# **Frequently Asked Questions**

## Eligibility and General Application Questions

1. **Can a private, not- for -profit school, apply for the grant?**

Yes, a private, not-for-profit school can apply for the grant.

1. **If awarded a grant, may a grantee count on receiving funding for the full period of three years?**

The actual level of program funding, if any, depends on final Congressional action each fiscal year and whether substantial progress has been made toward meeting the project objectives and program performance measures.

1. **Can an entity submit more than one application?**

Yes, an entity is allowed to submit multiple applications, as long as each application is for a different project. Each application will be reviewed and scored for quality. The proposed projects should not refer to services or activities that would be provided by a project described in another application.

1. **What issues might prevent applications from being considered for funding?**

The following examples are problems with grant applications that prevent an application from being considered for funding: exceeding 36 months budget; budget exceeding maximum amount; project narrative not included in application; incorrectly formatted documents; paper submission submitted without prior approval; documents that are password-protected; and late submission.

1. **Can a school district with Title VI formula grant funds be a recipient of the NAL@ED program as well?**

Yes, a Title VI grantee can also be a recipient of the NAL@ED program grant. In fact, applicants can be awarded five points if a project includes an assurance that after the project ends, the applicant will use all or part of the Title VI grant to sustain the goal of this project. The requirements to receive this competitive preference are identified in FAQ question # 17, as well as on the Competitive Preference Priority One attachment.

1. **Are there other Federal grant programs that provide funding for Native American language programs?**

Yes. At the Department of Education, the following grant programs also provide grant funding for Native American Language programs: the Native American and Alaska Native Children in School Program (NAM) program, under the Office of English Language Acquisition, can be used to support the teaching, learning and studying of Native American languages for English learners; and the Indian Education Formula Grants to LEAs supplement the regular school academic program through cultural enrichment, and allowable activities include Native American language instruction. At HHS, the Administration for Native American (ANA) funding provides opportunities to assess, plan, develop and implement projects to ensure the survival and continuing vitality of Native languages; the Esther Martinez Immersion is a Special Initiative under the Native Language Preservation and Maintenance grant competition.

1. **If an eligible entity currently has a grant from ED under the Native American and Alaska Native Children in School Program (NAM) program, or an HHS grant, can it apply for this grant as well, to expand its existing language program?**

An entity with a NAM grant, or any other similar federal grant, may apply for the NAL@ED program grant also. However, the grantee must comply with all of the program requirements of each grant, and must use the NAL@ED program funds for activities that are in addition to and not duplicative of the existing program. For example, if an entity currently receives a NAM grant for a project that provides Native American language instruction in grades K-2 to English learners (ELs), it could apply to the NAL@ED program to add more students to the existing program, e.g., students who are tribal members but are not ELs, or could expand the project into additional grades, but it could not use the NAL@ED program funds for the existing number of students in the same grades. The grantee would also need to account for the grant funds separately in order to fulfill the requirements for internal controls and reporting for each Federal program.

1. **Will an applicant be at an advantage or disadvantage if it receives funding currently under another federal grant program for this purpose?**

There is no priority for either an applicant that has no other funding source for Native American language programs, or an applicant with existing grants. However, note that the selection criterion “Adequacy of Resources” includes “the extent to which the applicant or a partner has experience in operating a Native language program,” as well as “the potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends.

1. **If a private nonprofit organization applies for and receives a grant, will it be subject to other Federal legal requirements, such as civil rights requirements, in addition to the NAL@ED program grant requirements?**

Yes. Every applicant for any ED grant must sign an assurance that it will comply with the civil rights laws, specifically Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as others. In addition, the government-wide Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR Part 200 apply to recipients of ED funds.

## Priorities

1. **What are the differences between the absolute priorities?**

There are two absolute priorities for the program. Absolute priority one is for projects that will take place in one or more schools of a State-funded local education agency, including a public charter school that is a local educational agency under State law, and absolute priority two is for projects that will take place in one or more schools funded by other entities, i.e., the Bureau of Indian Education, an Indian tribe, a Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c), an Alaska Native Regional Corporation (as described in section 3(g) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C.1602(g))) or a private, tribal, or Alaska Native nonprofit organization. Applicants must meet absolute priority one, absolute priority two, or both. Thus, assuming there are sufficient quality applications under both priorities, the Department will fund one or more grants from each category.

