated by the institution submitting the application.

The early career researcher **must** be the sole PI. No other PIs or co-PIs may be identified.

The PI **must** have completed a doctoral degree or postdoctoral position no earlier than April 1, 2018, and no later than the start of the award period. Please note that IES will use the date on which the university granted the PI's doctoral degree. For example, if the PI's dissertation defense was on March 25, 2018, but the university granted the degree on April 2, 2018, the PI would be eligible to apply. Similarly, if the PI had a postdoctoral appointment that ended after April 1, 2018, the PI would be eligible to apply.

For PIs at academic institutions, the PI **must** hold a tenure-track position or research scientist position (not a visiting faculty or adjunct position) at the applying academic institution or must have accepted an offer for such a position to begin before the start of the award. The position must be a regular, salaried position paid by the institution of higher education without a focus on training (not a postdoctoral fellowship). For PIs at non-academic organizations, the PI **must** hold a non-temporary research position with a research career track inside the organization or must have accepted an offer for such a position to begin before the start of the award. In the case that the PI has accepted an offer from an academic or non-academic institution, the PI must include a letter of support in <u>Appendix D</u> from the future home institution indicating that an offer has been made and accepted.

The following eligibility criteria will not be used in determining responsiveness, but if an application is recommended for funding, the PI **must** meet the following criteria:
- The PI **must** be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States.
- The PI **must not** have served or be serving at the time of award as a PI or co-PI on a research grant from IES.

The PI's doctorate may be in any field from which they can apply their knowledge and skills, with the support of their mentors, to education research.

All Early Career PIs **must** have a persistent identifier, such as ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor Identification; <u>https://orcid.org/</u>) in place before an award will be made.

(c) Mentors

Training must be provided under the guidance of at least one mentor. Applicants may have co-mentors depending on their training needs and location. One mentor should be designated as the primary mentor. The term *mentors* includes both primary and co-mentors.

Mentors may be from academic or nonacademic institutions, such as nonprofit and for-profit organizations or public and private agencies, that conduct rigorous education research.

At least one mentor (primary or co-mentor) **must** be at the PI's home institution.

Mentors **must** include only individuals who have not served as the PI's primary graduate school advisor, dissertation advisor, or postdoctoral supervisor. A faculty member who served on a dissertation committee but did not have a direct advisor-advisee relationship with the PI is eligible to serve as a mentor.

(d) Education Settings

Research proposed **must** be relevant to education in the United States and **must** address factors under the control of U.S. education systems, with the exception of research proposed to improve education statistical and/or research methods.

Education in the U.S. is delivered in a wide range of formal settings, such as center-based prekindergarten, public and private K-12 schools, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. In addition, there are also formal programs under the control of education agencies that take place out of school including after-school, distance learning, and online. Additionally, formal adult education programs can be operated by community-based organizations, libraries, and other entities receiving support from government education agencies. IES does not support research that is relevant only in informal contexts outside of education systems. Contact an IES program officer if you have questions about the setting you have identified for your proposed research.

4. *Training Program Narrative Requirements*

You **must** include a Training Program Narrative with five sections: **(a) Significance, (b) Research Plan, (c) Career Development Plan, (d) Personnel,** and **(e) Resources**. If any of these five sections are missing, or lack the content described below, your application will not move forward to peer review.

The Training Program Narrative **must** adhere to the formatting guidelines (see Part III.B) and be **no more than 25 pages**. For example, the use of small type will be grounds for IES to return the application without scientific peer review. If the narrative exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 25th page of the narrative.

The five sections of the Training Program Narrative **must** include the content described below. Please see the Recommendations for a Strong Application for additional information about what to include in the Training Program Narrative.

The narrative should clearly demonstrate the integration of your Research and Career Development Plans. The Research and Career Development Plans may influence one another bi-directionally. The proposed research conducted may inform which skills need enhancement just as the training and mentoring will provide those needed skills to conduct successful research.

(a) Significance

The purpose of this section is to explain the importance of your proposed Research and Career Development Plans.

You **must**
- Describe your need for further career development.
- Provide an overview of the proposed research project and your research questions.

- Identify a primary and, if applicable, secondary research topic that aligns with the focus of your research from the list below. For research projects that have the primary purpose of developing and disseminating a statistical and/or methodological product, you do not need to identify a research topic.
  - Career and Technical Education
  - Civics Education and Social Studies
  - Cognition and Student Learning
  - Early Learning Programs and Policies
  - Improving Education Systems
  - Literacy
  - Policies, Practices, and Programs to Support English Learners
  - Postsecondary and Adult Education
  - Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education
  - Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Context for Teaching and Learning
  - Teaching, Teachers, and the Education Workforce
- Identify a project type that reflects the type and purpose of the work you will do from the list below. In general, the cost maximums may not be sufficient for conducting rigorous Impact studies. However, there may be instances, given characteristics of the intervention or research methods, where these studies are possible. For instance, the intervention being evaluated is short-term and inexpensive and/or the evaluation utilizes data from administrative records.
  - <u>Measurement</u> projects support the development, refinement, and/or validation of new or modified assessments for use by educators or education researchers.
  - <u>Exploration</u> projects support the identification of relationships between learner-, educator-, school-, and policy-level characteristics and meaningful education outcomes. A variety of approaches are appropriate under Exploration, including (1) primary data collection and analyses, (2) secondary data analyses, (3) meta-analyses, or (4) some combination of these.
  - <u>Development and Innovation</u> projects support the development and pilot testing of new or modified interventions (programs, practices, or policies) that are intended to produce beneficial impacts on learner education outcomes.
  - <u>Impact</u> projects support causal studies to assess the impacts of interventions (programs, practices, or policies) on learner education outcomes. Impact projects include initial efficacy (studies that test an intervention that has not been rigorously evaluated previously to determine whether it has beneficial impacts on education outcomes), replication (studies that test an intervention that has been rigorously evaluated previously and demonstrated beneficial impacts on education outcomes to better understand for whom it works and under what conditions), and follow-up studies (studies that test the longer-term impact of an intervention that has been shown to have beneficial impacts on education outcomes in a previous or ongoing evaluation studies).
  - <u>Statistical and Research Methods</u> projects develop new or improved statistical and/or research methods to improve education research.

(b) Research Plan

The purpose of this section is to describe your research design and methods, demonstrate how you will use them to address your research questions, and describe how you will develop a plan for a future research program building on your proposed research.

IES expects that the research you propose will be smaller in scale than the research proposed for other IES grant programs such as the Education Research Grant program (84.305A) and the Statistical and Research Methodology in Education grant program (84.305D) to accommodate the maximum duration, award limits, and expectation that time will be divided between research and training.

IES anticipates that certain aspects of the research plan will be less detailed than others and that there will be further refinement of these plans resulting from the proposed training and mentoring.

You **must**
- Describe the research design, sample, key outcome measures, and data analysis procedures.

- If you are proposing to do research that will build evidence about how to improve academic achievement and attainment and access to educational opportunities for learners, describe how you will measure the academic outcomes of learners, which can reflect **learning and achievement** in content domains, as well as learners' **successful progression** through education systems.
- If you are proposing to develop a statistical or research product for education researchers, describe how you will measure that the product works as intended and can be used by education researchers.
- Describe your plans for developing a longer-term research agenda building on your proposed research.

(c) Career Development Plan

In this section, you will describe the process for mentoring and additional training to support your proposed research and longer-term research agenda. The Career Development Plan should go beyond the typical career development activities expected of early career researchers, such as attending and presenting at conferences, and should provide details about the mentorship model and support activities that you plan to participate in to further your professional development.

You **must**
- Describe your Career Development Plan, including how mentoring and other educational opportunities will be used to extend your expertise.
- Describe how your career development activities will support or complement your Research Plan and contribute to the development of your longer-term research agenda.

(d) Personnel

The purpose of this section is to describe the relevant expertise, responsibilities, and time commitments of the PI, your mentor(s), and any other personnel.

You **must**
- Describe how you meet the eligibility requirements to be the PI of an Early Career grant.
- Describe your expertise and experience to be the PI and carry out the Research Plan.
- Describe the expertise and experience of your mentor(s) (and any other personnel, such as consultants) to support you in completing your Research Plan and Career Development Plan.
- Specify the date on which you were granted your doctoral degree and (if applicable) the date you completed your postdoctoral position.
- Specify the names of your dissertation or graduate school advisor and (if relevant) your postdoctoral supervisor to demonstrate that the mentors have not served as your primary graduate school or dissertation advisor or postdoctoral supervisor.

(e) Resources

The purpose of this section is to describe the institutional resources to support you in successfully completing this project and disseminating the results.

You **must** describe the resources to support you in conducting the proposed project.

5. *Recommendations for a Strong Application*

These recommendations are intended to improve the quality of your application, and the peer reviewers will use these recommendations in their evaluation of your application.

(a) Significance

Describe and justify your career development goals, including why you need additional training and mentoring in these areas and why they are important for helping you accomplish the proposed research activities and preparing you to conduct rigorous and relevant research going forward (including becoming an

independent researcher capable of submitting grant applications to other IES grant programs). Discuss how this Early Career award will support and/or advance your career trajectory.

Describe the progression from your prior research to the research that will occur over the award period to the line of independent research that you will develop.

Discuss the significance of the research you propose to conduct (including both the overall issue you are studying and your research questions) for U.S. education policy, education practice, and/or education research. Describe how it fits into what is currently known and will inform future education research and practice.

Discuss how your proposed research can be used to address the needs of learners from underrepresented communities or populations and/or learners with lower achievement. Describe how your research can contribute to addressing education inequities such as by improving learners' outcomes and/or their access to resources and opportunities (see the SEER principles regarding equity at https://ies.ed.gov/seer) or by improving the methods used to do such research.

Address the following recommendations for your proposed project type.

