

## Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) program

# Frequently Asked Questions

### For the Fiscal Year 2018 Competition and Grant Awards



#### **Purpose of this Guidance**

The purpose of this guidance is to provide information about the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) program. This guidance addresses applicant or grantee implementation of various provisions in 20 U.S.C. §§1021—1022h of the TQP program, and other requirements governing the fiscal year (FY) 2018 TQP program competition announced in the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) on May 11, 2018.

This guidance does not impose any requirements beyond those included in the language of 20 U.S.C. §§1021—1022h, the NIA, and any other applicable provisions established in rules for this competition.

*The Department will provide additional or updated program guidance, as necessary, on its TQP program web site, <http://innovation.ed.gov/what-we-do/teacher-quality/teacher-quality-partnership/>. If you have further questions that are not answered here or are interested in commenting on this guidance, please email [TQPartnership@ed.gov](mailto:TQPartnership@ed.gov).*

**U.S. Department of Education  
Washington, D.C. 20202**

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## Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Frequently Asked Questions

### Application Questions

#### 1. How will applications be selected for funding?

Three independent peer reviewers (i.e. non-Federal employees) will review and score the applications. Those applications that include all required information will be scored against the program's selection criteria and, if they choose to address it, the competitive preference priorities announced in the FY 2018 NIA published in the Federal Register on May 11, 2018. Because the Department hopes to fund projects of sufficient quality that address both reform of teacher preparation programs at the pre-baccalaureate or 5<sup>th</sup> year levels (Absolute Priority 1) and teaching residency programs (Absolute Priority 2), applications will be reviewed by the absolute priority they address and then ranked within that absolute priority by their total score.

#### 2. When should applicants anticipate that grant awards will be made?

The Department expects TQP grant awards will be made on or before September 30, 2018.

### Eligibility Questions

#### 1. May an eligible partnership apply under Absolute Priority 2 to expand or enhance an existing teaching residency program that an Institution of Higher Education (IHE) partner is already implementing?

Yes, as long as the existing IHE's teaching residency program conforms to the requirements in HEA section 202(e) and the definition of "teaching residency program" in HEA section 200(22). If its current teaching residency program does not meet the definition for a teaching residency program in HEA section 200(22), the newly proposed TQP project must meet this definition in order to receive TQP funds. Please note the TQP program has a supplement not supplant requirement. Therefore, TQP funds may be used to expand or enhance capacity of existing teaching residency programs but may not be used to pay for currently provided services.

#### 2. How might an eligible partnership document that it has a college, school, or department of arts and sciences as a partner?

Required partners of a TQP project must include an IHE that meets the definition of a "partner institution" and its college, school, or department of arts and sciences.

An eligible partnership can demonstrate that an IHE's (partner institution's) college, school, or department of arts and sciences (school of arts and science) is a partner in a variety of ways:

- written confirmation from the dean or other officials of the school of arts and sciences that it is a partner.
- documentation of active representation in the eligible partnership of one or more faculty members from that school of arts and sciences, along with confirmation from the faculty member(s) that (1) the faculty member(s) speak(s) for the school of arts and science, and (2) as the project proceeds, the faculty member(s) will work in close consultation with the school's chair and academic dean to ensure that teaching residents benefit from any needed subject-matter content.

In addition, if an IHE does not have a school of arts and sciences, the eligible partnership may include as an additional partner an IHE that does—provided that the eligible partnership application and project management plan clarify how the multiple IHEs, teacher preparation program(s), and school of arts and sciences will work together to promote the success of the TQP project.

### **3. May two-year IHEs be partners in this competition?**

Yes. Two-year IHEs may be partner institutions as long as (1) they have a formal articulation agreement for a dual program with a four-year IHE participating in the eligible partnership and (2) that a four-year IHE has a teacher preparation program that meets the requirements in the definition of “partner institution.” See HEA section 200(17)(A) and (B).

