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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program

AGENCY: Office of Postsecondary Education, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice.

Overview Information:

Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program (MSEIP)

Notice inviting applications for new awards for fiscal year (FY) 2015.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 84.120A.

Dates:

Applications Available: [**INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [**INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**].

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [INSERT DATE 120 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The MSEIP is designed to effect long-range improvement in science and engineering education at predominantly minority institutions and to increase the flow of underrepresented ethnic minorities, particularly minority women, into scientific and technological careers.

Priorities: This notice contains one competitive preference priority and one invitational priority. The competitive preference priority is from the Department's notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the Federal Register on December 10, 2014 (79 FR 73425).

Competitive Preference Priority: For FY 2015 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is a competitive preference priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i), we award an additional two points to an application that meets this priority.

The competitive preference priority is:

Competitive Preference Priority -- Promoting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education (2 additional points).

Priority: Projects that are designed to improve Student Achievement (as defined in this notice) or other related

outcomes by identifying and implementing instructional strategies, systems, and structures that improve postsecondary learning and retention, resulting in completion of a degree in a STEM field.

Note: Applicants must indicate in the one-page abstract and on the MSEIP Eligibility Certification Form in the application package whether they intend to address the competitive preference priority.

Note: Through the competitive preference priority, the Department encourages applicants to implement strategies to improve student outcomes, such as increasing the number of students, including High-need Students (as defined in this notice), who persist and graduate in a STEM field. For example, an institution could implement pedagogies of engagement, such as problem-based learning, or provide Authentic STEM experiences (as defined in this notice), for students in science and engineering programs. Applicants addressing this priority should demonstrate how their proposal will improve STEM education and student outcomes.

Invitational Priority: For FY 2015 and any subsequent year in which we make awards from the list of unfunded applicants from this competition, this priority is an invitational priority. Under 34 CFR 75.105(c)(1), we do not give an application that meets this invitational

priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications.

The invitational priority is:

Invitational Priority -- Improving STEM Education in the First Two Years of College.

Priority: Projects designed to improve retention and other student outcomes in the first two years of college through strategies including, but not limited to, one or more of the following:

(a) Obtaining institutional support and support from accrediting agencies for changes in curricular, pedagogical, and graduation requirements that are necessary to improve the first two years of STEM coursework.

(b) Developing early intervention tutorial programs to help students academically deficient in STEM reach college level proficiency.

Note: Through the invitational priority, the Department encourages applicants to address systemic barriers that result in high failure and dropout rates during the introductory years of science and engineering programs. Applicants addressing this priority should demonstrate how their proposal will improve STEM education in the first two years of college.

Definitions: The following definitions are from the notice

of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the Federal Register on December 10, 2014 (79 FR 73425), and apply to the priorities in this notice:

Authentic STEM experiences means laboratory, research-based, or experiential learning opportunities in a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subject in informal or formal settings.

High-minority school means a school as that term is defined by a local educational agency (LEA), which must define the term in a manner consistent with its State's Teacher Equity Plan, as required by section 1111(b)(8)(C) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). The applicant must provide the definition(s) of high-minority schools used in its application.

High-need students means students who are at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend High-minority schools, who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have

disabilities, or who are English learners.

Regular high school diploma means the standard high school diploma that is awarded to students in the State and that is fully aligned with the State's academic content standards or a higher diploma and does not include a General Education Development (GED) credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award.

Student achievement means--

For grades and subjects in which assessments are required under section 1111(b) (3) of the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA): (1) A student's score on such assessments; and, as appropriate (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in the subsequent paragraph, provided that they are rigorous and comparable across schools within a local educational agency (LEA).