Project Type	Significance Recommendations
Measurement	Describe the assessment and the specific need for the measurement work.
	Describe the assessment framework. Strong frameworks include the following: • The operational definition(s) of the construct(s) being measured • The theoretical model showing how constructs are related to each other and/or external variables • How the assessment provides evidence of the construct(s) • The intended use(s) and population(s) for which the assessment is meant to provide valid information
Exploration	Describe the factors you will study and how you expect them to relate to learner outcomes.
	Discuss the significance of your proposed work, including how the results will inform future education research and/or affect policy or practice.
Development and Innovation	Describe the intervention, its implementation, and the population intended to benefit from it.
	Describe the theory of change for the intervention and the theoretical and empirical evidence that supports it. The theory of change should make clear why the intervention is expected to change learner outcomes. You may include a visual representation of your theory of change in Appendix E.
	Describe the need for the intervention, including how it differs from current practice and addresses limitations of other interventions.
Impact	Describe the intervention (program, practice, or policy), its implementation, and the population intended to benefit from it.
	Describe the theory of change for the intervention and the theoretical and empirical evidence that supports it. The theory of change should make clear why the intervention is likely to produce better education outcomes than current practice. You may include a visual representation of your theory of change in Appendix E.
	For impact studies of interventions that have not been rigorously evaluated previously, justify the intervention's readiness for evaluation by providing any available data on its feasibility, fidelity, and promise for improving learner outcomes.
	For impact studies of interventions that have been evaluated previously (follow-up studies and replication studies), describe the previous causal impact study (design,

	sample, measures, analyses), and the intervention's beneficial impacts on education outcomes.
	For follow-up studies, discuss your ability to follow sample members from the prior study and why the impacts from the prior study would be expected to continue long-term.
	For replication studies, describe and justify any aspects of the previous causal impact study that will be varied, such as the geographical location, the target population, or features of the intervention implementation and delivery.
	Describe the practical importance of the impact study for educators or policymakers.
Statistical and Research Methods	Describe the specific statistical and/or methodological issue that you will address, its importance to the improvement of applied education research, and its relevance to the type of education research IES funds.
	Describe the new or improved method you propose to develop and how it has the potential to produce substantially more accurate and/or more usable research results than current practice.
	Describe what products will be developed that will allow education researchers to make use of the new or improved method (e.g., software, an article written for education researchers).
	Discuss how the product(s) will be used by education researchers to improve the designs of their studies, analyses of their data, and/or interpretations of their findings.

(b) Research Plan

The level of detail provided in this section should align with your expertise and proposed training activities. You may provide less detail on those aspects of your proposed research for which you intend to receive additional training and mentoring.

Describe the aims of the research project, including your specific research question(s) and hypotheses.

You should propose a research plan that is feasible to carry out within the context of an Early Career grant and provide a justification for its feasibility.

Sample and Setting
Describe your sample, what population it represents, its size, and its relation to addressing the overall aims of the project.

Describe the setting where your research will take place.

Research Design
Describe the research design with enough detail to demonstrate that it will address the research questions. You may (1) propose quantitative or integrated quantitative and qualitative (that is, mixed methods) research and (2) provide descriptive, correlational, predictive and/or causal results. NCER does not favor any one type of research but expects that the proposed designs and analyses will be high quality, fit within your proposed project type, and provide results that will address your research questions.

Describe how you will consider input from learners, educators, education researchers, and/or other key stakeholders in conceptualizing, designing, and reporting results of your research, and when considering issues critical for implementation and scaling.

Address the following recommendations for your proposed project type.

Project Type	Research Plan Recommendations

Measurement	If you propose to develop or refine an assessment, describe the iterative development process, including procedures for the following (as applicable and feasible): • Scoring and administration • Developing items • Demonstrating that items adequately measure the intended construct(s) and only the intended construct(s) • Examining potential biases Describe the types of validity evidence to be collected and how they align with the assessment framework.
Exploration	For primary data collection and analyses, describe the procedures for collecting and scoring data, and (if applicable) any qualitative data collection and coding protocols. For secondary data analyses, identify the datasets you will use and the key variables you will examine. Discuss any limitations of the dataset(s). For meta-analyses, describe the study inclusion and exclusion criteria, search procedures, coding scheme, and procedures for extracting data from the studies. Demonstrate that there are enough studies available with the relevant information to allow an adequate dataset to be constructed.
Development and Innovation	Describe how you will iteratively develop the intervention and make necessary adjustments to ensure usability and feasibility. Describe the pilot study, including the research design, data collection procedures, plan for monitoring fidelity of implementation, and (if applicable) what the comparison group will receive.
Impact	Describe and justify the research design and how it could meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) design standards (https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/handbooks). Discuss your ability to detect a reasonably expected and minimally important effect size. Note how you will examine the variation within the average effect and the factors associated with it. Describe the data collection procedures, plan for monitoring fidelity of implementation, and (if applicable) what the comparison group will receive and how you will monitor comparison group practice.
Statistical and Research Methods	Explain the major activities and sequence of steps you will follow to develop the method and product(s). If applicable, describe any necessary theoretical development that must occur prior to your development of the method. If you propose to collect data, describe the sample (including criteria for inclusion and exclusion), measures (including evidence of reliability and validity for the specified use), and procedures proposed for the data collection. If you propose secondary data analyses, provide information on sampling design, sample characteristics, variables to be used, and the structure of the dataset. If you propose to conduct a simulation study, provide details on the procedures.

For any of these project types, if you plan to use extant data, name and describe the dataset(s), including the measures that will be used for analyses. Present evidence that you will have access to these data.

Measures
Describe the measures you will use to assess variables of interest, including learner outcomes, and discuss their reliability and validity for the intended purpose and population. Consistent with the SEER standards, outcomes should be assessed using high-quality measures (https://ies.ed.gov/seer/outcomes.asp).

As noted under the Requirements, if you propose to do research that will build evidence about how to improve academic achievement and/or attainment and access to educational opportunities for learners, you **must** propose to measure academic outcomes of learners, which can reflect **learning and achievement** in content domains, as well as learners' **successful progression** through education systems. IES is interested in the following academic outcomes:

- For prekindergarten, school readiness outcomes, including pre-reading, language, vocabulary, early-STEM (science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics) knowledge, English language proficiency, digital literacy, and social and behavioral competencies (including self-regulation and executive function) that prepare young children for school.
- For kindergarten through grade 12, learning, achievement, and higher order thinking in the academic content areas of literacy, STEM (science, technology, engineering, math), and social studies;[2] English language proficiency; career and technical education (CTE) achievement or attainment; digital literacy; and progression through education systems as indicated by course and grade completion, retention, high school graduation, and dropout.
- For postsecondary education, learning, achievement, and higher order thinking in postsecondary courses; and access to, persistence in, progress through, and completion of postsecondary education, which includes developmental education and corequisite support courses, bridge programs, for-credit and non-credit programs that lead to occupational credentials and certificates, and for-credit programs that lead to associate's or bachelor's degrees.
- For adult education,[3] achievement in literacy, English language proficiency, and numeracy, as well as access to, persistence in, progress through, and completion of adult education courses and programs including the full range of course and program types described in Title II of the Work Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2015.
- For each of the above, your research may include additional outcomes (such as social, emotional, and behavioral competencies; career and technical outcomes; labor market outcomes; and student interest, motivation, and participation) along with at least one of the above outcomes.

If you are proposing to develop a statistical or research product for education researchers, describe
- The measures to determine if the method or product works as intended.
- The measures to determine whether education researchers can successfully use the method and product(s).

Data Analysis
Explain your proposed analyses and how they will address your research questions. Provide a separate description of each data analysis you intend to do including any statistical models to be used in each one.

Where possible, provide findings for different groups within the sample to improve our understanding of the extent to which characteristics, practices, programs, or policies may yield varying outcomes for different groups, especially those groups that have been historically underserved (see the SEER principles regarding equity at https://ies.ed.gov/seer).

Timeline
Provide a timeline for each step in your project, including research and career development activities. The timeline may be discussed in the training program narrative and/or presented in Appendix E.

Longer-term Research Agenda

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[2] Social studies outcomes are defined as a learner's understanding of government structures and processes and how to be an engaged and knowledgeable citizen through skills and knowledge in civics, citizenship, geography, history, and economics.

[3] The system and authorized providers that serve learners at least 16-years old who are not enrolled in the standard K-12 system but are or could be preparing for, transitioning into, or currently enrolled in adult literacy programs, as defined in Title II, the "Adult Education and Family Literacy Act", of the 2015 Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA), such as Adult Basic Education, Adult Secondary Education, Integrated Education Training, Family Literacy, Integrated English Language and Civics.

Describe how you will develop your plans for developing a longer-term research agenda building on your proposed research for this project. Note how your future research might depend on the specific findings from the proposed work.

(c) Career Development Plan

Describe three to four overarching training goals and how they relate to your research plan and address gaps in your knowledge and training. Training goals may focus on expanding your content-area knowledge, methodological skills, and/or development as a scholar.

Specify how the mentors will help you reach your training goals, guide you through the process of refining and implementing your research plan, and guide your development as a scholar. Mentoring activities may include regular meetings to discuss the research plan and progress (primary mentors are expected to communicate with PIs at least once per month); review of your career development plan and suggestions for particular activities or directed readings; and additional guidance that will be useful for your development as a scientist, including reviews of manuscripts for publication, dissemination products, and grant applications.

Describe a plan for coordinating mentoring activities among the mentors if there are co-mentors.

Describe your planned training activities and how they will help you reach your training goals. For each activity, specify what it entails, with which training goal(s) it is aligned, the timing, and whether it is campus-based or external to your home institution. Training activities could include (but are not limited to) courses offered by your institution, IES-funded methods trainings, grant-writing seminars, and statistics workshops.

Describe how your career development plan, including the mentoring and/or training activities, will equip you to meet the SEER principles (https://ies.ed.gov/seer), as appropriate.

Describe how the content and timing of activities in your career development plan are integrated with the research plan. For instance, if you propose to participate in a training related to designing and conducting RCTs, you should demonstrate how that will be completed prior to conducting an RCT as part of your research project. A timeline may be discussed in the training program narrative and/or presented in Appendix E.

(d) Personnel

Describe your qualifications to be the PI, specifying your accomplishments and experience in education research and with the education issue and the population of learners or the research method that your research addresses.

Specify the percent of time and calendar months per year (academic plus summer) you will devote to the project. Explain how you will have time to conduct your proposed research and accomplish your training plan given your other responsibilities. IES anticipates that you will allocate a minimum of 20 percent and maximum of 50 percent of your 12-month calendar-year time to your research training project, with the specific amount depending on your course load, other faculty responsibilities, and other sources of salary funding.

Describe the qualifications of your mentors, their proposed roles in training, and how their experience and expertise align with your proposed research project and career development plan.
- Identify which mentor is the primary mentor if there is more than one mentor.
- If proposing multiple mentors, include mentors with a variety of areas of expertise. For instance, one mentor may have expertise in the relevant content area and the other may have expertise in another aspect of your proposed research plan, such as the statistical methods.
- Specify a mentor at your home institution who can help guide your career development there (for example, by helping you navigate the institution's procedures for grant submission and grant management) as well as provide additional content and/or methodological expertise.
- Describe your mentors' prior experiences mentoring early career researchers (including faculty or postdoctoral fellows).

- Describe your mentors' areas of expertise and how they relate to the education issue and learner population or the research method you will be studying and the research methods you will use in your Research Plan. Include a description of the relevant education research projects they have conducted (**a summary of these projects must be provided in Appendix C**).

