



**COMPETITIVE GRANTS FOR STATE
ASSESSMENTS (CGSA)
2024 COMPETITION**

**PRE-APPLICATION WEBINAR
MARCH 20, 2024**

PRESENTERS

State Assessments

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AGENDA FOR TODAY'S WEBINAR

- **Overview of CGSA**
- **Eligibility Requirements – SEA/Consortium**
- **Priorities – One of two absolute priorities, two competitive preference priorities, one invitational priority**
- **Budget Narrative**
- **Other Application Documents**
- **Criteria and Scoring**
- **Grantee Responsibilities – Record keeping, budget, monitoring, performance reports, closeout**
- **Applying to Grants.gov**
- **Information to Know – Timelines**
- **Resources – NIA, Grants.gov weblinks, ED weblinks**
- **Q & A**



Overview of CGSA

Notice Inviting Applications (NIA):

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/08/2024-04972/applications-for-new-awards-competitive-grants-for-state-assessments-program>

Application Deadline:

May 22, 2024, at 11:59:59 pm ET

OVERVIEW OF CGSA (CONTINUED)

PURPOSE

- The **purpose of this program** is to enhance the quality of assessment instruments and assessment systems used by States for measuring the academic achievement of elementary and secondary school students.
- The **program is authorized by** section 1203(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA).



2024 CGSA COMPETITION & ELIGIBILITY

- **Type of Award** – Discretionary grants.
- **Estimated Available Funds** – \$18,993,000.
- **Estimated Range of Awards** – \$1,000,000 to \$4,000,000
- **Estimated Average Size of Awards** – \$2,500,000.
- **Estimated Number of Award** – 3 to 6 awards.
- **Project Period** –
 - Absolute Priority #1: up to 48 months
 - Absolute Priority #2: up to 24 months



2024 CGSA COMPETITION & ELIGIBILITY

■ Eligible Applicants –

- State educational agencies (SEAs), as defined in section 8101(49) of the ESEA:
 - One of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and
- Consortia of such SEAs.

■ Note About Award Size –

- The Department will not make an award for less than the amount specified in section 1203(b)(1)(C) of the ESEA.
- Minimum award sizes, based on the FY 2023 SEA school-age child counts, are located on pages 6-7 of the CGSA grant application document.



CGSA ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES

- This competition includes two absolute priorities.
- Under 34 CFR § 75.105(c)(3), we consider only applications that meet at least one of these priorities. Eligible applicants **must clearly indicate** the specific absolute priority that the proposed project addresses.
- The Department plans to fund at least one grant under each absolute priority for which applications of sufficient quality are submitted.



CGSA ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1

- Measuring student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources; and/or
- Evaluating student academic achievement through the development of comprehensive academic assessment instruments (such as performance and technology-based academic assessments, computer adaptive assessments, projects, or extended performance task assessments) that emphasize the mastery of standards and aligned competencies in a competency-based education model.
- Project period: Up to 48 months.
- Budget maximum: Up to \$4 million.



CGSA ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 2

Planning for the Innovative Assessment Demonstration Authority (IADA). Under this priority, SEAs must –

- Provide an assurance by an authorized representative that the SEA intends to apply for flexibility under the IADA
- Describe their approach to innovative assessments in terms of the subjects and grades the SEA anticipates addressing, the proposed assessment design, proposed item types (e.g., item prototypes), and other relevant features.
- Project period: Up to 24 months.
- Budget maximum: Up to \$1 million.



CGSA APPLICATIONS MUST IDENTIFY THE SPECIFIC ABSOLUTE PRIORITY

- Applicants must **clearly identify the specific absolute priority** that the proposed project addresses.
- If an SEA (or consortium of SEAs) is interested in proposing separate projects (e.g., one that addresses Absolute Priority 1 and a **separate** project that addresses Absolute Priority 2), the SEA (or consortium of SEAs) **must submit separate applications**.
- If an SEA (or consortium of SEAs) erroneously submits an application that identifies both absolute priorities, or that fails to identify either absolute priority, **that application will only be considered under Absolute Priority 2**.



COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 1

Supporting a diverse educator workforce and professional growth to strengthen student learning.

(Up to 3 points)

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 2

Improving the utility of information about student performance included in reports of assessment results and providing better and more timely information to educators and parents. **(Up to 2 points)**

See NIA for full text of the competitive priorities.