### **4. How does an eligible applicant determine that it has at least 20 percent of, or at least 10,000, children from low-income families?**

HEA section 200(2) defines the phrase “children from low-income families” to have the meaning described in section 1124(c)(1)(A) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended. That ESEA provision requires use of the most recent poverty data issued by the US Census Bureau. These data may be found in the following links:

- <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saipe.html>
- <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/reapsrsa/eligibility.html>
- <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/reaprlisp/eligibility.html>

If the Census Bureau data do not include poverty data for a particular LEA, such as a charter school with LEA status, a newly created LEA, and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)-funded schools, the eligible partnership should include in its application documentary support for a conclusion that the level of its students’ family poverty as measured by data it does have, such as eligibility for free or subsidized lunches, is comparable to 20 percent of, or at least 10,000, children from low income families as presented in the most recent Census Bureau data. The Department will then review these submissions on a case-by-case basis.

### **5. Are all schools within the high-need LEA eligible to receive project services?**

Not necessarily. Teaching residency program participants must teach in a high-need school of a high-need LEA in order to meet their service requirement.

HEA section 202(e)(2)(C) states that projects focused on reforming teacher preparation programs at the pre-baccalaureate or 5<sup>th</sup> year levels must provide clinical experiences in a high-need school that is part of an eligible partnership, and the Department encourages teachers who complete the program to become teachers of record in a high-need school.

### **6. How does an eligible applicant determine that it has a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach, or a high teacher turnover rate or a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensure?**

The Department is not able to provide a definitive threshold of what constitutes a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach, or a high teacher turnover rate or a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensure. Therefore, eligible applicants should include in their application documentation to support the conclusion that any LEA they would identify as a high-need LEA has one of these teacher-need characteristics. The Department will then review these submissions on a case-by-case basis.

**7. Is a charter school eligible to be a member of an eligible partnership?**

A charter school may be eligible in one of two ways. First, a charter school is eligible as a required member of the eligible partnership under HEA section 200(6)(A) if it: (1) Is considered an LEA by the State in which it is located and (2) meets the definition of a high-need LEA in HEA section 200(10). Second, a charter school may be an optional member of the eligible partnership under HEA section 200(6)(B)(x), provided it meets the definition of a high-need school in HEA section 200(11).

**8. May an entity be a partner in more than one application?**

Yes. An entity may be a partner and participate in more than one TQP grant. However, because an eligible partnership may not receive a TQP grant more than once in a five-year period (see HEA section 203(a)(2)), the partnership as a whole may only submit one TQP application and is ineligible to apply if it received an award in the 2014 or 2016 TQP competition.

Entities that were members of partnerships that received awards in the 2014 or 2016 TQP competition are eligible to apply in this competition, so long as they apply as members of a different partnership than the one that received an award in 2014 or 2016. Entities that apply as members of a different partnership may not propose activities or services that are duplicative or redundant with their other TQP grant application.

**9. May 2014 and 2016 TQP eligible partnership grantees apply in this competition?**

No. HEA section 203(a)(2) prohibits an existing *eligible partnership* from receiving more than one TQP award during a five-year period. However, any *entity* within a currently funded TQP grant may be part of a new eligible partnership with different eligible partners and may apply with such partners for a new TQP grant.

Entities that apply as members of a different partnership may not propose activities or services that are duplicative or redundant with their existing TQP partnership grant.

## **Absolute Priorities Questions**

**1. May eligible partnerships submit two applications, one for each absolute priority?**

Yes. However, in doing so, applicants must realize that HEA section 203(a)(2) prevents an eligible partnership from receiving more than one TQP award during a five-year period. Eligible partnerships that submit two applications that are reviewed by the peer reviewers and both scored within funding range will have only their highest-scoring application selected for funding.

**2. Under Absolute Priority 1 may grantees use TQP funds to pay student stipends or tuition reduction to prospective teachers? May TQP funds pay the costs of their certification or State testing?**

No. The HEA does not authorize the use of TQP funds for tuition or other student support costs such as fees for certification or State testing.