Describe the time commitments of your mentors for your project.
- Describe the anticipated number (and length) of meetings per month as well as the amount of time to be devoted to other mentoring activities (such as reviewing your career development plan, advising you on the research, and reviewing manuscripts for publication, grant applications, research materials, and dissemination products).
- Specify their percent effort for each year of the project. Their effort should be commensurate with the mentoring activities and reflect the time they will actually devote to the project (including any donated time). IES anticipates that your mentors' combined time commitment to the project will be at least 5 percent per calendar year.

All mentors should provide a letter of support in Appendix D. The primary mentor should provide a detailed letter of support that includes their understanding of the PI's proposed research and career development plans and describes their own role in supporting both.

Describe other personnel (if applicable), including their proposed roles, qualifications, and time commitments. Other personnel, such as graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and consultants, can be used to provide support on specific aspects of your research plan or to fill gaps in your mentorship and training (for example, by providing consultation on statistical analyses). These personnel should have unique and specific roles that are different from those served by the mentors.

For all personnel, describe their experience disseminating research findings to a range of audiences, including in peer-reviewed scientific journals, publications or materials aimed at policymaker and practitioner audiences, and, as appropriate, communication with the population of learners and their parents that the research will address.

(e) Resources

Describe your institution's capacity to support early career researchers in managing grants and monitoring spending.

Describe your institution's experience supporting early career researchers through training workshops, seminars, and/or discussion groups with senior researchers.

Describe any facilities, such as computers or labs, and resources provided by your institution that are relevant for the successful completion of the project.

Describe your access to resources available at your mentor's institution, if different from your own, to support your research, your training, or both.

Describe your plans for acquiring any resources that are not currently accessible, will require significant expenditures, and are necessary for the successful completion of the project, such as equipment, test materials, curricula, or training materials.

Describe your resources, including access to specific offices and organizations, to carry out your plans to disseminate results as described in the required dissemination plan in Appendix A.

6. *Additional Budget Parameters and Application Requirements*

The following requirements for Early Career applications will not be used in determining responsiveness to the RFA, but applications recommended for funding will be required to adjust their budgets, if necessary, to meet these requirements before receiving grant funds.

The budget for supporting the PI's research and mentoring should include the costs of conducting the proposed research and executing the career development plan. This may include such costs as research and administrative staff salary, consultants, research supplies and equipment, software, participant compensation, collecting or obtaining data (including local travel), statistical services (including personnel and computer time), and registration for training workshops or institutes.

The budget for supporting the PI's research and mentoring may include the following:
- Up to 50 percent of the PI's salary to be used for academic year support and/or summer salary and related fringe benefits.
- Up to $30,000 per year for mentors.
  - If there are co-mentors, the sum allocated for mentors should be divided among all the mentors based upon their role in the project. The total amount of grant funds used for mentors cannot exceed $30,000 per year. Institutions may have different ways for allocating funds to mentors. Mentors may be compensated using honoraria, salary including fringe benefits, or through cost sharing or in-kind contributions. Regardless of compensation method, the federal government contribution cannot exceed $30,000 per year. In-kind contributions and cost sharing are allowed but are not required and they are not taken into consideration during the review of the application, nor do they influence funding decisions.
- Funding for travel, including to the annual IES PI Meeting, for the PI and mentor(s) to meet, for professional research conferences, and for specialized training workshops available through other entities (such as summer institutes in methodology or statistical analysis).
- Funding for any reasonable accommodations for the PI or research staff.

Grant funds must not be used for the following:
- Facility construction, renovation, or maintenance
- Support for graduate students beyond their direct work on the grant (for example, grant funds should not be used to support graduate student research or travel to conferences)
- Mentors' research

C. Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority-Serving Institutions

Program Officer: Dr. Katina Stapleton (202-245-6566; Katina.Stapleton@ed.gov)

1. Purpose

The Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority-Serving Institutions (Early Career MSI Program) supports grants that prepare early career faculty at minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to conduct high-quality education research that advances knowledge within the field of education sciences and addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners.

Each award will provide an individual early career MSI faculty member with funding to conduct research (including salary for protected time to conduct research), establish a longer-term research agenda, and obtain career development guidance and support, including training under the guidance of an experienced mentor or mentors. The Research and Career Development Plans are expected to be complementary as the proposed research and research agenda will inform which investigator skills need enhancement and the plan for training and mentoring will create a schedule to learn those skills.

This program is part of IES's larger effort to develop a pipeline of talented education researchers who bring fresh ideas, approaches, and perspectives to addressing the issues and challenges faced by the nation's diverse students and schools. By awarding these grants to MSIs, IES seeks to support principal investigators (PIs) at MSIs' preparation to conduct the type of research IES funds in its research grant programs.

Every Early Career MSI project has two components:
- **Research Plan**: Early Career MSI PIs are expected to both conduct research on an education issue important to practitioners and policymakers and develop a plan for future research that could be supported by NCER research grant programs. The purpose of this research may be (1) to build evidence about how to improve academic achievement and attainment and access to educational opportunities for learners or (2) to develop and disseminate statistical and/or methodological products (such as methods, software, toolkits, guidelines, compendia, and reviews) for use by education researchers. The research proposed is expected to be modest in scale compared to other IES research grant programs such as the Education Research Grant Program (84.305A) and the Statistical and Research Methodology in Education grant program (84.305D).
- **Career Development Plan:** Early Career PIs are expected to develop and implement a career development plan to support their professional development as independent researchers and to prepare them to carry out their research agenda. The career development plan will identify the mentorship and training activities that will support the PI as they conduct their research and develop their professional skillset.

PIs who complete an IES-funded Early Career MSI grant will have completed research of the type supported by IES research grant programs; obtained the skills necessary to carry out this type of research as part of a longer-term research agenda; developed the ability to communicate their research findings effectively to researchers, education policymakers, practitioners, and the public; and developed grant and research project management skills including preparing future grant applications and research projects. In addition, Early Career MSI PIs will have built professional skills and networks that support working with researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and other education stakeholders.

2. Award Limits

No more than $600,000 (direct and indirect costs) over no more than 4 years.

- The duration and budget you request should reflect the actual time and amount of funding necessary to conduct your proposed scope of work.

- **IES will not make an award under the Early Career MSI Program that exceeds $600,000.** Of this maximum, $400,000 is available to support the PI's research and career development, and the remaining $200,000 (maximum of $50,000 a year) may be requested only to support the direct costs of grant administration. The latter funds may be used to support a grant and/or budget manager or assistants to carry out such tasks as overseeing the budget and invoices or working with or for the other offices at the university involved in grant management (e.g., Office of Sponsored Projects). NCER program officers will review the planned use of these funds to ensure they are only being used for grant administration and management purposes.

- **IES will not make an award under the Early Career MSI Program that is longer than 4 years.**

- See the discussion of Indirect Cost Rate for training grants in Section IV.

3. General Requirements

Applications under the Early Career MSI Program must meet the requirements listed below for (a) Eligible Applicants, (b) Principal Investigator, (c) Mentors, (d) Education Settings, and in **Section 4. Training Program Narrative Requirements** to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

(a) Eligible Applicants

For the Early Career MSI Program, IES provides funds to the institutions of the PIs who submitted the application for support of their research and career development. The Early Career MSI Program requires a minority-serving institution (MSI) to be the applicant. Specifically, the applicant institution **must** be a
- Minority-serving institution (MSI) located in the territorial United States that confers bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees in academic fields relevant to education.

To qualify as an MSI for the purpose of the Early Career MSI Program, the institution **must** be 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. Information on eligibility under these authorities is available on the FY 2023 Eligibility Matrix at https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/idues/eligibility.html#el-ins. MSIs include Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (ANNH), American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCU), Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Predominantly Black Institutions (PBI), and Native American-Serving, Nontribal Institutions (NASNTI). Please note that institutions eligible only for the Department's Title III Part A Strengthening Institutions program (SIP) are not considered MSIs for the purpose of this competition unless they also meet the eligibility requirements for a specific MSI category.

(b) Principal Investigator (PI)

The Principal Investigator (PI) has the authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the research, including the appropriate use of federal funds and the submission of required scientific progress reports, and is the primary point of contact with IES. The PI is designated by the institution submitting the application.

The early career researcher **must** be the sole PI. No other PIs or co-PIs may be identified.

The PI **must** have completed a doctoral degree or postdoctoral position no earlier than April 1, 2018 and no later than the start of the award period. Please note that IES will use the date on which the university granted the PI's doctoral degree. For example, if the PI's dissertation defense was on March 25, 2018, but the university granted the degree on April 2, 2018, the PI would be eligible to apply. Similarly, if the PI had a postdoctoral appointment that ended after April 1, 2018, the PI would be eligible to apply. One exception to this requirement is for applicants resubmitting an application from FY 2023. Such applicants **must** have completed their doctoral degree or postdoctoral position no earlier than April 1, 2017.

The PI **must** hold a tenure-track position or research scientist position (not a visiting faculty or adjunct position) at the applying MSI or must have accepted an offer for such a position to begin before the start of the award. In the latter case, the PI must include a letter of support in Appendix D from the future home institution indicating that an offer has been made and accepted. The position must be a regular, salaried

position paid by the institution of higher education without a focus on training (not a postdoctoral fellowship).

The following eligibility criteria will not be used in determining responsiveness, but if an application is recommended for funding, the PI **must** meet the following criteria:
- The PI **must** be a citizen or permanent resident of the United States.
- The PI **must not** have served or be serving at the time of award as a PI or co-PI on a research grant from IES.

The PI's doctorate may be in any field from which they can apply their knowledge and skills, with the support of their mentors, to education research.

All Early Career MSI PIs **must** have a persistent identifier, such as ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor Identification; https://orcid.org/) in place before an award will be made.

(c) Mentors

Training must be provided under the guidance of at least one mentor. Applicants may have co-mentors depending on their training needs and location. One mentor should be designated as the primary mentor. The term *mentors* includes both primary and co-mentors.

Mentors may be from academic or nonacademic institutions, such as nonprofit and for-profit organizations or public and private agencies, that conduct rigorous education research.

At least one mentor (primary or co-mentor) **must** be at the PI's home institution.

Mentors **must** include only individuals who have not served as the PI's primary graduate school advisor, dissertation advisor, or postdoctoral supervisor. A faculty member who served on a dissertation committee but did not have a direct advisor-advisee relationship with the PI is eligible to serve as a mentor.

(d) Education Settings

Research proposed **must** be relevant to education in the United States and **must** address factors under the control of U.S. education systems, with the exception of research proposed to improve education statistical and/or research methods.