INVITATIONAL PRIORITY

Projects that propose to develop, improve, or scale high-quality formative, diagnostic, and/or interim assessments and tools that, to the greatest extent feasible, are part of a statewide, aligned assessment system to provide timely and actionable information to educators and parents or caregivers throughout the school year. (**No points awarded**)

CGSA ALLOWABLE USES OF FUNDS

Section 1203(b)(1)(A) of the ESEA identifies six allowable use of CGSA funds.

1. Developing or improving assessments for English learners.
2. Developing or improving models to measure and assess student progress or student growth on assessments.
3. Developing or improving assessments for children with disabilities.
4. Collaborating with institutions of higher education or other organizations to improve the quality, validity, and reliability of State academic assessments.



CGSA ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS

Section 1203(b)(1)(A) of the ESEA identifies six allowable use of CGSA funds.

5. Measuring student academic achievement using multiple measures of student academic achievement from multiple sources.
6. Evaluating student academic achievement using comprehensive academic assessment instruments (such as performance and technology-based academic assessments, computer adaptive assessments, projects, or extended performance task assessments) that emphasize the mastery of standards and aligned competencies in a competency-based education model).



Questions So Far?



BUDGET NARRATIVE

EACH APPLICATION MUST PROVIDE A BUDGET NARRATIVE (ED FORM 524, SECTION C) SHOULD PROVIDE A JUSTIFICATION OF HOW EACH BUDGET ITEM WILL BE SPENT.

- This section requires an **itemized budget breakdown** for each project year and the **basis for estimating the costs** of personnel salaries, benefits, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, indirect costs and any other projected expenditures.
- Be sure to complete an itemized budget breakdown and narrative for each year of the proposed project (up to 48 months for Absolute Priority 1; up to 24 months for Absolute Priority 2).



BUDGET NARRATIVE (CONTINUED)

- The Budget Narrative provides an opportunity for the applicant to identify the nature and amount of the proposed expenditures.
- Provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers and project staff to understand how requested funds will be used, how much will be expended, and the relationship between the requested funds and project activities and outcomes.
- Only include costs that are **allowable, reasonable, and necessary** for carrying out the objectives of the CGSA project.



BUDGET NARRATIVE (CONTINUED)

- Rules about allowable costs are set out in 2 CFR Part 200, as adopted by the Department at 2 CFR Part 3474.
- In accordance with 34 CFR § 75.232, **Department of Education staff perform a cost analysis** of each recommended project to ensure that costs relate to the activities and objectives of the project are reasonable, allowable and allocable.
- We may delete or reduce costs from the budget during this review.



BUDGET NARRATIVE (CONTINUED)

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FOR EACH YEAR OF THE PROJECT:

- 1. Personnel**
- 2. Fringe Benefits**
- 3. Travel**
- 4. Equipment**
- 5. Supplies**
- 6. Contractual**
- 7. Construction** (does not apply for these projects)
- 8. Other** – major type or category, include cost per item, purpose & estimates
- 9. Total Direct Costs**
- 10. Indirect Costs**
- 11. Training Stipends**
- 12. Total Costs**



INDIRECT COSTS

- Provide a copy of the most recently approved indirect cost agreement.
- Applicants may charge the unrestricted negotiated rate.
- Identify indirect cost rate (if the applicant will charge indirect costs to the grant).
- For contractual services, indirect costs may only be applied only to the first \$25,000 of each subcontract for each year of the project.
- For more information about indirect cost rates, visit <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocfo/intro.html>.



OTHER APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- **Project Abstract**
- **Project Narrative**
 - Table of Contents
 - Application Narrative
- **Other Attachment Forms** *(not included in 65-page limit)*
 - Individual Resumes for Project Directors and Key Personnel
 - ✓ We encourage you to limit each resume to five pages
 - Executive Order 12372
 - Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
 - Memoranda of Understanding
 - References/bibliography



OTHER APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

- **Assurances and Certifications**

- For attached files, use file names with less than 50 characters
- Recommend limiting the application narrative to no more than 65 pages.



CRITERIA AND SCORING

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR PROGRAM NARRATIVE

We will award up to 100 points to an application under the following selection criteria.