1. **What is competitive preference priority one (sustainability and implementation through Title VI funds)?**

Five points are awarded to an application for a project in which either the lead applicant or a partner receives or is eligible to receive a Title VI Formula grant, and will use that formula grant to help sustain the project after the conclusion of this grant period. To meet this priority, a project must include an assurance that it will use the Title VI grant to sustain the goal of this project. The assurance must indicate the fiscal year in which the entity will begin using the Title VI formula grant funds to help support this project; what percentage of the Title VI grant will be used for this; and that parent committee input and approval will be obtained, as necessary, in order to change from the current use of funds to the Native language activities. The form for this assurance (titled “Competitive Preference Priority One attachment”), must be uploaded as an attachment in Part 6 of the application. Applicants should be aware of the formatting requirements of attachments. See Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants in the application.

1. **What is competitive preference priority two?**

Five points are awarded to projects that are submitted by an Indian tribe, Indian organization, or TCU that is eligible to participate in the NAL@ED program or a consortium applicant that contains an Indian tribe, Indian organization or Indian TCU. The tribal entity does not need to be the lead applicant in order for the applicant to receive the priority points, as long as a tribal entity is part of the consortium.

1. **When is a consortium agreement needed?**

A consortium application of eligible entities would need to submit a consortium agreement that meets the requirements of 34 CFR 75.127 through 75.129. However, for this grant program, there is no requirement of a partnership in order to receive a grant; a solo applicant may apply.

## Part 6: Other Attachments

1. **What additional document is required for all applicants?**

All applicants must complete the document, Applicant Information for NAL@ED program. The document provides information on the Native language for instruction, information about the school where the project is taking place, participant information and program description. The document also contains program assurancesto be signed by the authorized representative of the application.The document will be uploaded as an attachment in Part 6 of the application. See Part 6 Instructions. Applicants should be aware of the formatting requirements of attachments. See Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants in this application.

1. **Who signs the Applicant Information for NAL@ED program attachment?**

The signer of the document should be the applicant for the project, not a school official unless the school is the applicant.

1. **What are the program assurances on the Application Information for NAL@ED program attachment?**

The applicant assures all of the following:

(a) the school in which the project will be located is engaged in meeting State or tribally designated long-term goals for students, as may be required by applicable Federal, State, or tribal law;

(b) the school provides assessments of students using the Native American or Alaska Native language of instruction, where possible;

(c) the qualifications of all instructional and leadership personnel at such school is sufficient to deliver high-quality education through the Native American or Alaska Native language used in the school; and

(d) the school will collect and report to the public data relative to student achievement and, if appropriate, rates of high school graduation, career readiness, and enrollment in postsecondary education or workforce development programs, of students who are enrolled in the school’s programs.

These assurances are signed by the authorized representative of the applicant.

1. **Does the first assurance on the Application Information for NAL@ED program attachment refer to the new long-term goals that States must establish under the ESSA amendments to the ESEA, and if so, how can I assure that, if my State has not yet established goals?**

For projects that will take place in State-funded public schools, this assurance applies to any goals currently set by the State, and also to the long-term goals that States are required under Title I of the ESEA, as amended by the ESSA, to establish in their State plans that must be submitted to ED. We understand that States may not yet have set these Title I goals, and therefore we interpret this assurance as being in effect for any current as well as future goals to which the school will be held accountable during the period of the grant. Similarly, tribal school applicants will assure that they will strive to meet any long-term goals that apply to them now or in the future during the grant period.

