

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

[CFDA No.: 84.083 A and B]

Women's Educational Equity Act Program (WEEA); Notice Inviting Applications for New Awards for Fiscal Year (FY) 1998

Purpose of Program: To promote gender equity in education; to promote equity in education for women and girls who suffer from multiple forms of discrimination based on sex and race, ethnic origin, limited English proficiency, disability or age; and to provide financial assistance to enable educational agencies to meet the requirements of title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Eligible Applicants: Public agencies, private nonprofit agencies, organizations, institutions, student groups, community groups, and individuals.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: November 24, 1997.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: January 30, 1998.

Applications Available: October 15, 1997.

Estimated Available Funds: The Congress has not yet appropriated fiscal year 1998 funds for this program. At the level requested by the President, \$1,570,000 would be available for new awards.

Estimated Range of Awards:
Implementation Grants: \$90,000–\$200,000; Research and Development Grants: \$80,000–\$200,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards:
Implementation Grants: \$150,000; Research and Development Grants: \$150,000.

Estimated Number of Awards:
Implementation Grants: 9; Research and Development Grants: 2.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in the notice.

Project Period: Up to 48 months. Funds available under this competition would be used for the first 12 months of a project.

Applicable Regulations: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 74, 75, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85, and 86.

Supplementary Information: The Department will award two types of grants: (a) grants for the *implementation* of gender equity programs in schools; and (b) *research and development* grants to develop model equity programs. Examples of authorized activities under the program include—

Implementation Grants

(a) Assisting educational agencies and institutions to implement policies and practices to comply with title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972;

(b) Training for teachers, counselors, administrators, and other school personnel, especially preschool and elementary school personnel, in gender-equitable teaching and learning practices;

(c) Leadership training for women and girls to develop professional and marketable skills to compete in the global marketplace, improve self-esteem, and benefit from exposure to positive role models;

(d) School-to-work transition programs, guidance and counseling activities, and other programs to increase opportunities for women and girls to enter a technologically demanding workplace and, in particular, to enter highly skilled, high-paying careers in which women and girls have been underrepresented;

(e) Enhancing educational and career opportunities for those women and girls who suffer multiple forms of discrimination, based on sex and on race, ethnic origin, limited-English proficiency, disability, socioeconomic status, or age;

(f) Assisting pregnant students and students rearing children to remain in or to return to secondary school, graduate, and prepare their preschool children to start school;

(g) Evaluating exemplary model programs to assess the ability of such programs to advance educational equity for women and girls;

(h) Introduction into the classroom of textbooks, curricula, and other materials designed to achieve equity for women and girls;

(i) Programs and policies to address sexual harassment and violence against women and girls and to ensure that educational institutions are free from threats to the safety of students and personnel;

(j) Nondiscriminatory tests of aptitude and achievement and of alternative assessments that eliminate biased assessment instruments from use;

(k) Programs to increase educational opportunities, including higher education, vocational training, and other educational programs for low-income women, including underemployed and unemployed women, and women receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children benefits;

(l) Programs to improve representation of women in educational administration at all levels; and

(m) Planning, development, and initial implementation of—

(1) Comprehensive institution- or districtwide evaluation to assess the presence or absence of gender equity in educational settings;

(2) Comprehensive plans for implementation of equity programs in State and local educational agencies and institutions of higher education, including community colleges; and

(3) Innovative approaches to school-community partnerships for educational equity.

Research and Development Activities

(a) Research and development of innovative strategies and model training programs for teachers and other education personnel;

(b) The development of high-quality and challenging assessment instruments that are nondiscriminatory;

(c) The development and evaluation of model curricula, textbooks, software, and other educational materials to ensure the absence of gender stereotyping and bias;

(d) The development of instruments and procedures that employ new and innovative strategies to assess whether diverse educational settings are gender equitable;

(e) The development of instruments and strategies for evaluation, dissemination, and replication of promising or exemplary programs designed to assist local educational agencies in integrating gender equity in their educational policies and practices;

(f) Updating high-quality educational materials previously developed through Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA) grants;

(g) The development of policies and programs to address and prevent sexual harassment and violence to ensure that educational institutions are free from threats to safety of students and personnel;

(h) The development and improvement of programs and activities to increase opportunity for women, including continuing educational activities, vocational education, and programs for low-income women, including underemployed and unemployed women, and women receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children; and

(i) The development of guidance and counseling activities, including career education programs, designed to ensure gender equity.

Selection Criteria for Implementation Grants: The Secretary evaluates applications for implementation grants on the basis of the following criteria. The maximum possible score for each

criterion is indicated in parentheses with the criterion. The Secretary awards up to 100 points for all of the criteria.

(a) *Effectively Achieving the Purposes of WEEA.* (20 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.209 and 20 U.S.C. 7235(a), the Secretary reviews each application to determine how well the project will effectively achieve the purposes of the WEEA Program.

Note: Applicants should consider the following statutory provisions in responding to this criterion. Under 20 U.S.C. 7232, the purpose of the WEEA program is: (1) to promote gender equity in education in the United States; (2) to provide financial assistance to enable educational agencies and institutions to meet the requirements of title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and (3) to promote equity in education for women and girls who suffer from multiple forms of discrimination based on sex, race, ethnic origin, limited-English proficiency, disability, or age.