Education in the U.S. is delivered in a wide range of formal settings, such as center-based prekindergarten, public and private K-12 schools, community colleges, and 4-year colleges and universities. In addition, there are also formal programs under the control of education agencies that take place out of school including after-school, distance learning, and online. Additionally, formal adult education programs can be operated by community-based organizations, libraries, and other entities receiving support from government education agencies. IES does not support research that is relevant only in informal contexts outside of education systems. Contact an IES program officer if you have questions about the setting you have identified for your proposed research.

4. *Training Program Narrative Requirements and Recommendations for a Strong Application*

You **must** include a Training Program Narrative with five sections: **(a) Significance, (b) Research Plan, (c) Career Development Plan, (d) Personnel,** and **(e) Resources**. If any of these five sections are missing, or lack the content described below, your application will not move forward to peer review.

The Training Program Narrative **must** adhere to the formatting guidelines (see Part III.B) and be **no more than 25 pages**. For example, the use of small type will be grounds for IES to return the application without scientific peer review. If the narrative exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 25th page of the narrative.

The five sections of the Training Program Narrative **must** include the content described above under the Training Program Narrative Requirements for the Early Career Development and Mentoring Program with the following additions:

- Under Significance, discuss how the applicant institution meets the MSI requirement.

- Under Personnel, describe how you meet the eligibility requirements to be the PI of an Early Career MSI grant.

Please see the [Recommendations for a Strong Application](#) for the Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for additional information about what to include in the Training Program Narrative with the following addition:

- Under Resources, if you are requesting any optional funds for direct costs of grant administration and management, describe how those funds will be used and which offices will carry out what type of work.

The narrative should clearly demonstrate the integration of your Research and Career Development Plans. The Research and Career Development plans may influence one another bi-directionally. The proposed research conducted may inform which skills need enhancement just as the training and mentoring will provide those needed skills to conduct successful research.

5. *Additional Budget Parameters and Application Requirements*

The following requirements for Early Career MSI applications will not be used in determining responsiveness to the RFA, but applications recommended for funding will be required to adjust their budgets, if necessary, to meet these requirements before receiving grant funds.

The budget for supporting the PI's research and mentoring should include the costs of conducting the proposed research and executing the career development plan. This may include such costs as research and administrative staff salary, consultants, research supplies and equipment, software, participant compensation, collecting or obtaining data (including local travel), statistical services (including personnel and computer time), and registration for training workshops or institutes.

The budget for supporting the PI's research and mentoring may include the following:
- Up to 50 percent of the PI's salary to be used for academic year support and/or summer salary and related fringe benefits.
- Up to $30,000 per year for mentors
  - If there are co-mentors, the sum allocated for mentors should be divided among all the mentors based upon their role in the project. The total amount of grant funds used for mentors cannot exceed $30,000 per year. Institutions may have different ways for allocating funds to mentors. Mentors may be compensated using honoraria, salary including fringe benefits, or through cost sharing or in-kind contributions. Regardless of compensation method, the federal government contribution cannot exceed $30,000 per year. In-kind contributions and cost sharing are allowed but are not required and they are not taken into consideration during the review of the application, nor do they influence the funding decision.
- Funding for travel, including to the annual IES PI Meeting, for the PI and mentor(s) to meet, for professional research conferences, and for specialized training workshops available through other entities (such as summer institutes in methodology or statistical analysis).
- Funding for any reasonable accommodations for the PI or research staff.

The budget for the optional funding for grant administration (no more than $50,000 per year in direct costs) may be used to support a grant and/or budget manager or assistants to carry out such tasks as overseeing the budget and invoices or working with or for the other offices at the university involved in grant management (e.g., Office of Sponsored Projects). NCER program officers will review the expenditure of these funds to ensure they are being used exclusively for grant administration and management purposes.

Grant funds must not be used for the following:
- Facility construction, renovation, or maintenance.
- Support for graduate students beyond their direct work on the grant (for example, grant funds should not be used to support graduate student research or travel to conferences).

- Mentors' research.

D. Methods Training for Education Researchers

Program Officer: Dr. Lara Faust (202-245-6532; Lara.Faust@ed.gov)

1. Purpose

The Methods Training for Education Researchers (Methods Training Program) supports training of current education researchers to expand and upgrade their methodological skills. Education researchers include individuals located in colleges and universities and research organizations and firms, as well as individuals working in state and local education agencies, education-focused organizations, and companies that have developed and deployed education related products and services. Supported training should respond to the ongoing development and adaptation of methods concerning the design of education studies, data collection, data analysis, and practical interpretation of the results of analyses.

For FY 2024, IES encourages applications that will provide training intended to do one or more of the following:

(1) Support applied education researchers, state and local education agency staff, and postsecondary institutional researchers to acquire skills necessary to obtain, evaluate, and generate the evidence needed for policy and programmatic decisions, such as the following:
- Creating and analyzing longitudinal data sets based on state, district, or postsecondary administrative data.
- Designing and implementing quick low-cost evaluations of digital learning interventions to measure the impact on student learning and identify which types of students may best benefit from them
- Applying data science methods (for example, to address challenges related to obtaining, using, analyzing, interpreting, and presenting "big data").
- Choosing and using measures (for example, tests, observations, surveys), checking whether measures can meet their intended purposes, and identifying what decisions the measures should be used for.

(2) Ensure that education researchers keep up with advances in the field, such as the following:
- Examining the variation in impacts across sites in experimental and quasi-experimental studies
- Designing, evaluating, and implementing replication studies.
- Combining qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the effects of education policy, program implementation, and context on the impact of interventions.
- Understanding and using alternatives to traditional null hypothesis significance testing such as the Bayesian Interpretation of Estimates (BASIE) framework and other strategies.
- Understanding and using modern missing data techniques in the analysis of education data, especially data collected during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Incorporating machine learning into research or carrying out research on AI and its use
- Using culturally responsive research methods and analyses.

(3) Provide product developers, researchers, and education practitioners the skills to support collaboration among them including:
- Carrying out interdisciplinary and interprofessional research and development.
- Integrating rigorous relevant research with best practices for product development.
- Ensuring scalability of the product is built in from the start of the research and development process.
- Incorporating education practitioners' ideas and views into the research and development process while maintaining objectivity in conducting the research and dissemination activities.

In addition, IES encourages applications that will provide training on methods linked to the Standards for Excellence in Education Research (SEER, https://ies.ed.gov/seer/). SEER codifies practices that IES expects—and increasingly requires—to be implemented as part of IES-funded causal impact studies. SEER encourages researchers to:
- Pre-register studies.
- Make findings, methods, and data open.

- Address inequities in learners' opportunities, access to resources, and outcomes.
- Identify interventions' components.
- Document treatment implementation and contrast.
- Analyze interventions' costs.
- Use high-quality outcome measures.
- Facilitate generalization of study findings.
- Support scaling of promising interventions.

You may also propose training in other methods and should document the need for the training and how it will advance the field. IES is interested in projects that provide researchers with targeted, relevant training they can immediately apply in their work.

You should include training opportunities for state and local agency staff responsible for implementing education practices, programs, and policies and for reviewing how well their agencies perform. IES encourages you to invite agency staff to participate, to include both agency staff and education researchers in training, or to require teams of agency staff and researchers to work together.

IES encourages you to provide methods training opportunities for researchers (including faculty, research staff, institutional researchers) at minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to increase their capacity to carry out rigorous education research and to prepare participants for more advanced training.

2. Award Limits

No more than $800,000 (direct and indirect costs) over no more than 3 years.

- The duration and budget you request should reflect the actual time and amount of funding necessary to conduct your proposed scope of work.

- **IES will not make an award under the Methods Training Program that exceeds $800,000 or that is for longer than 3 years.**

- See the discussion of Indirect Cost Rate for training grants in <u>Section IV.</u> Funds may be used to develop and disseminate training materials in addition to providing the training directly to participants.

3. General Requirements

Applications under the Methods Training program **must** meet the requirements listed below for (a) Eligible Applicants and in **Section 4. Training Program Narrative Requirements** to be sent forward for scientific peer review.

(a) Eligible Applicants

Applicants located in the territorial United States that have the ability and capacity to conduct training in scientific research methods for education research are eligible to apply.

An applying institution may hold more than one Methods Training award and submit multiple applications to the Methods Training Program if they are substantively different from one another and have no overlaps in key personnel. Key personnel can be on only one Methods Training application for FY 2024, and IES will not fund Methods Training projects with overlapping key personnel.

(b) The Principal Investigator

The Principal Investigator (PI) has the authority and responsibility for the proper conduct of the research, including the appropriate use of federal funds and the submission of required scientific progress reports, and is the primary point of contact with IES. The PI is designated by the institution submitting the application. Other personnel having authority and responsibility for the research and use of grant funds should be designated as co-Principal Investigators (co-PIs). Even if two or more people will share the authority and

responsibility for leading and directing the proposed research intellectually and logistically as co-PIs, only one of them may be identified as the PI for the purposes of making a grant award.

4. Training Program Narrative Requirements

You **must** include a Training Program Narrative with four sections: **(a) Significance, (b) Research Training Plan, (c) Personnel,** and **(d) Resources**. If any of these four sections are missing, or lack the content described below, your application will not move forward to peer review.

The Training Program Narrative **must** adhere to the formatting guidelines (see Part III.B) and be **no more than 20 pages**. For example, the use of small type will be grounds for IES to return the application without scientific peer review. If the narrative exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 20th page of the narrative.

The four sections of the Training Program Narrative **must** include the content described below. Please see the recommendations section for additional information about what to include in the Training Program Narrative.

(a) Significance

The purpose of this section is to describe the focus of your training program (the methodological training to be provided) and justify why this focus is important to improving the fields of education research and practice.

You **must** describe the specific methodologies that will be the focus of your training program and the intended participants.

(b) Research Training Plan

The purpose of this section is to describe the training to be provided along with recruitment for and outcomes of the training.

You **must** describe
- A recruitment plan.
- The content, format, and activities provided by your training.
- A plan for determining the success of your training.

(c) Personnel

The purpose of this section is to describe the relevant expertise of your training team, the responsibilities of each team member, and the time commitments of each team member.

You **must**
- Describe all key personnel on the project team, including the PI, any co-PIs, and other trainers.
- Identify the experts in specific methodologies who will provide the training.
- Include letters of agreement from key training personnel in Appendix D that describe their role in the training program.

The application will be considered non-responsive to the RFA if the application proposes to hire unnamed methods experts after the grant is received. Key personnel can be on only one Methods Training application for FY 2024, and IES will not fund Methods Training programs with overlapping key personnel.