1. **In the second assurance on the Application Information for NAL@ED program attachment, does this mean that the school currently provides assessments in the Native American language, or will do so after receiving a grant?**

This assurance relates to both the current situation and the plan for after a NAL@ED grant is received. Note that the assurance includes the phrase “where possible”; we understand that a school may not have the resources to be currently providing content assessments (e.g., in math, reading/language arts, science) in the Native American language, and the applicant may plan to do so using the NAL@ED grant funds.

1. **In the third assurance on the Application Information for NAL@ED program attachment, does this mean that teachers must be certified to teach the Native American language?**

This depends on applicable State, local, or tribal law. Applicants should work with appropriate officials to ascertain what qualifications are needed for the teaching and leadership positions planned in the proposed project.

1. **Under what circumstances does an applicant need to include the Tribal Certification?**

If an applicant is an LEA (including a public charter school that is an LEA), a school operated by the Bureau of Indian Education, or a nontribal for-profit or nonprofit organization, it must submit the Tribal Certification Attachment in Part 6 of the application. Applicants should be aware of the formatting requirements of attachments. See the section: Grants.gov Submission Procedures and Tips for Applicants in the application.

1. **Which type of entity must sign the Tribal Certification?**

The Tribal Certification Attachment must be signed by either an Indian tribe or tribal organization, a Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c)), an Alaska Native Regional Corporation or an Alaska Native nonprofit organization, or a Native Hawaiian organization. The certification must be from the relevant entity on whose land the school or program is located, or that is an entity served by the school, or whose members (as defined by that entity) are served by the school.

1. **What does the tribal entity certify?**

The entity signing the certification is assuring that the school or applicant organization has the capacity to provide education primarily through a Native American or an Alaska Native language; and there are sufficient speakers of the target language at the school or available to be hired by the school or applicant organization.

1. **Who must upload an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement?**

If the budget includes indirect costs, the applicant must attach a copy of its current Indirect Cost Rate (ICR) Agreement in Part 6: Other Attachments. See **Important Information Regarding Indirect Costs** in Part 5.

1. **What type of documentation is needed for an applicant that is an Indian Organization?**

A lead applicant that is an Indian organization must provide adequate documentation to demonstrate that the organization meets each element of the definition of Indian organization (see the Definitions section of this application). Such applicants must include a list of current board members demonstrating that a majority are Indian. Acceptable documentation to demonstrate that the organization meets all elements of the definition might also include the charter, bylaws, articles of incorporation, and mission statement.

##  Scope of NAL@ED Program Projects

1. **How much of the project should focus on instruction and how much should focus on professional development?**

Projects are required to include both Native American or Alaska Native language education and development, as well as provide professional development for teachers and, as appropriate, staff and administrators, to strengthen the overall language proficiency and academic goals of the school. The proportion of funds devoted for each activity is dependent on the particular project design.

1. **Must all projects be based on an immersion model of Native language instruction?**

No. Applicants have flexibility in choosing the model of instruction they believe will best suit the needs of the students and the participating school. Some applicants may wish to use a dual language model that includes some instruction in English, and some in the Native language. Factors to consider when choosing a model include the number or percentage of English learners in the school, and the number and percentage of students who are fluent speakers of the Native language. Note that under the selection criterion Quality of Project Services, applicants receive up to 3 points for the extent to which the percentage of the school day that instruction will be provided in the Native language is ambitious and is reasonable for the grade level and population served.

1. **Can applications focus on developing content assessments in the Native language?**

Yes, applicants can plan to use funds to develop assessments in the Native language (e.g. a math, science, or reading/language arts assessment). However, note that the program requires instruction in or through the Native language, and professional development, as well. All proposed uses of funds should be detailed in the budget in Part 5: Budget Narrative.

1. **Must projects serve an entire school, or is it permissible to focus on only one grade?**

Applicants have flexibility in the scope of their projects. Projects could serve an entire school; could add to an existing Native language program, e.g., one that serves grades K-2 currently, and could add grade 3; or could establish a new Native language program where one has never existed, and could focus on one or more grades. In any model chosen, however, the project must adhere to the NAL@ED program requirements as stated in the assurances in the Applicant Information for NAL@ED program attachment (Part 6).

