

FUNDED



A GRANTS OFFICE PUBLICATION

APRIL 2014 VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

**HIGHER
EDUCATION**
K-12
PUBLIC SAFETY
TRIBAL GRANTS

SPECIAL EDITION:
7 OF OUR FAVORITE GRANTS
YOU CAN APPLY FOR
RIGHT NOW!



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ON THE COVER

Grant programs open throughout the year, but as luck would have it, a number of top federal opportunities are open right now, with deadlines ranging from April 14th to November 6th.

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

One comment we get frequently from grantseekers is how frustrating it can be when they finally have their entire organization pulling in the same direction and ready to go after funding only to find that the best grant opportunity is still six months away. Of course there are plenty of planning and team-building activities you can undertake if you've got lots of lead time, many of which we've highlighted in past issues of FUNDED, but grantseekers usually prefer something they can act on now.

That's what we've got for you. Of course, this is not a comprehensive list of all the open opportunities out there, some of which may be an even better fit for your project. Instead, we've selected grants that are:

Open – with deadlines from April 14th (get on those I3 pre-applications!) to November 6th

Competitive – new, un-spoken-for money for your organization

Accessible – enough money available to make more than just a handful of awards across the country

Diverse – funding organizations in three broad categories (K-12, Higher Education, and Public Safety), and generally encouraging collaboration with an even wider segment of the public sector community

We hope you find something in this month's issue that's worth pursuing, and if not, we hope these opportunities at least get you started on your search for the best funding source for your project.

As always, if you have comments, feedback, corrections, or topics for future issues, feel free to drop me a line at mpaddock@grantsoffice.com.

I hope you enjoy this issue of FUNDED as much as we've enjoyed bringing it to you!

Sincerely,

Michael Paddock
Editor and Publisher, *FUNDED*



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INVESTING IN INNOVATION – DEVELOPMENT GRANTS ACT NOW!

PRE-APPLICATIONS ARE DUE APRIL 14

ANALYSIS

Investing in Innovation grants were part of the President's agenda that was reified in the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. One of three program types, project approaches under the Development type

require the least amount of "evidence" (previously documented outcomes) to be eligible for funding. Instead, projects must simply demonstrate that they are "promising," meaning that evidence, possibly even from en-



A New York student, parent and software developer view data on high school choice available through the School Choice Design Challenge. Innovate NYC Schools, a 2011 I3 Development grantee, is working to validate a different approach to achieve innovative answers to longstanding needs of students and teachers. This approach emphasizes using technology to increase the degree of alignment between classroom needs and innovative solutions, and making students and teachers integral to the change process.

I3 Development grants provide funding to support high-potential and relatively untested practices, strategies, or programs, whereas Validation and Scale-up grants have a higher threshold for evidence. (Photo: Innovate NYC Schools)

tirely different strategies, seems to indicate that the project will move the needle on one or more of the priority areas of the program.

The good news is that unlike the more rigorous Validation and Scale-up type of I3 grants, Development grants pre-screen applicants through a comparatively simple pre-application process. This allows potential applicants to find out if their projects are at all close to what the Department of Education is planning to fund.

The bad news is that pre-applications are due April 14, so even if you're reading this before April 14, you have a very limited window to get your pre-application in. Unlike most full federal applications, though, this pre-application could conceivably be written in a day or two, if you're willing to clear your calendar and work late night or two.

MORE DETAILS ON THE OPPORTUNITY

Development grants provide funding to support the development or testing of practices that are supported by evidence of promise or a strong theory and whose efficacy should be systematically studied. Development projects are novel and significant nationally, not projects that simply implement existing practices in additional locations or support needs that are primarily local in nature. All Development grantees must evaluate the effectiveness of the project at the level of scale proposed in the application.

There are six absolute priorities under the FY14 Development Grants competition. Each of the six absolute priorities constitutes its own funding category. An applicant for a development grant must choose one of the six absolute priorities and one of the subparts under the chosen priority to address in its pre-application, and full application, if the applicant is invited to, or chooses to, submit a full application.

The absolute priorities are:

1. IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHERS OR PRINCIPALS

- Developing and Implementing models for principal preparation that deepen leadership skills which have been demonstrated to improve student achievement.