**3. Absolute Priority 1 requires that applicants implement reforms in each teacher preparation program assisted with TQP funds. Does that mean that the eligible partnership must reform all of the partner IHE's teacher preparation programs inclusive of all subjects and grade levels, including those not housed in its college, school, or department of education?**

No. In addressing Absolute Priority 1, applicants may propose use of TQP funds to implement TQP-funded reforms and other required activities either within all teacher preparation programs that the partner IHE administers or within one or more particular teacher preparation programs that need

particular assistance to implement the TQP-funded reforms and other required activities. Applicants will need to identify in their applications the teacher preparation program(s) that TQP funds would reform . See HEA section 202(d)(1).

## Competitive Preference Priorities Questions

### 1. Should I address the CPPs in the application narrative, or in some other part of the application?

CPPs that applicants intend to address should be clearly stated in the application Abstract and the location of the response should be included in the Table of Contents of the application. An applicant's response to the CPP should be a separate response within the application narrative and labeled accordingly. Applicants that do not explicitly state what priorities they are addressing may not receive additional points.

### 2. How does an applicant, in addressing CPP 1, demonstrate that its proposed strategy for professional development strategies for current STEM educators or retraining strategies for current educators seeking to transition from other subjects to STEM fields, is evidence-based?

Applicants must demonstrate, in order to meet CPP 1, that their proposed professional development or retraining strategies are "Evidence-Based," as defined in 34 CFR §77.1 (and in the NIA). Applicants may do so by:

- Submitting a citation of a study that is (1) focused on a STEM-focused professional development or retraining strategies, (2) relevant to the proposed project, and meets at least the design standards set forth in the "Promising Evidence" definition in 34 CFR §77.1 (and in the NIA).
- Submitting a "Logic Model" (as defined in 34 CFR §77.1 and in the NIA) that (1) identifies the STEM professional development or retraining strategy of the project and (2) is informed by research or evaluation findings that suggest the project component is likely to improve "Relevant Outcomes" as defined in 34 CFR §77.1 and in the NIA.

Applicants are encouraged to visit the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), which compiles scientific evidence on education programs, products, practices, and policies. The website is located here: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW>.

## Programmatic Questions

### 1. May individuals who are already certified to teach in one area participate in the teaching residency program as a way of becoming certified in another area?

No. The definition of a "teaching residency program" in HEA section 200(22) provides that the program be for "prospective teachers." The intent of the TQP program is to bring new teachers into classrooms.

### 2. What is a teaching resident's service obligation, and who is responsible for tracking whether, upon completion of their teaching residencies, residents have met it?

In order to receive the one-year living stipend or salary that eligible partnerships must make available to them, residents must submit an application that includes an agreement to work, immediately upon successful completion of the residency, as a full-time teacher for not less than three years in a high-need school in a partner high-need LEA. The agreement also must specify that a resident who does not fulfill this service obligation must repay these funds to the eligible partnership. See generally HEA section 202(e)(2)(C)(iii) and (iv).

Eligible partnerships are responsible for tracking residents' employment after completing the teaching residency program based on the terms of the repayment agreement, and for requiring residents who do not fulfill their service obligation to repay the living stipend or salary that they received. They must use recovered funds for additional activities consistent with the purposes of the teaching residency program.

**3. In teaching residency projects, may payment of the participants' "one-year living stipend or salary" be made with either TQP grant funds or with non-Federal match funds?**

Yes. The living wage stipend may be paid with TQP funds, non-Federal match funds, or a combination of the two.

The HEA does not define the term "living stipend or salary." Therefore, the applicant should describe in the budget and budget narrative (and elsewhere in the application, as relevant) an appropriate amount that it proposes to provide as a living stipend to its teaching residents. This living stipend may be granted for a maximum of one year (12 months).

**4. May an applicant seek TQP funding to prepare multiple cohorts of teachers in a teaching residency program?**

Yes. Please note, if an applicant proposes to recruit and prepare candidates during Project Years 4 or 5 of their grant performance period, the Department will expect it to describe in the application how it will provide them with the required minimum two-year induction support, professional development, and networking opportunities (see HEA section 202(e)(2)(A)(vii)) during and after the end of the five-year grant performance period.