1. **Are projects required to have pre- and post-assessments of Native language proficiency?**

Yes, applicants must assess the Native language proficiency of the students who participate in the project with pre- and post- assessments. These pre- and post- assessments are needed for one of the GPRA indicators for this program. On the Applicant Information for NAL@ED program attachment, applicants will indicate if the assessment is available or if project funds will be used to create assessments. In addition, under the selection criterion Quality of the Project Evaluation, applicants earn up to 8 points for the extent to which each proposed performance target is ambitious yet achievable compared to the baseline for each performance measure. See information below under Annual Performance Reporting FAQs.

1. **What types of assessments can be used for the pre- and post-assessments of language proficiency?**

The pre- and post- assessment of the participating students’ proficiency in the Native language can take the form of a written assessment, an oral language assessment, or other type of assessment. The assessment should measure the knowledge, skills, and/or abilities the applicant believes are important to measure language proficiency. If a program does not have pre- and post- assessments in place currently, the program should develop an appropriate language proficiency assessment instrument.

1. **Do I have to include goals, objectives, and outcomes in my application?**

 Reviewers will score applicants on the extent to which any goals, objectives, and outcomes are clearly specified and measurable, in the selection criterion Quality of Project Design. Applicants that wish to receive full points should address this criterion by including in their project narrative information about those goals, objectives, and outcomes. See also the FAQs below regarding targets and baseline data for the GPRA measures under the Annual Performance Reporting section.

1. **Should projects plan for long-term data collection in their application?**

Yes. The Department may offer NAL@ED program grantees the option of extending their NAL@ED-related data collection and evaluation activities beyond the 36-month project period, and could choose to provide additional funding, for the purposes of data collection, analysis, and reporting, subject to sufficient Congressional appropriations.  This would enable grantees to conduct long-term tracking of the students in the project in order to provide better evidence of success of the program. The Department has discretion in deciding which, if any, NAL@ED projects will receive additional time and funding for the purposes of data collection, analysis, and reporting. Preparing for this ensures that your research project will collect the highest quality data. This long-term historical data will measure student academic progress over time (e.g. comparing the number of participants to all other students in the school or LEA in terms of attendance, graduation rate, proficiency against State academic standards, etc.), as well as other outcomes, and will provide evidence of the success of the program. Although this flexibility is not guaranteed and is contingent on available funding in subsequent fiscal years, we encourage all applicants to plan for this possibility.

1. **How should I address long-term data collection in my application?**

Applicants should address the long-term collection in the application narrative under the selection criteria Quality of Project Design and Quality of Project Evaluation. The applicant should include a plan for long –term data collection as well as provide its plan to collect valid and meaningful performance data during the project period. In addition, applicants should include in their budgets any costs associated with planning for a long-term data collection. For more information, see Part 5: Budget Narrative, “Budgeting for Data Collection.”

1. **Can our project serve non-Native American students along with Native American students?**

Yes, although the focus of the project (e.g. a majority of students served) should be American Indian/Alaska Native students, in keeping with the overall goals of the program.

1. **Must the teachers in the project be Native American themselves?**

There is a statutory hiring preference for members of Federally-recognized tribes; see **ISDEAA Hiring Preference Requirements,** in Program Background Information above.

1. **Under selection criteria: quality of project personnel, who should be listed?**

In determining project personnel, all personnel carrying out the proposed project including contractors and subcontractors should be listed under the “key personnel” in the sub-criterion.

## Program Costs

1. **What costs are permitted under these grants?**

Applicants are responsible for ensuring that the costs stipulated in their proposed budget are reasonable and necessary for addressing the proposed project effectively. The application must adequately describe the rationale for the proposed activities and their costs. In other words, an activity and its cost might be reasonable, allowable, and allocable in one project, but not necessarily in another. Applicants should review carefully the cost principles, particularly the guidance concerning “reasonable,” “allocable,” and “necessary” costs. The uniform administrative requirements and cost principles are published in 2 CFR part 200, which is available on the U.S. Government Printing Office website at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=6214841a79953f26c5c230d72d6b70a1&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl>.