- Increasing the equitable access to effective teachers or principals for low-income and high-need students, which may include increasing the equitable distribution of effective teachers or principals for low-income and high-need students across schools.

2. IMPROVING LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS

- Changing elements of the school's organizational design to improve instruction by differentiating staff roles and extending and enhancing instructional time.
- Implementing programs, supports, or other strategies that improve students' non-cognitive abilities (e.g., motivation, persistence, or resilience) and enhance student engagement in learning or mitigate the effects of poverty, including physical, mental, or emotional health issues, on student engagement in learning.

3. IMPROVING ACADEMIC OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Implementing coherent systems of support that appropriately coordinate and integrate programs to address the needs of children and youth with disabilities and improve the quality of service for those children and their families.

4. IMPROVING ACADEMIC OUTCOMES FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

- Increasing the number and proportion of ELs successfully completing courses in core academic subjects by developing, implementing, and evaluating new instructional approaches and tools that are sensitive to the language demands necessary to access challenging content, including technology-based tools.
- Preparing ELs to be on track to be college- and career-ready when they graduate from high school by developing comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, early learning programs (birth-grade 3) that are aligned with the State's high-quality early learning standards, designed to improve readiness for kindergarten, and support development of literacy and academic skills in English or in English and another language.

5. EFFECTIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

- Providing access to learning experiences that are personalized, adaptive, and self-improving in order to optimize the delivery of instruction to learners with a variety of learning needs.
- Integrating technology with the implementation of rigorous college- and career-ready standards to increase student achievement, student engagement, and teacher efficacy, such as by providing embedded, real-time assessment and feedback to students and teachers.

6. SERVING RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Under this priority the Department will provide funding to projects addressing one of the absolute priorities established for the 2014 Development i3 competitions and under which the majority of students to be served are enrolled in rural local educational agencies.

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for an award, a local educational agency (LEA) or consortium that includes at least one LEA must:

- Have significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of economically disadvantaged students, students from major racial and ethnic groups, students with limited English proficiency, and/or students with disabilities;
- Have made significant improvements in other areas, such as high school graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers or principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; and
- Demonstrate that it has established one or more partnerships with the private sector, which may include philanthropic organizations, and that organizations in the private sector will provide matching funds in order to help bring results to scale.

AWARD INFORMATION

The total amount anticipated under the i3 competition in FY14 is \$138,800,000. Development grants will be

made in amounts up to \$3,000,000. 10 development grant awards are anticipated. The project period is up to 60 months. The i3 program includes a statutory requirement for a private-sector match for all i3 grantees. While an applicant must secure 15 percent of its Federal grant award to be eligible for an i3 Development grant, the timeframe in which an applicant must secure and submit evidence of the required private sector matching funds has been expanded. In the past, the highest-rated applicants had only approximately 30 days to secure 100 percent of their required matches and become grantees, which proved difficult for both applicants and potential private-sector funders. For the FY 2014, i3 competition, each highest-rated applicant, as identified by the Department following peer review of full applications, must submit evidence of 50 percent of the required private sector match prior to the awarding of an i3 grant. An applicant must provide evidence of the remaining 50 percent of the required private-sector match no later than six months after the project start date. The grant will be terminated if the grantee does not secure its private-sector match by the established deadline. By decreasing the amount of the required match that must be secured before the i3 award can be made, the burden for both applicants and private-sector funders will be reduced, which in turn will foster improved collaboration.

HISTORY OF FUNDING

Previous awards under the Investing in Innovation Fund (I3) program are available at: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/awards.html>.

For more information, visit: www.grantoffice.com/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=31298

YOUTHBUILD GRANTS

RESTORING THE FUTURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
WHO HAVE FALLEN THROUGH THE CRACKS

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE APRIL 22

ANALYSIS

The 30-year old YouthBuild program provides employment opportunities and educational certification for young people between 16 and 24 who have dropped out of school or who are deficient in basic skills.

The ETA is specifically will be measuring placement rates (placement in employment, education, or training), attainment of a degree or recognized certificate, and literacy/numeracy gains. Since these are the ETA's



YouthBuild AmeriCorps members and Corporation for National and Community Service staff work on a wall frame during an event marking the 30th anniversary of YouthBuild on the National Mall in Washington, DC.