**5. What is the required length of the teaching residency program?**

The teaching residency program must be designed so that participants may complete it within 18 months (i.e., the program must be designed so that within an 18-month period, residents may receive the necessary mentoring and instruction and earn a Master's degree and initial teacher certification or licensure). TQP program funds may only be used to pay for residents' stipends or salaries for a one-year (12-month) period of that program. See the definition of teaching residency program in HEA section 200(22).

**6. How many classroom hours must teaching residents spend working in the classroom?**

The eligible partnership determines the number of required classroom hours; the HEA does not specify a specific number of hours per day/week that a resident must spend in the classroom. During the teaching residency, residents must teach alongside a mentor teacher (who is the teacher-of-record) for a full academic year, and that mentor teacher must have been selected based on measures of effectiveness addressed in HEA section 202(e)(2)(A)(iv).

**7. May teacher mentors under the TQP program receive stipends?**

Yes. TQP funds may be used to provide reasonable and necessary stipends or other supplemental compensation to teachers who have taken on additional responsibilities related to mentoring the teaching residents. Supplemental compensation may include bonuses, salary differentials, incentives, or performance pay, based on the mentor teacher's additional responsibilities.

**8. May TQP funds be used to secure replacement teachers for times when mentor teachers are working on TQP responsibilities outside their classrooms?**

Yes. TQP funds may be used to cover the costs of replacement teachers as long as the LEA, under its established policies, would not pay for these costs in the absence of the TQP project (which therefore would constitute impermissible supplanting of other Federal, State, or local funds).

**9. Is Early Childhood Education (ECE) a required component of either Absolute Priority 1 or 2 for TQP projects?**

No. However, applicants that propose to prepare teachers to teach early childhood education programs must focus their activities on providing prospective teachers with the knowledge and skills they need in early childhood education. See, e.g. HEA section 202(b)(6)(E), (b)(6)(K), (b)(7)(D); and HEA section 202(d)(1)(A), (d)(1)(B)(ii)(IV), and (d)(2)-(d)(4).

**10. What is a “mid-career professional”?**

A mid-career professional is someone in a profession other than teaching who has moved past entry-level but is not nearing the end of his or her career. A mid-career professional entering the teaching profession can bring specialized content knowledge, often in hard-to-staff subjects, into schools for the benefit of students. TQP applicants might consider factors such as the following when designing a teacher preparation program that includes mid-career professionals:

- Skills, certifications, and other professional qualifications
- Relevance of the professional subject area expertise to the teaching need
- Years in the profession
- Supervisory status

## **Match and Budget Questions**

**Note:** HEA section 203(c)(1) requires each eligible partnership that receives a TQP grant to provide a 100 percent non-Federal match, which may be provided in cash or in kind. As part of their TQP applications, eligible applicants must identify the match funds on the ED 524 non-Federal budget form and include a budget narrative that provides the source and description of the matching funds (see question 1 in this section for more information).

Funds designated as matching must be both an allowable use of TQP funds and supplement, not supplant funds that would have otherwise been used to carry out the activities of the grant (see question 4 in this section for more information).

**1. What is the amount of the non-Federal match requirement, and how do applicants identify the match in their applications?**

The TQP non-Federal match amount is 100 percent of the amount of TQP grant funds—a dollar for dollar match. It is calculated based on the annual amount of the TQP award (e.g., if the Year 1 award request is \$1,000,000, the applicant must match \$1,000,000 with non-Federal funds). Applicants must provide a proposed budget on form ED 524 Section B and a detailed budget narrative to show how the match would be met based on the annual award amount requested.

Matching funds are governed by, and valued on the basis of, provisions in 2 CFR §200.306 from 2 CFR part 200, the *Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, And Audit Requirements For Federal Awards* (Uniform Guidance). This regulation includes the requirement that funds used to meet matching requirements be allowable if paid for with TQP funds. See 2 CFR §200.306(b)(4).

**2. Should applicants submit a multi-year budget or just a Year 1 budget?**

Applicants should submit a multi-year budget. TQP grants are awarded for a period of five years (i.e. 60 months) per HEA section 203(a)(1). Applicants must provide a proposed budget using form ED 524 and a detailed budget justification or narrative for ALL budget years of the proposed project. Applicants should also use the ED 524 form to describe nonfederal funds being used to meet the matching requirement.