For grades and subjects in which assessments are not required under section 1111(b) (3) of the ESEA: (1) Alternative measures of student learning and performance, such as student results on pre-tests, end-of-course tests, and objective performance-based assessments; (2) student learning objectives; (3) student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and (4) other measures of

student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across schools within an LEA.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1067-1067k.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 75, 77, 79, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. (b) The Education Department debarment and suspension regulations as adopted in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards as adopted in 2 CFR part 3474. (d) The regulations for this program in 34 CFR part 646. (e) The notice of final supplemental priorities and definitions for discretionary grant programs, published in the Federal Register on December 10, 2014 (79 FR 73425).

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 79 apply to all applicants except federally recognized Indian tribes.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR Part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

Estimated Available Funds: \$2,800,918.

Contingent upon the availability of funds and the quality of applications, we may make additional awards in FY 2016 from the list of unfunded applications from this

competition.

Estimated Range of Awards: Institutional Project Grants: \$150,000-\$250,000. Special Project Grants: \$100,000-\$250,000. Cooperative Project Grants: \$250,000-\$300,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: Institutional Project Grants: \$200,000. Special Project Grants: \$175,000. Cooperative Project Grants: \$275,000.

Maximum Awards: Institutional Project Grants: \$250,000. Special Project Grants: \$250,000. Cooperative Project Grants: \$300,000. We will reject any application that proposes a budget exceeding the maximum award amount listed for a single budget period of 12 months. The Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education may change the maximum amount through a notice published in the Federal Register.

Estimated Number of Awards: Institutional Project Grants: 10; Special Project Grants: 1; Cooperative Project Grants: 1.

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

Project Period: Up to 36 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: The eligibility of an applicant is dependent on the type of MSEIP grant the

applicant seeks. There are four types of MSEIP grants:

Institutional project, special project, cooperative project, and design project.

Institutional project grants are grants that support the implementation of a comprehensive science improvement plan, which may include any combination of activities for improving the preparation of minority students for careers in science.

There are two types of special project grants. First, there are special project grants for which only minority institutions are eligible. These special project grants support activities that: (1) Improve quality training in science and engineering at minority institutions; or (2) enhance the minority institutions' general scientific research capabilities. There also are special project grants for which all applicants are eligible. These special project grants support activities that: (1) provide a needed service to a group of eligible minority institutions; or (2) provide in-service training for project directors, scientists, and engineers from eligible minority institutions.

Cooperative project grants assist groups of nonprofit accredited colleges and universities to work together to conduct a science improvement program.

Design project grants assist minority institutions that do not have their own appropriate resources or personnel to plan and develop long-range science improvement programs. We will not award design project grants in the FY 2015 competition.

(a) For institutional project grants, eligible applicants are limited to:

(1) Public and private nonprofit institutions of higher education that (i) Award baccalaureate degrees; and (ii) are minority institutions;

(2) Public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education that (i) award associate degrees; and (ii) are minority institutions that (A) have a curriculum that includes science or engineering subjects; and (B) enter into a partnership with public or private nonprofit institutions of higher education that award baccalaureate degrees in science and engineering.

(b) For special project grants for which only minority institutions are eligible, eligible applicants are described in paragraph (a).

(c) For special project grants for which all applicants are eligible, eligible applicants include those described in paragraph (a), and

(1) Nonprofit science-oriented organizations,

professional scientific societies, and institutions of higher education that award baccalaureate degrees that: (i) provide a needed service to a group of minority institutions; or (ii) provide in-service training to project directors, scientists, and engineers from minority institutions; or

(2) A consortium of organizations that provide needed services to one or more minority institutions, the membership of which may include (i) institutions of higher education which have a curriculum in science or engineering; (ii) institutions of higher education that have a graduate or professional program in science or engineering; (iii) research laboratories of, or under contract with, the Department of Energy, the Department of Defense or the National Institutes of Health; (iv) relevant offices of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Science Foundation and National Institute of Standards and Technology; (v) quasi-governmental entities that have a significant scientific or engineering mission; or (vi) institutions of higher education that have State-sponsored centers for research in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

(d) For cooperative project grants, eligible

applicants are groups of nonprofit accredited colleges and universities whose primary fiscal agent is an eligible minority institution as defined in 34 CFR 637.4(b).