Although funded through the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration, YouthBuild projects cover a wide range of functional areas, including education, housing, and crime prevention. (Photo: Corporation for National and Community Service)

measures, winning proposals should provide good evidence that they will be able to produce these results with their funding.

The range of allowable uses of YouthBuild funding is also quite broad, so you can include apprenticeships and internships as a complement to GED or other classroom work.

The April 22 deadline is for full proposals, so you'll want to get started right away!

MORE DETAILS ON THE OPPORTUNITY

YouthBuild is a youth and community development program that simultaneously addresses several core issues facing low-income communities:

- Affordable housing
- Education
- Employment
- Crime prevention
- Leadership development

The purpose of YouthBuild is to:

- Enable disadvantaged youth to obtain the education and employment skills necessary to achieve economic self-sufficiency in occupations in demand and post-secondary education and training opportunities
- Provide disadvantaged youth with opportunities for meaningful work and service to communities
- Foster the development of employment and leadership skills and commitment to community development among youth in low-income communities
- Expand the supply of permanent affordable housing for homeless individuals and low-income families by utilizing the energies and talents of disadvantaged youth

The YouthBuild model balances in-school learning that leads to the achievement of a high school diploma or passing the General Education Development (GED) test and occupational skills training that prepares youth for career placement. The in-school component is an alternative education program that assists youth who are often significantly

behind in basic skills to obtain a high school diploma or GED credential.

The target populations for YouthBuild are high school dropouts who may also be adjudicated youth, youth aging out of foster care, youth with disabilities, and other at-risk youth populations.

ELIGIBILITY

Public and private nonprofit agencies are eligible to apply for these grants, and winning projects will include meaningful collaboration with K-12 schools, institutions of higher education, and employers, keeping in mind that construction-related training will be a required activity for all YouthBuild grantees.

AWARD INFORMATION

The ETA is planning to fund approximately 75 grants of up to \$1.1 million each. There is a 25 percent matching requirement, which may come from cash or in-kind sources, and additional cost sharing will increase an application's competitiveness.

In 2012, approximately 75 grants were awarded, ranging from \$750,000 to \$1.1 million.

For more information, visit: www.grantoffice.com/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=23459

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM

HELPING STUDENTS WORK THROUGH ISSUES,
SUPPORT HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT, AND
IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

PRE-APPLICATIONS ARE DUE APRIL 28



Since 2000, ESSCP grants have supported a broad range of counseling programs that tackle student achievement and self esteem to mental health and family services. This year's program includes priorities for school engagement, environment, and safety, as well as for military-connected students.
(Photo: David Sacks, Getty Images)

ANALYSIS

Although these grants are primarily focused on mental health counseling, and school mental health counseling staff are the most actively engaged participants in funded activities, the Department of Education expects the results to extend to many other areas of students' well-being, academic and social competency, and personal development. Therefore, a broader team of administrators, faculty, and staff should be involved in developing the program concept, identifying students who might benefit from counseling, and conducting ongoing evaluation of the program's effectiveness for participating students.

The objectives that you define in your application should also align with the grade level(s) of the schools at which the counseling programs are being established or expanded. Most of the funding is going for elementary programs this year, but many districts have multiple facilities serving different elementary grade levels.

Further, there is a small amount of additional funding that may be used to establish counseling programs in higher grade levels as well, provided you can demonstrate the need for it in your district.

MORE DETAILS ON THE OPPORTUNITY

This program provides funding to local educational agencies (LEAs) to establish or expand elementary and secondary school counseling programs, with special consideration given to applicants that can:

- Demonstrate the greatest need for counseling services in the schools to be served
- Propose the most innovative and promising approaches, and
- Show the greatest potential for replication and dissemination

Projects should:

- Use a developmental, preventive approach
- Expand the inventory of effective counseling programs
- Include in-service training, and
- Involve parents and community groups

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 1—IMPROVING SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT, SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT, AND SCHOOL SAFETY AND IMPROVING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Under this priority, the Department of Education gives priority to applications for projects that are designed to improve student outcomes through one or both of the following priority areas:

- Improving the school environment, which may include improving the school setting related to student learning, safety, and health
- Improving school safety, which may include decreasing the incidence of harassment, bullying, violence, and substance use

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 2—SUPPORT FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

Under this priority, the Department of Education gives priority to applications for projects that are designed to address the needs of military-connected students

ELIGIBILITY

Local educational agencies (LEAs), including charter schools that are considered LEAs under State law, that do not have an active grant under this program, and consortia of LEAs are eligible to apply for funding under this program.