**3. What if an applicant cannot meet the non-Federal match requirement?**

HEA section 203(c)(2) allows for the Secretary to waive all or part of the matching requirement described in HEA section 203(c)(1). An applicant may request a waiver of all or part of the non-Federal match requirement when it submits its application. If an applicant requests such a waiver, it must provide a detailed justification to support why a waiver in whole or in part is needed and demonstrate that all possible efforts were made to identify appropriate matching funds.

**4. What is the “supplement, not supplant” requirement for the TQP program, and what does it mean for budgeting costs?**

The supplement, not supplant requirement is in HEA section 202(k). It provides that grantees must not use TQP funds to pay for activities that are already being carried out, or that must be carried out, by the grantee or its partners with Federal, State, or local funds. “Local” funds include private IHE and other privately contributed funds. In addition, matching contributions must likewise supplement non-TQP funds that would be provided in the absence of the TQP grant.

**5. What is the limitation on administrative expenses for the grant?**

Per HEA section 203(d), an eligible partnership that receives a grant may use not more than two percent of the funds provided to administer the grant. Please see Administrative Cost Cap slide deck on the TQP webpage for more information on this topic.

**6. How does an eligible partnership determine the amount of indirect costs that it may charge to TQP funds?**

Under 34 CFR §75.563 and §76.563(c), the indirect cost rate that an eligible applicant may use to charge indirect costs to TQP funds may be no more than eight percent (8 percent). In addition, because the TQP eligible applicant is a group applicant (see 34 §§CFR 75.127 – 75.129), under 34 CFR §75.564(e), the eligible partnership must use a restricted indirect cost rate (RICR) that is no greater than the amount of the lead applicant’s RICR if that rate is less than eight percent. Under 34 CFR §75.128(b), the members of the eligible partnership need to enter into an agreement that details the responsibilities of each partner, and this agreement should, among other things, identify how indirect costs will be apportioned among members of the eligible partnership. For more information on indirect costs, see 34 CFR §§75.560-75.561 and §§75.563-75.564.

**7. How may a lead applicant that does not have a restricted ICR (RICR) obtain one?**

If a lead applicant that does not have an approved RICR would like to obtain one, please email the Department’s Indirect Cost Rate Group at [IndirectCostGroup@ed.gov](mailto:IndirectCostGroup@ed.gov) for instructions. The Department of Education will provide direct support if it is the cognizant Federal agency. The cognizant Federal agency is the Federal agency that provides the most direct Federal funding to the lead applicant.

**8. May unrecovered indirect cost funds be used to meet the TQP non-Federal match requirement?**

No. As noted above, federal cost principles provide that matching funds are allowable only if they would be allowable if paid for with TQP funds. Since indirect costs charged to TQP funds may not exceed the amount using a restricted indirect cost that is the lesser of 8 percent or the negotiated restricted indirect cost rate, indirect costs that exceed this amount may not be used as a non-federal match.

## **Evaluation Questions**

**1. What measures should be included in the applicant’s evaluation plan?**

Applicants should include both the TQP Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) measures found in the FY 2018 NIA and measures that are unique to the applicant’s project as part of

their evaluation plan. Applicants will report on all these measures annually as part of the annual performance report. Several of the TQP GPRA measures do not yield results in Year 1. An explanation of how to report on these measures and possible options to reduce the grantee reporting burden will be provided to successful applicants shortly after awards have been made.

**2. In evaluating TQP projects, must eligible partnerships use an outside evaluator?**

No. Those eligible applicants that wish to use an outside evaluator may also wish to consider selecting the evaluator and identifying it in the application using procedures in 34 CFR §75.135, which allows a contract for data collection, data analysis, evaluation services, or essential services to use the informal, small-purchase procurement procedures in the Uniform Guidance. See 2 CFR §200.320(b). Whether or not the eligible partnership uses an outside evaluator, the Department strongly recommends that it provide a detailed list of responsibilities for the evaluator in its application.