Note: As defined in 34 CFR 637.4(b), "minority institution" means an accredited college or university whose enrollment of a single minority group or a combination of minority groups exceeds 50 percent of the total enrollment.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Address to Request Application Package: You can obtain an application via the Internet at Grants.gov. If you do not have access to the Internet, please contact Dr. Stacey Slijepcevic, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006-8517. Telephone: (202) 219-7124 or Dr. Bernadette Hence, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20006-8517. Telephone: (202) 219-7038.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille,

large print, audiotape, or computer disc) by contacting the program contact persons listed in this section.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application, together with the forms you must submit, are in the application package for this competition.

Page Limit: The application narrative (Part III of the application) is where you, the applicant, address the selection criteria that reviewers use to evaluate your application. We have established a mandatory page limit for the application narrative of each type of MSEIP grant project application as follows:

Institutional project grant: 40 pages;

Special project grant: 35 pages;

Cooperative project grant: 50 pages.

You must limit the application narrative (Part III) to these established page limits, using the following standards:

- A "page" is 8.5" x 11", on one side only, with 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides. Page numbers and a document identifier may be within the 1" margin.

- Double space (no more than three lines per vertical inch) all text in the application narrative, except titles,

headings, footnotes, quotations, references, captions, and all text in charts, tables, and graphs. These items may be single spaced; however, they will count toward the page limit.

- Use a font that is either 12 point or larger, or no smaller than 10 pitch (characters per inch). However, you may use a 10 point font in charts, tables, figures, and graphs.

- Use one of the following fonts: Times New Roman, Courier, Courier New, or Arial. An application submitted in any other font (including Times Roman or Arial Narrow) will not be accepted.

If you use some but not all of the allowable space on a page, it will be counted as a full page in determining compliance with the page limit.

The page limit does not apply to Part I, the cover sheet; Part II, the budget section, including the budget justification; Part III, the one-page abstract, the table of contents, the MSEIP Eligibility Certification Form, required letter(s) of commitment, evidence of partnerships; and Part IV, the assurances and certifications. If you include any attachments or appendices not specifically requested, these items will be counted as part of the

program narrative (Part III) for purposes of the page limit requirement. You must include your complete responses to the selection criteria in the program narrative.

We will reject your application if you exceed the page limit, or if you apply other standards and exceed the equivalent of the page limit. We will also reject your application if you fail to provide the MSEIP Eligibility Certification Form.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Applications Available: [**INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**].

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: [**INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**].

Applications for grants under this program must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (Grants.gov). For information (including dates and times) about how to submit your application electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to section IV. 7. Other Submission Requirements of this notice.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

Individuals with disabilities who need an

accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: [**INSERT DATE 120 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER**].

4. Intergovernmental Review: This program is subject to E. O. 12372 and the regulations in 34 CFR part 79. Information about Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs under E. O. 12372 is in the application package for this competition.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management: To do business with the Department of Education, you must--

- a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);
- b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the

System for Award Management (SAM) (formerly the Central Contractor Registry (CCR)), the Government's primary registrant database;

c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and

d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet. A DUNS number can be created within one-to-two business days.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow 2-5 weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data entered into the SAM database by an entity. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department,

please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

Note: Once your SAM registration is active, you will need to allow 24 to 48 hours for the information to be available in Grants.gov, and before you can submit an application through Grants.gov.

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

Information about SAM is available at www.SAM.gov. To further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, we have prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html.

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are

outlined at the following Grants.gov Web page:

www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html.

7. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the MSEIP, CFDA Number 84.120A, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. Through this site, you will be able to download a copy of the application package, complete it offline, and then upload and submit your application. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section

under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

You may access the electronic grant application for the MSEIP at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.120, not 84.120A).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.
- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received--that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system--after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline

requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors, including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for this competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at www.G5.gov.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere

in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a PDF (Portable Document) read-only, non-modifiable format. Do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, non-modifiable PDF or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material. Additional, detailed information on how to attach files is in the application instructions.