AWARD INFORMATION

2014 funding of \$14,779,760 will fund an estimated 42 awards averaging \$350,000.

HISTORY OF FUNDING

Previous awards under the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program are available at: <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/elseccounseling/awards.html>.

For more information, visit: www.grantoffice.com/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=21573

VIOLENT GANG AND GUN CRIME REDUCTION PROGRAM

TIME TO TAKE THAT INNOVATIVE PROJECT OFF THE SHELF!

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE MAY 12

ANALYSIS

A major hurdle in applying to this program is in defining what exactly is a “research-driven, intelligence-led, and problem-solving approach.” What may seem to fit these criteria for a rural county sheriff may be completely different from a city manager running a large urban center, even though they may both have an equal interest in attacking the problem of firearms and gang violence.

Technology certainly can fit into this definition, and research shows that technology can help connect

officers to critical information in the field, improve prosecution rates through better records management, and expand the capacity of law enforcement officials to monitor and respond to criminal activity in more places than ever before. But no solution – technology, training, community involvement, etc. – is going to be sufficient on its own to merit funding.

Instead, it’s important to consider how these and other approaches will work within the context of your organizational culture and community, then look for



Project Safe Neighborhoods was initiated during the Bush administration and continues to provide funding to reduce gun and gang violence across the country. Technology is frequently a part of these innovative and data-driven approaches to achieving improved situational awareness and suspect identification, as well as expanding access to criminal history records. (Photo: Getty Images)

the approaches that best fit the qualifying criteria for the grant (research-driven, intelligence-led, and problem-solving). You may have to go through a few iterations of this exercise to find the approach that best matches both your needs and the objectives of the program, but the time you spend on developing a sound program concept will go a long way in making your proposal more competitive.

MORE DETAILS ON THE OPPORTUNITY

The purpose of PSN is to reduce gun and gang violence in jurisdictions throughout the nation by employing a research-driven, intelligence-led, and problem-solving approach to reduce firearms and gang violence, through enforcement, deterrence, and prevention. BJA is seeking applications from applicants interested in developing innovative, comprehensive, data-driven approaches to reduce chronic gun and/or gang violence in their jurisdiction. BJA expects agencies to work toward a result; a PSN result is defined as a plausible, scientifically-based finding that a solution had either an effect or no effect on the problem. The involvement of a research partner is indispensable to achieving this result.

There are five PSN design features that all PSN grant applicants should address in their application. The five design features are:

PARTNERSHIPS

The PSN program is intended to increase partnerships between federal, state, and local agencies through the formation of a local PSN task force.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESEARCH INTEGRATION

PSN is a problem-solving program, based on a strategic planning process in which jurisdictions should define the specific components of their gun and/or gang violence problem with the help of research data and design focused strategies to target these problem components through enforcement/prosecution, deterrence, and prevention.

TRAINING

A core component of PSN is its provision of training opportunities to local district task forces to assist them in the effective implementation of all aspects of the program.

OUTREACH

This PSN component involves both local and national outreach efforts. Locally, districts should be sending a deterrent message to would-be criminals stressing “hard time for gun and gang-related crime,” with simultaneous promotion of educational, intervention/prevention, reentry, and employment alternatives.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND DATA-DRIVEN EFFORTS

This element emphasizes that PSN will focus on outcomes—i.e., reduced gun and gang crime—as opposed to a focus on outputs such as arrests and cases prosecuted.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are PSN Task Force fiscal agents for the U.S. Attorney districts and federally recognized Indian tribal governments as determined by the Secretary of the Interior. All fiscal agents must be certified by the relevant U.S. Attorney’s Office (USAO). Eligible fiscal agents include states, units of local government, educational institutions, faith-based and other community organizations, private nonprofit organizations, and federally recognized Indian tribal governments as determined by the Secretary of the Interior. For details on the fiscal agent certification process, see www.bja.gov/programs/psn/cert_process.html.