1. **Under what circumstances could NAL@ED program grant funds be used to support a preschool Native language program?**

NAL@ED program funds may be used to support preschool education in schools that also provide elementary or secondary education beyond preschool. However, for all proposed projects, grant funds must be used for at least one or more grades higher than preschool in addition to the preschool level. (e.g., a project serving ages 4-8).

1. **Can NAL@ED program grant funds be used to support programs in higher education, e.g., training Native language teachers?**

No. The statute limits the use of these funds to elementary and secondary schools. However, an institution of higher education can be a partner in a project; for example, a TCU or other IHE could provide professional development to teachers and administrators in the elementary or secondary school.

1. **My Indirect Cost Rate Agreement is scheduled to expire shortly after my award is made. What should we do?**

Applicants that include indirect costs in their budget need to be aware of when their Indirect Cost Rate Agreement is due to expire. If the current rate expires prior to the start of the first grant year, or shortly thereafter, ED is required to attach special conditions to the grant, under which the grantee has the option of not charging indirect costs, or using a temporary ED rate until the grantee obtains a new rate from its cognizant agency. See **Important Information Regarding Indirect Costs** in Part 5.

1. **Is there a cost sharing or matching requirement?**

This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

1. **What are some examples of reasonable planning costs for data collection and long-term data collection?**

In planning for data collections, some reasonable planning costs could include the development of pre- and post- assessment of Native language proficiency (or purchase of an existing assessment), costs of administering the assessments each year, and professional development relating to these assessments. In addition, for long-term data collections, costs could include data analysis, developing a contract for longitudinal collection of student data, or purchasing of data-tracking software.Annual Performance Reporting

1. **What are the reporting requirements for NAL@ED program grantees?**

All NAL@ED program grantees must submit an annual performance report (APR) that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information. The APR must include information on performance outcomes related to the GPRA as well as project-specific performance measures. The Department will consider this data in making annual continuation awards. At the end of the project period, grantees must submit a final performance report, including financial information, goal attainment, and program evaluation.

1. **What is GPRA?**

Under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), Federal departments and agencies must clearly describe the goals and objectives of programs, identify resources and actions needed to accomplish goals and objectives, develop a means of measuring progress made, and regularly report on achievement. One important source of program information on successes and lessons learned is the project evaluation conducted under individual grants.

1. **What are the GPRA measures for the FY2017 NAL@ED program Competition?**

The Department has developed the following GPRA performance measures for evaluating the overall effectiveness of the NAL@ED program:

* **Measure 1: The number and percentage of participating students who attain proficiency in a Native language as determined by each grantee through pre-and post-assessments of Native language proficiency.**
* **Measure 2: The number and percentage of participating students who make progress in learning a Native language, as determined by each grantee, through pre-and post-assessments of Native language proficiency.**
* **Measure 3: The number and percentage of participating students who show an improvement in academic outcomes, as measured by academic assessments or other indicators.**
* **Measure 4: The difference between the average daily attendance of participating students and the average daily attendance of all students in the comparison group (e.g. school, LEA, tribe or other).**
1. **Are we required to submit performance targets and baseline data for each GPRA measure?**

Yes. Applicants should include the performance targets and baseline data in their project narrative. Note that two of the selection criteria provide points based on this information. In the selection criterion Quality of the Project Evaluation, applicants earn up to 8 points for the extent to which each proposed performance target (as defined in this notice) is ambitious (as defined in this notice) yet achievable compared to the baseline for each performance measure. In addition, in the selection criterion Quality of the Project Design, points are given for the extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. Applicants may establish project-specific goals, objectives, and outcomes in addition to the specific GPRA measures, but the outcomes addressed in this portion of the project narrative should include the GPRA measures.

