

**FY 2016-2017  
to FY 2020-2021**

**NDE 02-081**

Nebraska Department of Education  
Data, Research and Evaluation Center  
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## **NEBRASKA'S INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM**

### **GRANT APPLICATION GUIDE AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**NDE Form Number: 02-081**

**Approved: October 20, 2016**

***Grant Application Guide and RFP* Expiration Date: December 14, 2016**

**2016-2017 Grant Application Closing Date: December 14, 2016**

# Forward

## Grant Application Guide and Request for Proposals (RFP)

Prospective applicants interested in submitting a *Grant Application* to Nebraska's *Innovation Grant Program* are encouraged to review the **Grant Application Guide and Request for Proposals (RFP)** in its entirety. This document provides a general orientation to Nebraska's *Department of Education Innovation Grant Program* and competitive grant application process, including:

- Purpose of Grant Program;
- Eligible Applicants;
- Priority Considerations and Optional Competitive Preference Priority;
- Grant Program Design;
- Project Evaluation Requirements;
- Grant Program Timelines;
- Selection Criteria;
- Grant Application Instructions;
- Definitions; and
- Authorizing Legislation.

Additional information as well as templates for the *Grant Application* and required forms are available on the Nebraska Department of Education's *Innovation Grant Program* website:

[https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation\\_grant.html](https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation_grant.html)

### Questions?

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) encourages interested applicants to ask questions to clarify their understanding of the *Innovation Grant Program* and competitive grant application process. However, the Department cannot provide guidance to an applicant on a specific project proposal. Questions regarding the *Innovation Grant Program* may be directed to the NDE Help Desk, using one of the following options:

- Email: [nde.helpdesk@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.helpdesk@nebraska.gov)
- Submit a *Helpdesk Request* from your NDE Portal Account (located in the upper right corner of the *Collection Announcement* page)
- Call the Voicemail Line: (888) 285-0556

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# I. Request for Proposals (RFP): Grant Applications

## Nebraska's Innovation Grant Program

**INNOVATION:** A process, product, strategy or intervention, featuring new practices or methods that are advanced, original and creative, which will improve significantly upon the outcomes reached with status quo options and ultimately reach widespread effective usage.

### **Purpose**

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) is requesting applications for grants through the *Innovation Grant Program*. The *Department of Education Innovation Grant Fund* and *Innovation Grant Program* were created with the passage of *Legislative Bill (LB) 519*, effective August 30, 2015. This competitive grant program provides funding to *Local Education Agencies (LEAs)* to support the development, expansion and investment in innovative best practices that improve:

- Education outcomes for early childhood, elementary, middle school or high school students;
- Transitions between any successive stages of education; or
- Transitions between education and the work force.

Funded projects must have the potential to be both replicable and scalable. Grant recipients are required to generate evidence of a project's effectiveness through a rigorous independent evaluation, culminating in identification, validation and possible "scale-up" of the innovative best practice(s).

### **Administration and Funding**

As provided in *Nebraska Revised Statute (NRS) §79-1054*, the State Board of Education is responsible for establishing the *Innovation Grant Program*. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) administers the *Innovation Grant Fund* which consists of:

- Transfers pursuant to *NRS §9-812 (State Lottery Operation Trust Fund and Nebraska Education Improvement Fund)*;
- Repayments of grant funds; and
- Interest payments received in the course of administering the fund.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INNOVATIVE GRANT FUND	
<b>FY 2016-2017 through FY 2020-2021</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Beginning July 1, 2016, the <i>Nebraska Education Improvement Fund</i> receives 44.5% of the <i>State Lottery Operation Trust Fund</i>, after payment of prizes and operating expenses.</li><li>▪ 17% of the <i>Nebraska Education Improvement Fund</i>, after actual and necessary administrative expenses, is allocated to the <i>Department of Education Innovative Grant Fund</i>.</li></ul>

There is currently approximately \$7.8 million available over the next three (3) years for competitive grants through this program. The State Board of Education will award the first round of funding in January of 2017, to projects deemed sufficiently innovative, with a high chance of success and statewide significance. The grant program is fiscally structured on a *Reimbursement Payment* basis, with recipients reimbursed after making approved project-related expenditures.

## ***Eligible Applicants***

Applicants eligible for funding through Nebraska's *Innovation Grant Program* include:

- A School District;
- An Educational Service Unit (ESU); or
- A Combination of Entities that includes at least one (1) School District or ESU.

The applicant should identify all prospective project partners by the time of *Grant Application*, if possible.

## ***Authorized Representative***

The *Authorized Representative* is the person who will legally act on behalf of the grant recipient (e.g., School District Superintendent or ESU Administrator). The *Authorized Representative* serves as the primary liaison between the grantee and the grantor (Nebraska Department of Education). The *Local Education Agency's (LEA)* governing body must annually delegate this authority to the *Authorized Representative*, with that action duly noted in its recorded meeting minutes. Applicants should verify that the person assigned to submit the Grant Application has been formally designated as the Authorized Representative prior to the established submission deadline.