AWARD INFORMATION

Awards will be made for a period of up to 24 months across 3 categories, based on the USAO district populations.

- USAO district populations of 5 million or more can receive awards of up to \$500,000
- USAO district populations of 2 to 5 million can receive awards of up to \$300,000
- USAO district populations under 2 million can receive awards of up to \$150,000

For more information, visit: www.grantoffice.com/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=22840

TRIBAL HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM

ONE OF SEVERAL GRANT PROGRAMS THAT EXPRESSLY FUND TRIBAL INITIATIVES

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE MAY 23

ANALYSIS

As a Tribal law enforcement organization, it's important to be diverse when pursuing grant funding. All too often Tribal law enforcement organizations rely on a select few grant programs year after year to fund important projects, but due to limitations on funding, those programs don't always provide enough support for the projects. The Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program (THSGP) is an excellent opportunity for Tribes to diversify their law enforcement grant funding portfolio.

THSGP funding can be utilized for a wide range of activities related to public safety and law enforcement; everything from planning activities, organizational activities, equipment purchases, training, exercises, personnel activities, and maintenance. Establishment or outfitting of an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and large scale interoperability projects are some examples of projects that can be undertaken with THSGP funds.

With a deadline date of May 23rd 2014, there's still plenty of time for a Tribe to take inventory on current law enforcement and public safety initiatives, fully form projects, and drive an application to the program. Speaking of the application, it's fairly simple and straight forward. The Department of Homeland Security has developed an Excel-based Investment Justification (IJ) that applicants use to express project details, gaps, and budget. There are some other standard forms that have to accompany the IJ, but the IJ provides an excellent lay out for your project details and is easy to use. Even if your Tribe is not selected as one of the anticipated 50 awardees, the work you put forth in the construction of your IJ would make an excellent starting point for other law enforcement and public safety grants.

MORE DETAILS ON THE OPPORTUNITY

The Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program is one tool among a comprehensive set of initiatives authorized by Congress and implemented by the Administration to help strengthen the Nation against risks associated with potential terrorist attacks. Funding under this program is provided to strengthen tribes' capacity to prepare for and respond to emergency situations.

The FY 2014 program plays an important role in the implementation of the National Preparedness System by supporting the building, sustainment, and delivery of core capabilities essential to achieving the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient Nation. Delivering core capabilities requires the combined effort of the whole community, rather than the exclusive effort of any single organization or level of government. The program's allowable costs support efforts to build and sustain core capabilities across the Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery mission areas.

The objective of THSGP is to implement the National Preparedness System and support efforts that build and sustain core capabilities such as:

Advancing a whole community approach to security and emergency management

Strengthening governance integration by working with local and regional preparedness partners

Improving immediate emergency victim care at mass casualty events

Sustaining support innovation and sustaining support for the National Campaign for Preparedness

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to receive THSGP funding, grantees must be considered “directly eligible Tribes” as well as “Federally recognized Tribes,” and must not have received funds through a state from the Department of Homeland Security’s State Homeland Security Program or Urban Areas Security Initiative.

In addition, directly eligible tribes must be located in the continental United States, operate a law enforcement or emergency response agency with the capacity to respond to calls for law enforcement or emergency services, and meet one of the following criteria:

Be located within 50 miles of an international border or a coastline bordering an ocean (including the Gulf of Mexico) or international waters

Be located within 10 miles of a system or asset included on the prioritized critical infrastructure list or have such a system or asset within its territory

Be located within or contiguous to one of the 50 most populous metropolitan statistical areas in the United States

Have a jurisdiction which includes not less than 1,000 square miles of Indian country

Consortia of Tribes that meet all these requirements are also eligible to apply.

AWARD INFORMATION

In FY14, the Department of Homeland Security has made \$10,000,000 available for the Tribal Homeland Security Grant Program. Tribal grantees are required to ensure that at least 25 percent program award funds are dedicated towards law enforcement terrorism prevention planning, organization, training, exercise, and equipment activities. Cost sharing is not required.

For more information, visit: www.grantoffice.com/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=31122



Chickasaw Nation Fire Marshall Dewayne Price and a team of emergency responders develop a strategy to help citizens and employees of the Chickasaw Nation recover from the May 2013 tornado that struck near Moore, Oklahoma.