(b) *Project as a component of a comprehensive plan.* (5 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.209 and 20 U.S.C. 7235(a)(2)(C), the Secretary reviews each application to determine the extent to which the project is a significant component of a comprehensive plan for educational equity and compliance with title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 in the particular school district, institution of higher education, vocational-technical institution, or other educational agency or institution.

(c) *Implementing an institutional change strategy.* (5 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.209 and 20 U.S.C. 7235(a)(2)(D), the Secretary reviews each application to determine the extent to which the project implements an institutional change strategy with long-term impact that will continue as a central activity of the applicant after the WEEA grant has been terminated.

(d) *Need for project.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The magnitude of the need for the services to be provided or the activities to be carried out by the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project will enhance educational and career opportunities for those women and girls who suffer forms of discrimination, based on sex and race, ethnic origin, limited English-proficiency, disability, socioeconomic status or age.

(e) *Significance.* (5 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the

significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

(3) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

(4) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in employment, independent living, or both, as appropriate.

(f) *Quality of the project design.* (15 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(g) *Quality of project services* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project. In determining the quality of the services to be provided by the proposed project, the Secretary considers the quality and sufficiency of strategies for ensuring equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The likely impact of the services to be provided by the proposed project on the intended recipients of those services.

(2) The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are appropriate to the needs of the

intended recipients or beneficiaries of those services.

(h) *Quality of Project Personnel.* (5 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

(i) *Adequacy of resources.* (5 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.

(2) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

(j) *Quality of the management plan.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, time lines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(3) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a

variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

(k) *Quality of the project evaluation.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are appropriate to the context within which the project operates.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of project implementation strategies.

(4) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(5) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Note: Applicants should consider the following statutory provision in responding to this criterion. Under 20 U.S.C. 7234(1), applicants for WEEA funds are required to set forth policies and procedures that will ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the grant activities, including an evaluation of the practices, policies, and materials used by the applicant and an evaluation or estimate of the continued significance of the work of the project following completion of the award period.

Priority for Implementation Grants: Under 34 CFR 75.105 (b) and (c), the Secretary gives a competitive preference to applications that meet the following priority found in 20 U.S.C. 7235(b) by awarding bonus points depending on how well the applicant meets the priority:

Projects submitted by applicants that have not received assistance under the WEEA Program (5 points).

Selection Criteria for Research and Development Grants: The Secretary evaluates applications for research and development grants on the basis of the following criteria. The maximum possible score for each criterion is indicated in parentheses with the criterion. The Secretary awards up to 100 points for all of the criteria.

(a) *Effectively Achieving the Purposes of WEEA.* (20 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.209 and 20 U.S.C. 7235(a), the Secretary reviews each application to determine how well the project will effectively achieve the purposes of the WEEA Program.

Note: Applicants should consider the following statutory provisions in responding to this criterion. Under 20 U.S.C. 7232, the purpose of the WEEA program is: (1) to promote gender equity in education in the United States; (2) to provide financial assistance to enable educational agencies and institutions to meet the requirements of title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and (3) to promote equity in education for women and girls who suffer from multiple forms of discrimination based on sex, race, ethnic origin, limited-English proficiency, disability, or age.

(b) *Addressing multiple discrimination.* (5 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.209 and 20 U.S.C. 7235(a)(2)(A), the Secretary reviews each application to determine the quality of the applicant's plan for addressing the needs of women and girls of color and women and girls with disabilities.

(c) *Need for project.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

(d) *Significance.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The national significance of the proposed project.

(2) The potential contribution of the proposed project to increased knowledge or understanding of educational problems, issues, or effective strategies.

(3) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(4) The importance or magnitude of the results or outcomes likely to be attained by the proposed project, especially improvements in teaching and student achievement.

(e) *Quality of the project design.* (20 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

(3) The quality of the proposed demonstration design and procedures for documenting project activities and results.

(4) The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

(5) The quality of methodology to be employed in the proposed project.

(f) *Quality of Project Personnel.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator.

(2) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(3) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of project consultants or subcontractors.

(g) *Adequacy of resources.* (5 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the adequacy of resources for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.

(2) The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

(h) *Quality of the management plan.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the management

plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, time lines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(2) The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project.

(3) How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others, as appropriate.

(i) *Quality of the project evaluation.* (10 points)

Under 34 CFR 75.210, the Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

(2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes

of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Note: Applicants should consider the following statutory provision in responding to this criterion. Under 20 U.S.C. 7234(1), applicants for WEEA funds are required to set forth policies and procedures that will ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the grant activities, including an evaluation of the practices, policies, and materials used by the applicant and an evaluation or estimate of the continued significance of the work of the project following completion of the award period.

Priority for Research and Development Grants: Under 34 CFR 75.105 (b) and (c), the Secretary gives a competitive preference to applications that meet the following priority found in 20 U.S.C. 7235(b) by awarding bonus points depending on the extent to which the applicant meets the priority:

Projects submitted by applicants that have not received assistance under the WEEA Program (5 points).

For Applications or Information Contact: Beth Baggett, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Portals Room 4500, Washington, D.C. 20202-6140. Telephone (202) 260-2502. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternate format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed in the preceding paragraph.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternate format, also, by contacting that person. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternate format the standard forms included in the application package.

Note: The official application notice for a discretionary grant competition is the notice published in the **Federal Register**.

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Dated: October 3, 1997.

Gerald N. Tirozzi,

Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.

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