(d) Resources

The purpose of this section is to describe both how you have the institutional capacity to complete a research training program of this size and complexity and your access to the resources you will need to successfully complete this research training program.

You **must** describe the institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions.

5. *Recommendations for a Strong Application*

These recommendations are intended to improve the quality of your application. Peer reviewers will use these recommendations in their evaluation of your application.

(a) Significance

Detail the specific methods that the training will teach and their importance to improving education research and/or the use of research in education practice. When applicable, note which SEER principles (https://ies.ed.gov/seer.asp) are aligned with the focus of the training.

Describe the type of participants you will recruit, noting their field of work and existing skills and expertise.
- Justify why this is an important group to train.
- Discuss the importance of the methods for the work of the expected participants and how they are expected to contribute to education research and practice when using the methods they will learn.
- Note the number of participants who will be trained and whether there will be one or several cohorts.

Identify any existing sources from which potential participants could currently obtain the training you propose. If such sources do exist, justify the unique value of your training program.

Provide a logic model that ties together the training needs of the participants to be recruited, the training to be provided, the specific skills and knowledge that participants will acquire, and how the skills and knowledge will improve participants' ability to carry out their work.

Methods Training grants should seek to increase the knowledge and skills of education researchers and practitioners to an extent that benefits the field. *IES does not expect that participants will become experts in the material taught.* Specify in the application the anticipated level of proficiency the participants will attain by the end of the training. Provide a rationale for that level of proficiency being both useful in the field and attainable through the proposed training.

(b) Research Training Plan

(i)   Recruitment Plan, Eligibility Requirements, and Selection Criteria
Discuss how the recruitment plan addresses the type of participants you intend to recruit, as described in the Significance section.
- In most cases, the focus of Methods Training Programs is on participants who have received their master's degree or doctorate prior to beginning the training and are working in the field of education research. Training focused on state and local education personnel may include people with a bachelor's or master's degree.

- Eligibility is limited to citizens or permanent residents of the United States.

Discuss strategies to recruit qualified participants with diverse backgrounds and from diverse institutions — consistent with constitutional and statutory limitations—to ensure that training in advanced research methods is made available to those currently underrepresented in the education sciences (for example, racial/ethnic minorities, first in their families to graduate college, veterans, and individuals with disabilities). Note any plans to train researchers at minority-serving institutions.

Describe the eligibility criteria for participants and the application process. Example application criteria and materials can be provided in Appendix E.

Describe the selection criteria, how they will be applied to the applicants, and who will make the decisions regarding admission to the training. Discuss how you will make the selection process fair, manage potential bias (explicit and implicit), and avoid any appearances of conflict of interest. Your proposed screening and scoring templates can be included in Appendix E.

Identify the number of participants who will take part in the training and the timing of their participation. The proposed number of participants should strike a balance between reaching as large an audience as possible while supporting each participant adequately and equitably. Previous training programs have included 12 to 50 participants per session and have conducted 2 to 8 sessions during the life of the project. Provide a timeline (either in this section or Appendix E) delineating when the expected recruitment and training of the participants will take place. Methods Training projects can start between August 1, 2024, and September 1, 2024.

(ii) Training Content, Format, and Activity Types
Describe the specific content to be taught and how it will develop the expected knowledge, skills, and abilities in the participants. The proposed content to be taught and the emphasis placed on each component of the content should be justified for the type of participants to be included in the training and what they are being prepared to do.

Describe the training format you will use. Methods Training projects can use a variety of formats, and you should justify why the format you choose will provide participants with the knowledge and skills they are expected to learn and the practice necessary to use them. Formats may be in-person and/or virtual. Discuss how the proposed format provides the training in a cost-effective way. Examples of formats used in other training projects include:
- One-time extended sessions (e.g., workshops from 3 days to 2 weeks).
- Short courses.
- Multi-year extended sessions.
- Ongoing sessions (e.g., similar to a regular course).
- Combinations of extended and ongoing sessions (sometimes mixing in-person with virtual sessions).
- Sessions or meetings at which participants present their work and receive comment on it.
- Prework or pre-sessions to prepare some or all participants for the main training.
- Ongoing opportunities for the participants to consult with the experts.

Describe the specific training activities you will use, the content to be taught by each activity, and how each activity will develop the participants' knowledge and skills. Describe how the activities are organized to reflect adult learning theories (such as participants engaging in activities that are relevant and timely, linked to their work, and applicable to the problems of their fields). IES expects training programs to include hands-on practice with the methods taught using real data and project-focused learning. Identify who will lead each activity and how long it will last. Examples of activity types used in other methods training projects include:
- Preparatory work, homework, and long-term assignments.
- Lectures and webinars.
- Readings and discussion on the method.
- Demonstrations of applying a method.
- Small group or individual assignment to apply a method.
- Having trainers work with individuals or small groups.
- Participant application of a method to their own research with trainer's support.
- Participants presenting their research to the group and receiving training or mentor feedback.
- Development of future research ideas and/or proposals by participants and trainers.

Describe how the training will build networks among the participants and, if so, how joint learning and collaboration will be encouraged both during and after the training.

Indicate whether participants will being a specific research issue to work on during the training or will work on developing a plan to further their understanding of the methodological program.

IES encourages applicants to include training on how to discuss the methods with education policymakers and practitioners.

Examples or supporting information regarding content, format, and activities can be provided in Appendix E.

(iii) Tracking Program Success

Discuss how you will identify the strengths and weaknesses of participants upon their entry to the program and how you will tailor the training accordingly.

Describe both short-term and medium-term measures you will use to determine whether participants can and are using the knowledge and skill taught in their post-training work and in the fields of education research and practice. Describe your plans for analyzing the data, using your findings for revising your training, and sharing your findings with IES and other training programs.

Describe how you will obtain formal feedback from both trainers and participants (current and former) that can be used to improve the training.

Describe how you will monitor the dissemination of training content and activities that you make available to persons who the training was designed for but who cannot attend the training, as described in your Dissemination Plan in Appendix A.

Describe how you will estimate the cost of training per participant, including recruitment costs.

(c) Personnel

Describe the PI's qualifications and experience for managing a Methods Training grant.

Briefly describe the following for each key personnel:
- Qualifications and how these contribute to the focus of the Methods Training project.
- Roles and responsibilities within the training project.
- Percent of time and calendar months per year to be devoted to the training project.
- Previous experience providing training for current education researchers.

Discuss how the combined expertise of the key personnel reflects the methodological focus, format, and activities of the training project.

Remember that key personnel can be on only one Methods Training application for FY 2024.

(d) Resources

Describe your institutional capacity and experience to manage a grant of this kind.

Describe your access to resources available at the primary institution and any subaward institutions.

Describe your plan for acquiring any resources that are not currently accessible, will require significant expenditures, and/or are necessary for the successful completion of the project (for example, software, equipment, test materials, curriculum, or training materials).

Include letters of agreement in Appendix D from all institutions and trainers that will take part in the training.

Describe your access to any data sets that you will require for training purposes. Include letters of agreement, data licenses, or existing memoranda of understanding (MOU) in Appendix D to document that you will be able to access the data for your proposed use.

Note any ongoing or recently completed Methods Training grants led by key personnel on your application related to the training to be provided (these are to be detailed in your Appendix C).

Describe the success of any previous Methods Training grants you or the other key personnel have had from IES (see also Appendix C) and describe any lessons learned incorporated into your application.

Describe the resources you have and will obtain to implement your dissemination plan, as described in Appendix A, to provide opportunities for non-participants to have access to your training content and activities. For example, previous Methods Training projects have
- Made videos of key activities and posted them on the project's website or other platforms.
- Posted training activities or materials on the project's website.

- Released posts, briefs, monographs, working papers or published articles on key issues in using the methods aimed at the needs of the training participants.
- Developed training modules and made them freely available so that other qualified persons can teach with them.
- Developed an online course based on the training materials and open to a wide audience.
- Established an ongoing user group so that participants can continue to collaborate and allowing others with similar interests to join.

6. *Additional Budget Parameters and Application Requirements*

The following requirements for the Methods Training applications will not be used in determining responsiveness to the RFA, but applications recommended for funding will be required to adjust their plans and budgets, if necessary, to meet them before receiving grant funds.

The budget **must include** funds allocated to (a) general accommodations (e.g., ensuring training materials are 508 compliant) and (b) the specific needs of participants with disabilities (e.g., sign language interpreter and/or assistive listening devices). Costs to accommodate specific needs should be set aside until registration is completed and disability requirements are known. These estimated costs should be reasonable given the duration and format of the training and should be budgeted for each training.

Under the Methods Training program, you will have to certify that your training participants and your support of them meet the following requirements. Grant funds expended in ways that do not meet these requirements will be disallowed, and your institution will have to return such expended funds.

(a) Participant Characteristics

Training participants must be citizens or permanent residents of the United States.

Participants' work must be relevant to education in the United States.

(b) Participant Support Costs

Participant support costs include all direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees or similar expenses paid to or on behalf of trainees (but not training grant personnel) in connection with the training. They must be excluded from the IDC calculations.

Methods Training participants and their institutions cannot receive financial recompense for attending a training program.

Participants' lodging and per diem can be covered by the grant but must not exceed federal government reimbursement rates for place and time of year (see https://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287). Grant funds cannot be used for lodging, travel, and per diem for local training project staff.

Participants are expected to cover their own travel costs with the following exceptions:
- Reasonable travel costs for state and local education agency personnel attending the training can be covered by the grant.
- Training participants can have their travel costs covered by the grant if they have been accepted to the training but lack travel funding. If your application is funded, you will need to work with your program officer to ensure reasonable and equitable provision of travel support.

In general, training grant funds may not be used to pay for food. However, under limited circumstances grant funds may be used to cover the costs of working lunches for attendees of training activities. If you are proposing to use grant funds for working lunches, you should include a clear description of the work to be accomplished during the meal as well as the per person cost. IES will determine whether these working lunch costs are allowable if the grant is awarded. If allowed, the cost of these working lunches must be subtracted from any per diem provided to participants. Grant-supported staff taking part in these working lunches must directly pay for them or have the cost subtracted from their per diem if they are receiving one. Other meals or snacks should not be included in the grant budget.

Part III: Preparing Your Application

A. Overview

The application contents—individual forms and their PDF attachments—represent the body of an application to IES. Read the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) to learn how to prepare a complete application that is submitted on time through Grants.gov (https://www.grants.gov/).

B. General Formatting

To ensure that reviewers can read your application and that all applicants have similar expectations for length and space, IES specifies the following formatting conventions. Adherence to type size and line spacing requirements is necessary so that no applicant will have an unfair advantage by using small type or by providing more text in their applications. These requirements apply to the PDF file as submitted, unless otherwise specified. In order for an application to be compliant and sent forward for review, the applicant should ensure that each narrative section follows both the page limit maximums and the formatting guidelines below unless otherwise specified.