Tribal Homeland Security Grants fund a laundry list of security, preparedness, and response capabilities, and it is incumbent on the applicant organization to decide how best to use their funds to achieve their operational objectives.

(Photo: Federal Emergency Management Agency)

H-1B READY TO WORK PARTNERSHIP GRANTS

A SUBSTANTIAL AND FLEXIBLE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE JUNE 19

ANALYSIS

There are many factors to consider when applying to the H-1B Ready to Work program. First and foremost, it is helpful to understand that the funding for this program is generated by the H-1B Visa fees that employers pay to hire foreign workers. Thus, one of the clear goals of the program is to train American workers to fill these highly skilled and technical occupations. This requires more thought than simply picking one of the occupations noted in Appendix A of the grant guidance document, as you should be able to provide local and regional data to document that these positions are being hired out to foreign workers in your targeted service area.

A new factor to consider this year is the “Ready to Work” component of the program. In the past, the target audience was wide-open as long as you were training American workers. This iteration of the program requires a focus on the long-term unemployed (85% of funding targeted towards this group). Furthermore, in an effort to connect the dots between the provision of training and the hiring of participants, applicants must include at least 3 regional employers in their coalition. These employers must have a true connection to the project in that they ultimately hire for the occupations being targeted in the proposal.

One final item to consider is the inclusion of technology and equipment into the funding proposal under the H-1B Ready to Work program. The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) will apply a high level of

scrutiny to such requests, requiring appropriate and extensive justification. However, considering the focus this year on the long-term unemployed, one could imagine the importance of online, web-based and distance learning methodologies for a target audience that is likely to consist of non-traditional students that have familial and other adult obligations. Furthermore, the involvement of local employers and the importance of on-the-job training and immersion experiences also lends itself to the inclusion of technology to connect instructors, students and the business community. While most folks will front-load any equipment needs to be available throughout the project, it is worth noting that the ETA generally does not support equipment requests in the final year of a project period.

MORE DETAILS ON THE OPPORTUNITY

This grant program is designed to provide long-term unemployed workers with individualized counseling, training and supportive and specialized services leading to rapid employment in occupations and industries for which employers use H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. A small percentage of other unemployed and/or incumbent workers may also be served through this program. H-1B grants are financed by a user fee paid by employers to bring foreign workers into the United States under the H-1B nonimmigrant visa program.

The primary objective of this program is to fund

partnerships that can effectively recruit and serve long-term unemployed workers and that are built around a comprehensive, up-front assessment resulting in customized interventions across three tracks:

- Intensive coaching and other short-term, specialized services culminating in direct job placement into middle and high-skilled jobs
- Short-term training leading to employment
- Accelerated skills training along a career pathway that leads to an industry-recognized credential and employment.

Within these tracks, we are especially interested in programs that include employer-based activities with

an earnings component, such as on-the-job training, and other paid work experience, as well as specialized participant services that address the unique barriers facing long-term unemployed workers, such as financial counseling and behavioral health counseling.

Funded programs will include tangible commitments from employers and other partners to provide employment opportunities, technical skills training, and on-the-job experience and other paid work experience for H-1B occupations, while also addressing the barriers, income needs, and support needs unique to long-term unemployed workers. As a pre-condition to be considered for Ready to Work funding, all applicants must have at least three employers or a regional



US Secretary of Labor Tom Perez chats with Joe Joerin, an apprentice at the UAW-Ford Technical Training Center. Mechanical engineering jobs are one of the occupations for which foreign workers can obtain H-1B visas. H-1B-eligible occupations are also a focus of the H-1B Ready to Work Partnership Grants, with the intent of enabling long-term unemployed American workers to fill these positions. (Photo: US Department of Labor)

industry association with at least three employers actively engaged in the project.