1. **How does an applicant set performance targets for the GPRA measures?**

The performance targets should be both annual, and there should be an overall target for the grant period (3 years). Targets may be expressed as percentages of all participating students. For example, for Measure 1 (progress in learning the Native language) an applicant might establish a performance target of 90% of participating students making annual progress towards proficiency in the language, with progress defined as a certain number of points of improvement on the Native language proficiency assessment, which will be administered at the start of the project year and again at the end of the year. The overall grant target for the end of three years might be 95% of students who made progress. For Measure 2, the applicant might establish a performance target that increases each year. If the applicant has already ascertained that there are currently no fluent speakers amongst the student body at the school, the baseline data for Measure 2 would be 0% at the start of the project. Since very few students would be expected to reach proficiency in the first year, the performance target for year 1 might be 2% of participating students gaining proficiency in the Native language; for the end of year 2 the target might be 10%, and for the end of year 3, 20%. These examples are illustrative only and are not grounded in research; applicants should use applicable research in setting their targets.

1. **What if we don’t have baseline data because we have not yet developed a pre- and post-assessment of Native language proficiency?**

In that situation, the applicant should explain in the project narrative (Quality of Project Evaluation) why there is no established baseline and explain how and when, during the project period, the applicant will establish a baseline for that performance measure. For example, if the applicant does not yet have a pre-and post- assessment tool for proficiency in the Native language in order to gather baseline data for Measure 1 at the time of application, it could propose that it will develop or acquire a Native language proficiency assessment within 30 days of funding, and apply the pre-assessment to the students within 60 days of funding. The cost of that development or acquisition should be included in the budget unless other funding will be used.

## Competition Application Review

1. **How are applications selected for funding?**

Peer reviewers will review all eligible applications for NAL@ED program grants that are submitted by the established deadline. Readers will review and score all eligible applications on the selection criteria set forth in this application.

1. **Is an applicant’s past performance a factor in the application review process?**

Yes. The Department will take into consideration the potential applicant’s past performance in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant’s use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Department may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

1. **How long does it take the Department of Education to complete the review process and when will funds be available?**

Most review processes take about four to six months from the deadline date through the issuance of the signed Grant Award Notification. The list of grantees will be published at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oese/oie/index.html>. The Department plans to issue grants prior to September 31, 2017.

## Grant Application Procedures

1. **Why is it helpful for a potential applicant to submit a Notice of Intent to Apply?**

A Notice of Intent to Apply from potential applicants informs the Department of the approximate number of applications the program may receive so that the grant review process can be more efficiently planned. We strongly encourage each potential applicant to notify us of the applicant’s intent to submit an application by emailing OESE.NAL.ED2017@ed.gov with the **subject line: Intent to Apply** and include in the content of the email the following information: (1) the applicant organization’s and address, and (2) absolute priority and/or any competitive preference priority the applicant is addressing in the application. Applicants that do not complete this form may still submit an application.

1. **Where does a potential applicant locate resources, information, on the NAL@ED program and the application support?**

Potential applicants may obtain an application package via the Internet or from the Education Publications Center (ED Pubs). To obtain a copy via the Internet, use the following address: www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/grantapps/index.html.

For guidance on ED's discretionary grant process and the laws and regulations that govern it, please refer to “Grant making at ED: Answers to Your Questions about the Discretionary Grants Process” at: http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/about/grantmaking/index.html

## Application Submission

1. **May applicants submit personnel resumes as an appendix to the application?**

Applicants should address qualifications of personnel in the narrative response to the Quality of Personnel criterion. Applicants are requested not to submit resumes, but instead provide position descriptions for key personnel, including current staff, as well as those it expects to recruit. In addition applicants may want to describe relevant training and experience of key personnel who are current employees, which may include, for example, the project director, the project coordinator, and project evaluators.

1. **Will there be a kick-off meeting after receipt of the award and any subsequent annual meetings that provide for one-on-one interaction with Department staff?**

Yes, after the awards are made, grantees will attend a one and one-half day planning meeting in Washington, DC. The project director and one other relevant staff member, for a maximum of two staff members from the project, will attend.

1. **Whom should I contact if I have any additional questions?**

Please contact John Cheek by email at john.cheek@ed.gov.