- Your electronic application must comply with any page-limit requirements described in this notice.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a

Grants.gov tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department.) The Department then will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send a second notification to you by e-mail. This second notification indicates that the Department has received your application and has assigned your application a PR/Award number (an ED-specified identifying number unique to your application).

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date, please contact the person listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that that problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. The Department will contact you after a determination is made on whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant you an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through

the Grants.gov system because--

- You do not have access to the Internet; or
- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the Internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Dr. Stacey Slijepcevic, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., room 6014, Washington, DC 20006-8517. Fax: (202) 502-7861 or Dr. Bernadette Hence, U.S. Department of Education,

1990 K Street, NW., room 6152. Fax: (202) 502-7861.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.120A)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

(1) A private metered postmark.

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

If your application is postmarked after the application deadline date, we will not consider your application.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number 84.120A)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries

daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: The selection criteria for this program are from 34 CFR 637.32(a) through (j). Applicants should address each of the selection criteria. The total weight of the selection criteria is 100 points; the weight of each criterion is noted in parentheses. Please see the application package for a detailed explanation of these criteria. The selection criteria are

as follows:

- (a) Identification of need for the project (Total 5 points).
- (b) Plan of operation (Total 20 points).
- (c) Quality of key personnel (Total 5 points).
- (d) Budget and cost effectiveness (Total 10 points).
- (e) Evaluation plan (Total 15 points).
- (f) Adequacy of resources (Total 5 points).
- (g) Potential institutional impact of the project (Total 15 points).
- (h) Institutional commitment to the project (Total 5 points).
- (i) Expected outcomes (Total 10 points).
- (j) Scientific and educational value of the proposed project (Total 10 points).

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Secretary may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Secretary may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of

unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Secretary also requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

Tiebreaker for Institutional, Special Project, and Cooperative Grants. If there are insufficient funds for all applications with the same total scores, applications will receive preference in the following manner. The Secretary gives priority to applicants which have not previously received funding from the program and to previous grantees with a proven record of success, as well as to applications that contribute to achieving balance among funded projects with respect to: (1) Geographic region; (2) Academic discipline; and (3) Project type.

3. Special Conditions: Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Secretary may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions

of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive

funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Secretary. If you receive a multi-year award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Secretary under 34 CFR 75.118. The Secretary may also require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

4. Performance Measures: The Secretary has established the following key performance measures for assessing the effectiveness of the MSEIP: (1) The percentage of change in the number of full-time, degree-seeking minority undergraduate students at the grantee's institution enrolled in the fields of engineering or physical or biological sciences, compared to the average minority enrollment in the same fields in the three-year period immediately prior to the beginning of the current grant; (2) the percentage of minority students enrolled at four-year minority-serving institutions in the fields of engineering or physical or biological sciences who graduate

within six years of enrollment. Please see the application package for details of data collection and reporting requirements for these measures.

5. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Secretary considers, among other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in achieving the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Secretary has established performance measurement requirements, the performance targets in the grantee's approved application. In making a continuation grant, the Secretary also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Agency Contacts

For Further Information Contact: Dr. Stacey Slijepcevic, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., room 6014, Washington, DC 20006-8517. Telephone: (202) 219-7124, or by e-mail: stacey.slijepcevic@ed.gov or Dr. Bernadette Hence, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K

Street, NW., room 6152. Telephone: (202) 219-7038 or by e-mail: Bernadette.hence@ed.gov.

If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

VIII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to the program contact persons listed under For Further Information Contact in section VII of this notice.

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Delegation of Authority: The Secretary of Education has delegated authority to Jamiene S. Studley, Deputy Under Secretary, to perform the functions and duties of the Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education.

Dated: March 27, 2015.

Jamiene S. Studley,
Deputy Under Secretary.

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