1. *Page and Margin Specifications*

For all IES grant applications, a "page" is 8.5 in. x 11 in. on one side only with 1-inch margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

2. *Page Numbering*

Add page numbers using the header or footer function and place them at the bottom or upper right corner for ease of reading.

3. *Spacing*

Text must be single spaced.

4. *Type Size (Font Size)*

Type must conform to the following three requirements:
- The height of the letters must not be smaller than a type size of 12 point.
- Type density, including characters and spaces, must be no more than 15 characters per inch (cpi). For proportional spacing, the average for any representative section of text must not exceed 15 cpi.
- Type size must yield no more than 6 lines of type within a vertical inch.

You should check the type size using a standard device for measuring type size, rather than relying on the font selected for a particular word processing/printer combination. Small type size makes it difficult for reviewers to read the application; consequently, the use of small type will be grounds for IES to return the application without scientific peer review.

As a practical matter, if you use a 12-point Times New Roman font without compressing, kerning, condensing, or other alterations, and use footnotes sparingly, if at all, the application will typically meet these requirements. Readability should guide your selection of an appropriate font and your use of footnotes.

5. *Citations*

Use the parenthetical author-date style for citations rather than numeric citations that correspond to the reference list.

6. *Graphs, Diagrams, and Tables*

Use black and white in graphs, diagrams, tables, and charts. If color is used, you should ensure that the material reproduces well when printed or photocopied in black and white.

Text in figures, charts, and tables, including legends, may be in a type size smaller than 12 point but must be readily legible.

C. Required and Optional Appendices

The required training program narrative that is described for each training program (see <u>Part II: Training Program Descriptions and Requirements</u>) is followed by several appendices. Some of these appendices are required, and some are optional. When you submit your application through Grants.gov, you will create a single PDF file that *contains the training program narrative and all required and optional appendices* and include it as an attachment in the application package. Include appendices in alphabetical order and simply skip an appendix if it is not required for your application or if you choose not to include the optional appendices. See the IES Application Submission Guide (<u>https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp</u>) for more information about preparing and submitting your application using the required application package for this competition through Grants.gov (<u>https://www.grants.gov/</u>).

The training program narrative and appendices are critical parts of the IES application because they include the substantive content that the peer reviewers will evaluate for theoretical and practical significance and scientific merit.

1. *Appendix A: Dissemination Plan (Required)*

You **must** include Appendix A after the training program narrative. Appendix A **must** meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than three pages**. If Appendix A exceeds this three-page limit, IES will remove any pages after the third page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review.

(a) Dissemination Plan

The dissemination plan is intended to demonstrate that the training you are proposing to conduct will be disseminated in a way to reach other members of your intended audience that are unable to attend the training sessions provided under this grant. Your dissemination plan should include the following:

- Identify the audiences that you expect will most likely benefit from your research (Early Career and Early Career MSI projects) or training (Methods Training projects) such as institutional researchers, state or local education agency staff, junior or senior researchers, education practitioners, parents and students.

- For Early Career and Early Career MSI projects, discuss the different ways in which you intend to reach these audiences through the publications, presentations, and products you expect to produce.

- For Methods Training projects, discuss the different ways in which you intend to reach members of these audiences who will not be able to attend the training sessions you intend to hold. Describe how the materials, presentations, and products you expect to develop will be made more widely available. Note whether these materials will be updated on a regular basis.

The Dissemination Plan is the only information that may be included in Appendix A; all other materials will be removed prior to review of the application.

2. *Appendix B: Response to Reviewers (Required for Resubmissions)*

If your application is a resubmission, you **must** include Appendix B. If your application is one that you consider to be new but that is similar to a previous application, you should include Appendix B. Appendix B **must** meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than three pages**. If Appendix B exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the third page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review. Note that an application that was previously submitted to a different topic within this competition or to another IES grant competition is still considered a resubmission.

Use Appendix B to describe how the revised application is responsive to prior reviewer comments. If you have submitted a somewhat similar application in the past but are submitting the current application as a new application, you should use Appendix B to provide a rationale explaining why the current application should be considered a "new" application rather than a "resubmitted" application.

This response to the reviewers is the only information that may be included in Appendix B; all other material will be removed prior to review of the application.

3.   *Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects (Required)*

Appendix C **must** meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than 15 pages**. If Appendix C exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 15th page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review. In Appendix C, you must provide the information requested according to the training topic area.

Each training program has specific guidelines for the information to be included Appendix C. See below for the guidelines for each program. These are the only materials that may be included in Appendix C; all other materials will be removed prior to review of the application.

(a) Early Career Program and Early Career MSI Program

Include a summary table of ongoing (and recently completed) education research projects that the principal investigator has conducted in addition to education research projects conducted by the proposed mentor(s) that are relevant to the PI's research and career development plans with the following for each project:
- PI and other key personnel
- Brief description, including the topic addressed and methods used
- Funding source
- Duration
- Outcomes and products

(b) Methods Training Program

Include a summary table of the ongoing (and recently completed) research and training projects of the PI and/or co-PIs that are related to the training to be provided. In the table, include the following for each project:
- Principal investigator and other key personnel involved in the project
- Brief description of the research project
- Funding source
- Duration of the project
- Outcomes and products of the project

If the PI or any key personnel on this application have had or currently have an IES-funded Methods Training Program grant, include a summary table that contains the following information:
- Title of the training program grant
- Number of participants admitted to the training program
- Research methods learned by participants
- Participant rating of the training program
- Results from follow-up with participants on their use of the material taught
- The outcomes and products

4.   *Appendix D: Letters of Agreement (Required)*

There is **no recommended page length** for Appendix D. Include in Appendix D the Letters of Agreement from any institutional partners, mentors, and individual trainers who will take part in the training program. Letters of Agreement should include enough information to make it clear that the author of the letter understands the nature of the commitment of time, space, and resources to the training program that will be required if the application is funded. Applicants for the Methods Training topic may also include data licenses and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in Appendix D.

(a) Early Career Program and Early Career MSI Program

IES requires including letters from the following:
- All mentor(s)

- All institutions that will take part in the training
- Consultants (if applicable)
- Any partners, such as schools or districts
- Those who hold access to necessary data including letters of agreement, data licenses, or the existing MOU in documenting access to any data sets to be used in the training

(b) Methods Training Program

IES requires including letters from the following:
- All key training personnel
- All institutions that will take part in the training
- Those who hold access to necessary data including letters of agreement, data licenses, or the existing MOU in documenting access to any data sets to be used in the training

These are the only materials that may be included in Appendix D; all other material will be removed prior to review of the application.

5. *Appendix E: Supplemental Materials (Optional)*

Appendix E **must** meet the general formatting guidelines and be **no more than 15 pages**. If Appendix E exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the 15th page of the appendix before it is forwarded for scientific peer review. Include in Appendix E examples of training-related materials and tables/charts that support the training program narrative.

Appendix E may include materials that support the training program narrative, for example, a theory of change for Early Career projects, project timeline, self-assessments used to identify fellows' or participants' strengths, weaknesses, and/or interests; syllabi, descriptions of course/training activities and course modules; descriptions of mentoring activities or seminars; participant eligibility and selection criteria; training evaluation forms.

These are the only materials that may be included in Appendix E; all other material will be removed prior to review of the application.

D. Other Narrative Content

In addition to the training program narrative (see [Part II: Training Program Requirements and Recommendations](#)) and required and optional appendices (see above), you will also prepare a project summary/structured abstract, a bibliography and references cited, an exempt or non-exempt research on human subjects narrative, and biosketches for key personnel and consultants to include as file attachments in your application. See the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) for more information about preparing and submitting your application using the required application package for this competition on Grants.gov (https://www.grants.gov/).

1. *Project Summary/Abstract*

You **must** submit the project summary/abstract as a separate PDF attachment in the application package. If your project is recommended for funding, IES will use this abstract as the basis for the online abstracts that we post when new awards are announced. We recommend that the project summary/abstract be two-pages long and follow the format used for IES online abstracts (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/).

(a) Early Career Program and Early Career MSI Program

- **Title:** Distinct, descriptive title for the project.
- **Topic:** The RFA (Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences) and the program to which you are applying (Early Career Program or Early Career MSI Program).
- **Purpose:** A brief description of the purpose and significance of the research plan and the career development plan.

- **Research Plan:** A brief description of the research plan including research questions/hypotheses, sample, intervention (if applicable), measures, and data analysis plan.
- **Career Development Plan:** A brief description of the proposed training and mentoring activities.

(b) Methods Training Program

- **Title**: Distinct, descriptive title for the Methods Training project.
- **Topic:** The RFA (Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences) and the program to which you are applying (Methods Training Program).
- **Purpose:** A brief description of the purpose and significance of the research training plan.
- **Research Training Plan:**
  o A brief description of the proposed training and its purpose.
  o The expected number of individuals to be recruited and length of their training.

See our online search engine of funded research and training grants (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch) for examples of the content to be included in your summary/abstract and to search for award numbers and URLs.

2. *Bibliography and References Cited*

You **must** submit the bibliography and references cited as a separate PDF attachment in the application package. There is no recommended page length for the bibliography and references cited. You should include complete citations, including the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), titles of relevant elements such as the article/journal and chapter/book, page numbers, and year of publication for literature cited in the training program narrative. Use the parenthetical author-date style for citations.

3. *Human Subjects Narrative*

You **must** submit an exempt or non-exempt human subjects narrative as a separate PDF attachment in the application package. We do not recommend a page length for the human subjects narrative. See *Information About the Protection of Human Subjects in Research Supported by the Department of Education* (https://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/humansub/hrsnarrative1.html) for a brief overview of principles, regulations, and policies which affect research involving human subjects in research activities supported by the U.S. Department of Education.

The U.S. Department of Education does not require certification of IRB approval at the time you submit your application. However, if an application that involves non-exempt human subjects research is recommended for funding, the designated U.S. Department of Education (Department) official will request that you obtain and send the certification to the Department within 30 days of the formal request from the Department.

4. *Biographical Sketches for Key Personnel*

You **must** submit a biographical sketch for each person named as key personnel in your application. You may also submit biographical sketches for consultants (optional). Each biographical sketch (an abbreviated CV plus current and pending support information) **must be no more than five pages in length, and this five-page limit includes current and pending support information**. If a biographical sketch exceeds this page limit, IES will remove any pages after the fifth page before it is forwarded for scientific peer review.