To meet the legislative intent of positioning American workers to reduce the need for foreign workers under the H-1B visa program, applicants must design their programs to support industries and occupations in demand in their regional economy(ies) and for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers. According to recent data, a wide range of industries may meet these criteria in local and regional areas around the country. Ready to Work grants under this SGA will focus on high-growth industries and occupations defined as those that:

- Are projected to add substantial numbers of new jobs to the economy
- Are being transformed by technology and innovation requiring new skill sets for workers
- Are new and emerging businesses that are projected to grow or
- Have a significant impact on the economy overall or on the growth of other industries and occupations

A list of qualifying H-1B occupations is available at <http://www.h1base.com/content/h1boccupations>

ELIGIBILITY

Grants will be awarded to the lead applicant of a public and private partnership of entities that includes:

- The workforce investment system
- Training providers, such as community colleges and community-based and faith-based organizations
- Business and business-related groups, trade associations, nonprofit business or industry, and organizations functioning as workforce intermediaries for the expressed purpose of serving the needs of businesses

As a pre-condition to be considered for Ready to Work funding, there must be at least three employers or a regional industry association consisting of at least three employers who are actively engaged in the project. Additional partners that reflect the character and resources of the local or regional economy and the community are strongly encouraged.

AWARD INFORMATION

Approximately \$150 million will be available for H-1B grants.

For more information, visit: www.grantsoffice.com/GrantDetails.aspx?gid=36242

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

MAKING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN MOTIVATED STUDENTS AND CAREERS IN TECHNOLOGY

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE NOVEMBER 6

ANALYSIS

There are many ways in which an applicant can stumble when it comes to developing a competitive ITEST project and funding proposal. One of the primary decisions for an applicant is the characterization of their initiative in the proposal. As simple as it sounds this is actually one that people overlook, often times suggesting “that if you have a quality project, the NSF will not care whether it is positioned as a *Strategies* initiative or *SPrEaD* (*Successful Project Expansion and Dissemination*). It is true that the goal of the program is the same across the board: establish best practices and model interventions that will immerse students in the STEM disciplines and motivate them to pursue such careers. However, projects positioned as *SPrEaD* initiatives must have a pre-existing moderate-to-strong evidence base. In other words, applicants must be positioning scale-up projects in order to target the higher dollar amounts available through *SPrEaD*. On the other hand, while *Strategies* projects may explore new models that may not have a sophisticated evidence-base, the NSF still anticipates that such initiatives at a component-level will still be supported in the research literature. Unfortunately, you do not get 3 strikes with the NSF, if you position a world-class *Strategies* project under the *SPrEaD* program, your application will likely be denied without review.

Once you have properly characterized your initiative, the goal is obviously to offer an innovative project that is compelling to the NSF and competitive when compared to other applicants. Many folks do a decent job with the innovative part, such as creating robotics competitions or incorporating gaming or virtual reality software into STEM curricula. However, they may fall short when it comes to some of the non-technical pieces that will make a proposal competitive. ITEST is partially funded

through H-1B Visa fees that employers pay when they hire foreign workers into highly technical occupations. The ultimate goal is to get American k-12 students excited and on track to assume these highly skilled roles in the present and future economy. As such, projects that incorporate and partner with the industry sector through a combination of immersive experiences and mentoring (by current employee volunteers at the companies involved) typically stand out amongst the competition. In addition, the most successful projects typically take a multi-pronged approach to their strategy, addressing formal k-12 student curricula and credentialing, professional development for k-12 STEM teachers, and informal STEM immersion that occurs outside of the traditional school day.

MORE DETAILS ON THE OPPORTUNITY

The ITEST program through research and model-building activities seeks to build understandings of best practice factors, contexts and processes contributing to K-12 students' motivation and participation in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) core domains along with other STEM cognate domains (e.g., information and communications technology (ICT), computing, computer sciences, data analytics, among others) that inform education programs and workforce domains. The ITEST program funds foundational and applied research projects addressing the development, implementation, and dissemination of innovative strategies, tools, and models for engaging students to be aware of STEM and cognate careers, and to pursue formal school-based and informal out-of-school educational experiences to prepare for such careers. ITEST supports projects that:

INCREASE STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF STEM AND COGNATE CAREERS

Motivate students to pursue the appropriate education pathways for STEM and cognate careers and/or

Provide students with technology-rich experiences that develop disciplinary-based knowledge and practices, and non-cognitive skills (e.g., critical thinking and communication skills) needed for entering STEM workforce sectors

ITEST projects may adopt an interdisciplinary focus on one or more STEM domains or focus on sub discipline(s) within a domain. ITEST projects must involve students, and may also include teachers. ITEST is especially interested in broadening participation of student groups from traditionally underrepresented in STEM and cognate intensive education and workforce domains. Strongly encouraged are projects that actively engage business and industry to better ensure K-12 experiences are likely to foster the skill-sets of emerging STEM and cognate careers.