## ***Fiscal Agent***

Under the *Innovation Grant Program*, only a school district or ESU can act as a funded project's *Fiscal Agent*. For applicants that are a combination of entities, a participating school district or ESU must be designated as the *Fiscal Agent*. The *Fiscal Agent* is responsible for administering the grant and all funds awarded. The *Fiscal Agent* cannot be a separate legal entity created solely to administer the grant.

For more information about an *Authorized Representative* or *Fiscal Agent*, refer to [Nebraska Department of Education's State and Federal Grant Management Requirements and Guidance](#), available on the Nebraska Department of Education's Federal Programs webpage: <https://www.education.ne.gov.federalprograms/index.html>

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## **Priority Considerations**

Under Nebraska's *Innovation Grant Program*, priority consideration is given to proposed projects that address one (1) of the following:

### **Priority Consideration 1: Serves "High Needs" Students**

Within the context of this grant program, *High-Needs Students* refers to students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support. This *Priority Consideration* is given to projects that specifically serve students who:

- Are performing far below grade level;
- Are at risk of not graduating with a regular high school diploma on time;
- Have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma;
- Have a disability;
- Are English Learners (EL);
- Are migrant;
- Live in poverty;
- Are homeless;
- Are involved in the child welfare, juvenile/criminal justice or behavioral health system;
- Are in foster care or other out-of-home placement; or
- Have been incarcerated.

### **Priority Consideration 2: Focuses on AQUESTT Tenets**

Nebraska's *Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow (AQuESTT)* is a system of school improvement and support, adopted by the State Board of Education, designed to measure the performance of public schools and school districts. *AQuESTT* establishes school performance classifications through a framework that describes quality and accountability. This framework addresses two (2) broad categories of quality education: (1) *Student Success and Access*; and (2) *Teaching and Learning*. Within each of those broad categories, tenets describe the conditions which contribute to quality education systems. *Priority Consideration* is given to proposed projects which focus on any of *AQuESTT*'s six (6) tenets:

#### ***Student Success and Access Tenets***

- Positive Partnerships, Relationships and Student Access;
- Transitions; and
- Educational Opportunities and Access.

#### ***Teaching and Learning Tenets***

- College and Career Ready;
- Assessment; and
- Educator Effectiveness.

### **Priority Consideration 3: Serves Students in “Needs Improvement” Schools**

The *AQuESTT System* is used to classify all public schools and school districts into one (1) of four (4) categories: *Excellent, Great, Good* or *Needs Improvement*. *Priority Consideration* is given to proposed projects that serve students attending a public school or district designated as *Needs Improvement*.

Additional information about Nebraska's *AQuESTT System* and *Needs Improvement Schools* is provided on the Nebraska Department of Education's *AQuESTT* website:  
[NDE.AQuESTT@nebraska.gov](mailto:NDE.AQuESTT@nebraska.gov)

### **Priority Consideration 4: Leverages Technology to Support Instructional Practice and Professional Development**

Within the context of this grant program, *Leveraging Technology* refers to the innovative use of technology in the classroom to support student learning and inform teachers' professional development. This *Priority Consideration* is given for an innovative process, product, strategy or intervention that uses data platforms or technological tools for the development, integration, visualization and rapid analysis of data to inform instructional practice and improve education outcomes. *Priority Consideration* is also be given to projects that support privacy, security, access to instructional assets, open source options, timely communication and information sharing among systems of support for students, parents and educators.

### **Optional Competitive Preference Priority: Matching Funds**

In addition to the four (4) *Priority Considerations* described above, applicants may choose to seek an *Optional Competitive Preference Priority of Matching Funds*. Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with community partners, the private sector and philanthropic organizations to “match” *Innovation Grant Program* funds using local dollars. Under of this grant program, *Matching Funds* may include:

- **Cash Outlay** - The grantee's cash spending, which may come from non-Federal and non-State revenues, individuals, agencies, institutions, private organizations or foundations.
- **In-Kind Contributions** – The value of non-cash contributions made by the grantee, other individuals, agencies, institutions, private organizations and foundations. *In-Kind Contributions* may include

charges for real property and equipment as well as the value of goods and services directly benefitting and specifically identifiable to the project.

To be eligible for the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority*, an applicant must secure *Matching Funds*, in the form of *Cash Outlay* or *In-Kind Donations*, equal to at least 25% of the total *Project Budget* amount. For example, an applicant with a total *Project Budget* of \$100,000 would secure at least the minimum 25% in *Matching Funds* (\$25,000) and request the remaining 75% (\$75,000) in *Innovation Grant Program* funds.