Biographical sketches are submitted as separate PDF attachments in the application package. IES strongly encourages applicants to use SciENcv (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/) where you will find an IES biosketch form. IES will accept the SciENcv format for your biographical sketch even though it does not adhere exactly to our general formatting requirements. You may also develop your own biosketch format. If you use SciENcv, the information on current and pending support will be entered into the IES biosketch template. If you use your own format, you will need to provide this information in a separate table.

The biographical sketch for the principal investigator, each co-principal investigator, other key personnel, and consultants (if included) should show how members of the project team possess training and expertise commensurate with their specified duties on the proposed project, for example by describing relevant publications, grants, and research experience including experience working with the study population as applicable.

Provide a list of current and pending grants for the principal investigator, each co-principal investigator, and other key personnel, along with the proportion of their time, expressed as percent **effort over a 12-month calendar year**, allocated to each project. Include the proposed IES grant as one of the pending grants in this list.

Include a persistent identifier (PID) such as an ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor; https://orcid.org/) in the biosketches for all key personnel. If you or any key member of your project team does not yet have a PID, IES encourages you to establish one as soon as possible, given the requirement that all key personnel are required to have a PID in place before an award will be made.

Part IV: Competition Regulations and Review Criteria

A. Funding Mechanisms and Restrictions

1. Mechanism of Support
IES intends to award cooperative agreements pursuant to this Request for Applications. Through the terms of the cooperative agreements, grantees will work with IES to plan and implement their activities.

2. Funding Available
Although IES intends to support the programs described in this announcement, all awards pursuant to this Request for Applications are contingent upon the availability of funds and the receipt of meritorious applications. IES makes its awards to the highest quality applications as determined through scientific peer review, regardless of program.

The size of the award depends on the program and scope of the training program. Please attend to the duration and budget maximums set for each training program in [Part II: Training Program Requirements](). IES will not make an award exceeding the relevant maximum grant duration and/or award amount as set out below.

3. Special Considerations for Budget Expenses

(a) Indirect Cost Rate

U.S. Department of Education policy (34 CFR 75.562 (c)(2)) limits indirect cost reimbursement on a training grant to the recipient's actual indirect costs, as determined by its negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, or 8 percent of a modified total direct cost base, whichever amount is less. For the purposes of this competition, a modified total direct cost base is defined as total direct costs less stipends, tuition and related fees (including fellows' benefits), and capital expenditures of $5,000 or more. Questions about indirect cost rates should be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Indirect Cost Group https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/fipao/icgindex.html.

Institutions, both primary grantees and sub-awardees, not located in the territorial U.S. cannot charge indirect costs.

(b) Meetings and Conferences

If you are requesting funds to cover expenses for hosting meetings or conferences, please note that there are statutory and regulatory requirements in determining whether costs are reasonable and necessary. Please refer to the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), 2 CFR, §200.432 Conferences (https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=dcd3efbcf2b6092f84c3b1af32bdcc34&node=se2.1.200_1432&rgn=div8).

Federal grant funds cannot be used to pay for alcoholic beverages or entertainment, which includes costs for amusement, diversion, and social activities. In general, federal funds may not be used to pay for food. A grantee hosting a meeting or conference may not use grant funds to pay for food for conference attendees unless doing so is necessary to accomplish legitimate meeting or conference business. You may request funds to cover expenses for working meetings, such as working lunches; however, IES will determine whether these costs are allowable in keeping with the Uniform Guidance Cost Principles. Grantees are responsible for the proper use of their grant awards and may have to repay funds to the Department if they violate the rules for meeting- and conference-related expenses or other disallowed expenditures.

4. Program Authority

"Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002," Title I of Public Law 107-279, November 5, 2002. This program is not subject to the intergovernmental review requirements of Executive Order 12372.

5. Applicable Regulations

Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) codified at CFR Part 200. The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 77, 81, 82, 84, 85, 86 (part 86 applies only to institutions of higher education), 97, 98, and 99 and 2 CFR 3485. In addition, 34 CFR part 75 is applicable, except for the provisions in 34 CFR 75.100, 75.101(b), 75.102, 75.103, 75.105, 75.109(a), 75.200, 75.201, 75.209, 75.210, 75.211, 75.217, 75.219, 75.220, 75.221, 75.222, and 75.230.

B. Additional Award Requirements

1. Pre-Award

(a) Clarification and Budget Questions

IES uses the scientific peer review process as the first step in making funding decisions. If your application is recommended for funding based on the outcome of the scientific peer review, an IES program officer will contact you to clarify any issues, address concerns raised by the peer reviewers, and address whether the proposed budget adequately supports the scope of work and meets federal guidelines. If significant revisions to the project arise from these information requests, they will have to be addressed under the original overall budget.

(b) Demonstrating Access to Data and Education Settings

For Early Career and Early Career MSI projects, if you propose to conduct that requires access to education settings (such as classrooms, schools, districts, colleges/universities; secondary datasets; or studies currently under way) you will need to provide evidence that you have access to these resources prior to receiving funding. Whenever possible, include letters of agreement in Appendix E from those who have responsibility for or access to the data or settings you wish to incorporate when you submit your application. Even in circumstances where you have included such letters with your application, **IES will require additional supporting evidence prior to the release of funds**. If you cannot provide such documentation, IES may not award the grant or may withhold funds.

You will need supporting evidence of partnership or access if you are doing any of the following.

(1) Conducting research in or with education settings
If your application is being considered for funding based on scientific merit scores from the scientific peer review panel and your research relies on access to education settings, you will need to provide documentation that you have access to the necessary settings in order to receive the grant. This means that if you do not have permission to conduct the proposed project in the necessary number of settings at the time of application, you will need to provide documentation to IES indicating that you have successfully recruited the necessary number of settings for the proposed research before the full first-year costs will be awarded. If you recruited sufficient numbers of settings prior to the application, IES will ask you to provide documentation that the settings originally recruited for the application are still willing to partner in the research.

(2) Using secondary datasets
If your application is being considered for funding based on scientific merit scores from the scientific peer review panel and your research relies on access to secondary datasets (such as federally collected datasets, state or district administrative data, or data collected by you or other researchers), you will need to provide documentation that you have access to the necessary datasets in order to receive the grant. This means that if you do not have permission to use the proposed datasets at the time of application, you must provide documentation to IES from the entity controlling the dataset(s) before the grant will be awarded. This documentation must indicate that you have permission to use the data for the proposed research for the time period discussed in the application. If you obtained permission to use a proposed dataset prior to submitting your application, IES will ask you to provide updated documentation indicating that you still have permission to use the dataset to conduct the proposed research during the project period.

(3) Building on existing studies
You may propose studies that piggyback onto an ongoing study, which will require access to those subjects and data. In such cases, the principal investigator of the existing study should be one of the members of the research team applying for the grant to conduct the new project.

In addition to obtaining evidence of access, IES strongly advises applicants to establish a written agreement, within 3 months of receipt of an award, among all key collaborators and their institutions (including principal and co-principal investigators) regarding roles, responsibilities, access to data, publication rights, and decision-making procedures.

(c) Assessment of Past Performance

IES considers the applicant's performance and use of funds under a previous federal award as part of the criteria for making a funding decision. Performance on previous Department of Education awards is considered as is additional information that may be requested from the applicant, including compliance to the IES Public Access Policy (applicable for all grants funded from 2012 to present; https://ies.ed.gov/funding/researchaccess.asp).

(d) Persistent Identifiers (PID) for Key Personnel

All key personnel are required to have a persistent identifier, such as ORCID iD (Open Researcher and Contributor Identification; https://orcid.org/) in place before an award will be made.

2. Post Award

(a) Compliance with IES Policy on Public Access to Results

IES requires all grantees to submit the electronic version of peer-reviewed scholarly publications to ERIC (https://eric.ed.gov/), a publicly accessible and searchable electronic database of education research that makes available full-text documents to the public for free. This public access requirement (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/researchaccess.asp) applies to peer-reviewed, original scholarly publications that have been supported (in whole or in part) with direct funding from IES. The public access requirement does not apply to book chapters, editorials, reviews, or non-peer-reviewed conference proceedings. **As the designated representative for the grantee institution, IES holds the principal investigator (PI) responsible** for ensuring that authors of publications stemming from the grant comply with this requirement. The public access requirement applies to any author who receives financial support from a training grant, **including training personnel, fellows, and participants**.

The author's final manuscript is defined as the final version accepted for journal publication and includes all modifications from the peer review process. Submission of accepted manuscripts for public accessibility through ERIC is strongly encouraged as soon as possible **but must occur within 12 months of the publisher's official date of publication.** ERIC will not make the accepted manuscripts available to the public prior to the end of the 12-month embargo period, unless specified by the publisher.

The ERIC website includes a homepage for the Grantee and Online Submission System (https://eric.ed.gov/submit/), as well as a Frequently Asked Questions page (https://eric.ed.gov/?granteefaq). During the submission process, authors will submit bibliographic information from the publication, including title, authors, publication date, journal title, and associated IES award number(s).

(b) Special Conditions on Grants

IES may impose special conditions on a grant pertinent to the proper implementation of key aspects of the proposed research design or if the grantee is not financially stable, has a history of unsatisfactory performance, has an unsatisfactory financial or other management system, has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant, or is otherwise not responsible.

(c) Attendance at the Annual IES Principal Investigators Meeting

The PI is required to attend one meeting each year (for up to 3 days) in Washington, DC with other IES grantees and IES staff. The project's budget should include this meeting. For Methods Training projects, PIs who are not able to attend the meeting may designate another person who is key personnel on the research team to attend.

(d) Attendance at NCER Early Career Sessions

PIs from the Early Career and Early Career MSI programs are required to take part in NCER-Organized professional development activities. At these sessions, PIs will discuss (1) their research progress, (2) how they are using mentoring and additional training to support their ongoing research, their long-term research plan and other professional plans, (3) explore grant writing strategies, and (4) build a network of early career researchers. These sessions are expected to be held virtually and at the IES PI Meeting so they should not affect your budget.

C. Overview of Application and Scientific Peer Review Process

1. Submitting Your Letter of Intent

Letters of intent (LOIs) are submitted online at the IES Peer Review Information Management Online (PRIMO) system (https://iesreview.ed.gov/LOI/LOISubmit). **Select the Letter of Intent form for the topic under which you plan to submit your application**. The online submission form contains fields for each of the seven content areas listed below. Use these fields to provide the requested information. The project description should be single-spaced and is recommended to be no more than one page (about 3,500 characters).

The LOI is non-binding and optional but strongly recommended. If you submit an LOI, a program officer will contact you regarding your proposed research. IES staff also use the information in the LOI to identify the expertise needed for the peer review panels and to secure a sufficient number of reviewers to handle the anticipated number of applications.