Criteria	Max. Points
A. Significance	10
B. Quality of Project Design	25
C. Quality of Project Services	35
D. Adequacy of Resources	10
E. Quality of Management Plan	15
F. Quality of Project Evaluation	5



SUGGESTED SCORING RUBRIC POINTS BREAKDOWN

Criteria	Max. Points	Weak	Adequate	Strong
A. Significance	10	0-3	4-7	8-10
B. Quality of Project Design	25	0-8	9-17	18-25
C. Quality of Project Services	35	0-12	13-23	24-35
D. Adequacy of Resources	10	0-3	4-7	8-10
E. Quality of Management Plan	15	0-5	6-11	12-15
F. Quality of Project Evaluation	5	0-1	2-3	4-5
Total Score	100			



GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Successful applicants with multi-year grants must submit an **annual performance report** demonstrating their progress in meeting approved project objectives.
- Grantees must also provide the most current financial and performance measure data for each year of the project.
- At the end of the project period, grantees will also be required to submit a **final performance report**.



GRANTEE RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTD.)

REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Department has established the following performance indicators to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the Competitive Grants for State Assessments (CGSA):

- 1) The percentage of grantees, for each grant cycle, that demonstrate significant progress towards improving, developing, or implementing a new model for measuring the achievement or growth of students.
- 2) The percentage of grantees, for each grant cycle, that demonstrate collaboration with institutions of higher education, other research institutions, or other organizations to develop or improve State assessments.
- 3) The percentage of grantees that, at least three times during the period of their grants, make available to SEA staff in non-participating States and to assessment researchers information on findings resulting from the CGSA program through presentations at national conferences, publications in refereed journals, or other products disseminated to the assessment community.



APPLYING TO GRANTS.GOV

RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE

■ Online Resources

Workspace is the Grants.gov shared, online environment to collaboratively complete and submit Federal grant applications

- It consists of step-by-step explanations of particular applicant tasks to help applicants get started using Grants.gov.
- It provides access to online training resources and the video series to help you with the grant application process.

■ Grants.gov Training resources page at:

<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-training>



APPLYING TO GRANTS.GOV (CONTD.)

RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE

■ For Technical Difficulties

Grants.gov customer support at 1-800-518-4726 or email at support@grants.gov or access Grants.gov self-service knowledge base web portal at:

<https://grants-portal.psc.gov/Welcome.aspx?pt=Grants>

- You must obtain a Grants.gov Help Desk Case Number and keep track of your progress to resolve the issue.
- Additional submission instructions are found in the CGSA application package.



SYSTEMS FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM) TIPS

- SEA staff should **identify who at their SEA has the System for Award Management (SAM) registration information** to facilitate their application. Please ensure that your SEA's SAM information is active.
- Entities that are not registered in SAM.gov will be assigned a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) when they register.



GRANTS.GOV SUBMISSION TIPS

- SEA staff should identify who at their SEA has the ability to enable the State to create an application in Grants.gov **well in advance** of the submission deadline.
- We advise that SEAs **SUBMIT EARLY**.
- Depending on the size of the file, transmittal may take **SEVERAL MINUTES to HOURS**.
- Do not wait until the deadline date to submit. The system will be slow due to last minute submissions.

LATE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE READ!

- Applications that are time/date stamped after 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 22, 2024, will be marked late and **will not be read**.



INFORMATION TO KNOW

TIMELINES

- **April 8, 2024 - CGSA Intent to apply**
 - Not mandatory but preferred

CGSA Submission deadline –

May 22, 2024, by 11:59 pm EST

- **Award Announcements as early as possible**
 - Expected announcements: Mid to late September 2024
- **Mid-October – Post Award Webinar/Conference Call**



RESOURCES TO ACCESS

- **Notice Inviting Applications**

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/08/2024-04972/applications-for-new-awards-competitive-grants-for-state-assessments-program>

- **Application Package Document**

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/competitive-grants-for-state-assessments/applicant-information/>

- **Grants.gov**

<https://www.grants.gov/applicants> for general info,
CGSA 2024 Competition link <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/352813>

- **Webinar Slide Deck and Recording**

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/competitive-grants-for-state-assessments/resources/>

- **CGSA Program Webpage**

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/school-support-and-accountability/competitive-grants-for-state-assessments/>



QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU AND BEST WISHES TO YOU ON YOUR APPLICATION PROCESS!



For additional information or questions contact:

ESEA.Assessment@ed.gov