ITEST supports two types of foundational and applied research projects:

STRATEGIES

These are projects that address the creation and implementation of innovative technology-related interventions.

SPREAD (SUCCESSFUL PROJECT EXPANSION AND DISSEMINATION)

SPrEaD projects support the wider and broader dissemination and examination of innovative interventions.

Successful ITEST projects will engage in foundational or model-based design applied research that seeks to understand conditions and contexts that improve K-12 students' STEM learning pathways and STEM-focused career preparations and mentorships. The ITEST program is particularly interested in projects that examine the effectiveness of engaging adult volunteers with relevant disciplinary expertise from academia or industry to mentor and engage students in school, after school or out-of-school. Typically, proposals with a primary focus on workforce development for youth and on school to work transitions should be submitted to ITEST. Also encouraged are proposals that engage students in the use of cutting-edge technological tools, in computer sciences, or in providing students with work/problem

based opportunities for innovative use of technology..

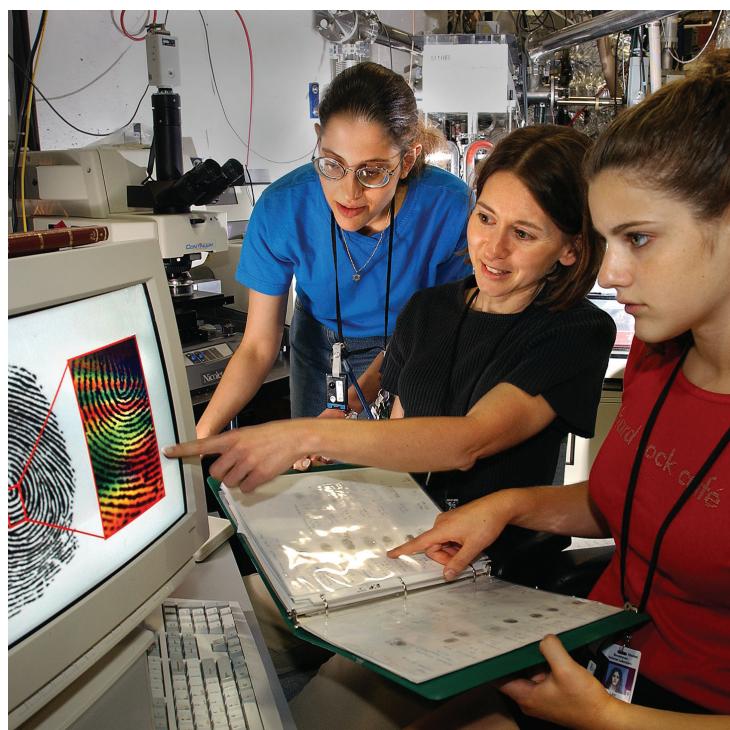
ELIGIBILITY

All U.S. organizations with an educational mission are eligible for ITEST, however all ITEST projects must demonstrate evidence of partnerships and collaboration in the formulation, implementation, and/or interpretation and dissemination of the project.

AWARD INFORMATION

The National Science Foundation anticipates making approximately 15-20 Strategies awards with durations up to three years and total budgets up to \$1,200,000 each and approximately 5-10 SPrEaD awards with durations of three to five years and total budgets up to \$2,000,000 each.

For more information, visit: www.grantsoffice.com/



Mount Sinai high school student Lara Hershovitch (right) studies adult/child fingerprint differences at Brookhaven National Laboratory under the direction of Lisa Miller (center), a Brookhaven scientist who volunteered to mentor Hershovitch, and Jackie Tetenbaum, a current employee and former undergraduate student at BNL.

ITEST grants generally involve a partnership between an institution of higher education and a secondary school, but may also include organizations actively working in technology fields that are the focus of the ITEST project. (Photo: US Department of Energy, Brookhaven National Laboratory)



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