Elements of a Letter of Intent:
- Descriptive title
- Research Training Program that you will address
- Brief description of the proposed training program
- Name, institutional affiliation, address, telephone number, and email address of the principal investigator and any co-principal investigators
- Name and institutional affiliation of any key collaborators and contractors
- Duration of the proposed project (attend to the Duration maximums for each Training Program)
- Estimated total budget request (attend to the Budget maximums for each Training Program)

2.   Resubmissions and Multiple Submissions

If you intend to revise and resubmit an application that was submitted to a previous IES competitions but that was not funded, you must indicate on the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance Form in the application package (see IES Application Submission Guide, https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) that the FY 2024 application is a resubmission (Item 8) and include the application number of the previous application (an 11-character alphanumeric identifier beginning "R305" entered in Item 4a). Prior reviews will be sent to this year's reviewers along with the resubmitted application.

You **must** describe your response to the prior reviews using Appendix B: Response to Reviewers. Revised and resubmitted applications will be reviewed according to this FY 2024 Request for Applications.

If you submitted a somewhat similar application in the past and did not receive an award but are submitting the current application as a new application, you should indicate on the application form (Item 8) that the FY 2024 application is a new application. In Appendix B, you should provide a rationale explaining why the FY 2024 application should be considered a new application rather than a revision. If you do not provide such an

explanation, then IES may send the reviews of the prior unfunded application to this year's reviewers along with the current application.

You may submit applications to more than one of the IES FY 2024 Training Grant programs so long as you meet the requirements below.

- An institution may submit multiple applications to the Early Career Program and the Early Career MSI Program as long as the PI is different for each application and there is no overlap in mentors.
- An MSI may not submit applications to both the Early Career Program and the Early Career MSI program for the same PI.
- An institution may submit multiple applications to the Methods Training Program if they are substantively different from one another and have no overlap in key personnel.

If an institution submits multiple applications that violate one of the above conditions, IES will determine whether and which applications will be accepted for review and/or will be eligible for funding.

3. Application Processing

Applications must be submitted electronically and received no later than 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on January 11, 2024 using the Grants.gov Workspace (https://www.grants.gov/applicants/workspace-overview.html). You must follow the application procedures and submission requirements described in the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) and on Grants.gov (https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants.html).

After applications are fully uploaded and validated at Grants.gov, the U.S. Department of Education receives the applications for processing and transfer to the IES Peer Review Information Management Online (PRIMO) system (https://iesreview.ed.gov/). PRIMO allows applicants to track the progress of their application via the Applicant Notification System (ANS).

Approximately one to two weeks after the application deadline, invitation emails are sent to applicants who have never applied to IES before to create their individual PRIMO ANS accounts. Both the PI and the AOR will receive invitation emails. Approximately 4 to 6 weeks after the application deadline, all applicants (new and existing ANS users) will begin to receive a series of emails about the status of their application. See the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) for additional information about ANS and PRIMO.

Once an application has been submitted and the application deadline has passed, you may not submit additional materials or information for inclusion with your application.

4. Scientific Peer Review Process

IES will forward all applications that are compliant and responsive to this Request for Applications to be evaluated for scientific and technical merit. Scientific reviews are conducted in accordance with the review criteria stated below and the review procedures posted on the IES website (https://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/application_review.asp) by a panel of experts who have substantive and methodological expertise appropriate to the program of research and Request for Applications.

Each compliant and responsive application is assigned to one of the IES review panels (https://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/reviewers.asp). Applications are assigned to panel according to the match between the overall expertise of reviewers on each panel and the content and methodological approach proposed in each application.

At least two primary reviewers will complete written evaluations of the application, identifying strengths and weaknesses related to each of the review criteria. Primary reviewers will independently assign a score for each criterion, as well as an overall score, for each application they review. Based on the overall scores assigned by primary reviewers, IES calculates an average overall score for each application and prepares a preliminary rank order of applications before the full peer review panel convenes to complete the review of applications.

The full panel will consider and score only those applications deemed to be the most competitive and to have the highest merit, as reflected by the preliminary rank order. A panel member may nominate for consideration by the full panel any application that he or she believes merits full panel review but that would not have been included in the full panel meeting based on its preliminary rank order.

5. *Review Criteria for Scientific Merit*

The purpose of IES-supported research is to help solve education problems by generating reliable information about education programs, practices, policies, and assessments that support learning and improve academic achievement and education access for all learners. The specific purpose of IES-funded training programs is to support this contribution by furthering the training of education researchers and policymakers. In doing so, IES aims to increase the quality, accessibility, use, and relevance of education research. IES expects reviewers to assess the scientific rigor and practical significance of the research and research training proposed in order to judge the likelihood that it will make a meaningful contribution to the larger IES mission. Information pertinent to each of these criteria is described in [Part II: Training Program Requirements and Recommendations](#).

(a) Significance

Does the applicant provide a compelling rationale for the significance of the training program as defined in the Significance section for the program under which the applicant is submitting the application? Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Significance section for the training program under which the applicant is submitting the application? For resubmissions, does the applicant adequately address the comments/concerns of prior reviewers?

(b) Research Plan (Early Career Program and Early Career MSI Program)

Does the applicant address the recommendations for the training plans described in the Research Plan section? For resubmissions, does the applicant adequately address the comments/concerns of prior reviewers?

(c) Research Training Plan (Methods Training Program)

Does the applicant address the recommendations for the training plans described in the Research Training Plan section? For resubmissions, does the applicant adequately address the comments/concerns of prior reviewers?

(d) Career Development Plan (Early Career Program and Early Career MSI Program)

Does the applicant address the recommendations described in the Career Development Plan section? For resubmissions, does the applicant adequately address the comments/concerns of prior reviewers?

(e) Personnel

Does the description of the personnel make it apparent that the principal investigator and other key personnel possess appropriate training and experience and will commit sufficient time to competently implement the proposed training? For resubmissions, does the applicant adequately address the comments/concerns of prior reviewers?

(f) Resources

Does the applicant have the facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources required to support the proposed activities? Do the commitments of each partner show support for the implementation and success of the project? For resubmissions, does the applicant adequately address the comments/concerns of prior reviewers?

(g) Dissemination

Does the application address pertinent recommendations described in [Appendix A: Dissemination Plan](#)? Does the applicant present a dissemination plan that is tailored to audiences that will benefit from the findings and reflect the purpose of the project? For resubmissions, does the applicant adequately address the comments/concerns of prior reviewers?

6. *Award Decisions*

The following will be considered in making award decisions for responsive and compliant applications:
- Scientific merit as determined by scientific peer review
- Performance and use of funds under a previous federal award
- Contribution to the overall program of research training described in this request for applications
- Ability to carry out the proposed research training within the maximum award and duration requirements
- Availability of funds

Part V: Compliance and Responsiveness Checklist

Only compliant and responsive applications will be forwarded for scientific peer review. Use this checklist to better ensure you have included all required components for compliance and that you have addressed all general and training program narrative requirements for responsiveness.

See the IES Application Submission Guide (https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp) for an application checklist that describes the forms in the application package that must be completed and the PDF files that must be attached to the forms for a successful submission through Grants.gov.

Compliance	
	Have you included a training program narrative?
	Do the training program narrative and other narrative content adhere to all formatting requirements (Part IV.B)?
	Do the training program narrative and other narrative content adhere to all page maximums as described in the RFA? IES will remove any pages above the maximum before forwarding an application for scientific peer review.
	Have you included the following required Appendices? • Appendix A: Dissemination Plan • Appendix B: Response to Reviewers if you are resubmitting an application • Appendix C: Summary of Research and Training Projects • Appendix D: Letters of Agreement from Training Partners
Responsiveness	
	Have you identified a single Training Program for your application?
	Have you meet the general requirements for your chosen topic?
	Does your training program narrative include the required sections? Did you describe the elements required for each section as listed below?

Required Training Program Narrative Elements			
	Early Career Program	**Early Career MSI Program**	**Methods Training Program**
Significance	• Need for further career development • Overview of the proposed research project and research questions • Research topic(s) • Project type	• Meeting the MSI requirement • Need for further career development • Overview of the proposed research project and research questions • Research topic(s) • Project type	• The specific methodologies that will be the focus of our training program and the intended participants
Research Plan	• Research design, sample, key outcome measures, and data analysis procedures • Measures of academic outcomes of learners or measures of how statistical and/or research method works as intended and can be used by education researchers • Plan for developing a longer-term research agenda	• Research design, sample, key outcome measures, and data analysis procedures • Measures of academic outcomes of learners or measures of how statistical and/or research method works as intended and can be used by education researchers • Plan for developing a longer-term research agenda	N/A

Research Training Plan	N/A	N/A	• A recruitment plan • The content, format, and activities provided by your training • A plan for determining the success of your training
Career Development Plan	• Career Development Plan • How your career development activities will support or complement your Research Plan and contribute to your longer-term research agenda	• Career Development Plan • How your career development activities will support or complement your Research Plan and contribute to your longer-term research agenda	N/A
Personnel	• Your eligibility to be PI • Your expertise and experience to be the PI and carry out the Research Plan • The expertise and experience of your mentor(s) and other personnel • The date on which you were granted your doctoral degree and (if applicable) the date you completed your postdoctoral position • The names of your dissertation or graduate school advisor and (if relevant) your postdoctoral supervisor	• Your eligibility to be PI • Your expertise and experience to be the PI and carry out the Research Plan • The expertise and experience of your mentor(s) and other personnel • The date on which you were granted your doctoral degree and (if applicable) the date you completed your postdoctoral position • The names of your dissertation or graduate school advisor and (if relevant) your postdoctoral supervisor	• A description of all key personnel on the project team, including the PI, any co-PIs, and other trainers • Identification of the experts in specific methodologies who will provide the training • Letters of Agreement from key training personnel in Appendix D that describe their role in the training program
Resources	• The resources to support you in conducting the proposed project	• The resources to support you in conducting the proposed project	• Institutional resources of both the primary applicant institution and any subaward institutions

Part VI: Program Codes

Applications to the **Education Research Training Grant program (ALN 84.305B)** are submitted under a single training program.

You must enter the program code in Item 4b of the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance form (see the IES Application Submission Guide, https://ies.ed.gov/funding/submission_guide.asp, for more information about this form). For example, an application to the Education Research Training Grants program (ALN 84.305B) under the Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority-Serving Institutions program should have the code "NCER-Early Career MSI" entered in the field for Item 4b.

Program	Codes
Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Education Research	NCER-Early Career
Early Career Development and Mentoring Program for Faculty at Minority-Serving Institutions	NCER-Early Career MSI
Methods Training for Education Researchers	NCER-Methods