**Applicants requesting the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority* must submit evidence that at least 50% of *Matching Funds* have been pledged or secured by the time of *Grant Application*.** If awarded a grant, the recipient will need to demonstrate that the remaining 50% of *Matching Funds* has been pledged to the project within sixty (60) days of award. Using the above example, an applicant must include *Pledge Letters*, totaling \$12,500 in *Matching Funds*, from project partners in the *Grant Application*. Additional *Pledge Letters* for the remaining \$12,500 in *Matching Funds* are due March 3, 2017. **All *Matching Funds* must be included on the *Line Item Budget Form(s)* submitted with the *Grant Application*.**

### ***Reduction in Matching Funds***

If necessary, an applicant may request a reduction in the amount *Matching Funds* specified in their *Pre-Application*. The *Grant Application* must be revised to reflect both the reduced amount of *Matching Funds* and corresponding reduction in the total *Project Budget* amount.

Once a grant award is made under the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority*, the recipient must meet the pledged amount of *Matching Funds* (both *Cash Outlay* and *In-Kind Donations*). If a grantee cannot meet the pledged match amount, the Nebraska Department of Education may disallow reimbursement for project-related expenditures and require repayment of any grant funds used that are not matched.

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## **Grant Program Design**

One of the central design elements of Nebraska's *Innovation Grant Program* is its multi-phased structure, linking future funding opportunities to the quality of evidence supporting a project's effectiveness and potential to be both replicable and scalable. Grant projects must demonstrate the likelihood of future success through progress made toward stated goals, specific measurable objectives and targeted outcomes. Over time, the three (3) tiers of grants described below may be progressively awarded to eligible applicants.

### ***Phase I - Development Grants***

Initially, applicants proposing an innovative promising practice or method supported by limited evidence may apply for a *Phase I - Development Grant*. This tier of grant funding seeks to identify, develop, demonstrate or expand upon a process, product, strategy or intervention that is novel and potentially significant statewide. Proposed projects should not simply implement existing practices at additional locations or support primarily local needs. **This RFP invites applications for *Phase I - Development Grants* only.**

### ***Phase II - Validation Grants***

Each *Phase I - Development Grant* project must submit a *Summative Evaluation of Progress Report* to the State Board of Education in July, 2019. Based on that *Report*, the State Board will recommend the project represents:

- A best practice;
- A model for a State-supported program; or
- A local issue or promising practice for further study.

Projects recommended as a best practice or model for a State-supported program will be invited to apply for a *Phase II - Validation Grant*. In this tier of grants, funded projects must substantiate their designation as a best practice or model through a rigorous independent evaluation, focusing on the specific student population(s), school settings and contexts in which most effective. *Phase II Grants* are designed to build the project's capacity to deliver a best practice or model that can successfully reach statewide significance and scale. Any barriers to replication, expansion, or cost effectiveness should be addressed during this tier.

### ***Phase III - Scale-Up Grants***

During the third tier, *Phase II - Validation Grant* projects may apply for funds to support replication and scale-up of an innovative best practice or model for a State-supported program. In addition to improving education outcomes and related transitions for an increasing number of students, projects awarded *Phase III - Scale-Up Grants* must generate further information about the specific student populations, school settings and contexts in which the best practice or model is most effective as well as replication strategies for timely efficient expansion.

The State Board of Education may establish criteria allowing grant projects recommended as best practices to be included in the *Best Practices Allowance to School Districts*, beginning with aid calculated for *School Fiscal Year 2021-2022*. This criteria will specify the qualifications for a school district to participate in the *Best Practices Allowance* for each best practice included. The *Best Practices Dollar Amount* is based on 85% of the estimated costs of each best practice included in the allowance that:

- Would not otherwise be incurred without the best practice;
- Does not replace other such costs; and
- Is not included in another allowance.

On or before November 1, 2020, and every November 1st thereafter, the Nebraska Department of Education will annually certify:

- To each qualifying school district, the amount of the *Best Practices Cost* for that district; and
- The *Total Best Practices Cost* for all qualifying school districts to be included in State Aid calculations for the next *School Fiscal Year*.

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## **Project Evaluation**

The *Innovation Grant Program* requires grant recipients generate evidence of their funded project's effectiveness, culminating in identification, development, validation, potential replication and scale-up of innovative best practices or methods that improve education outcomes and related transitions for students. Grantees must use a portion of their *Project Budget* for a rigorous independent evaluation of the project to assess its progress toward achieving the stated goal(s), specific objectives and targeted outcomes as well as its potential for success and statewide significance as an innovative best practice or model for a State-supported program.

### ***Project Evaluation Plan***

Applicants must submit a proposed *Project Evaluation Plan* as part of the *Grant Application*. If awarded a grant, the recipient and independent evaluator may be required to revise or expand on the proposed plan. Technical assistance in finalizing the *Project Evaluation Plan* is available through the Nebraska Department of Education, if needed. **Finalized *Project Evaluation Plans* must be electronically submitted to the Department by March 3, 2017.**

The *Project Evaluation Plan* is updated at least annually to reflect any changes. Updates must be consistent with the project's scope, goals and objectives, as described in the original *Grant Application*.

### ***Annual Project Progress Report***

All funded projects must annually evaluate and report progress toward achieving stated goals, specific measurable objectives and targeted outcomes. On or before November 1, 2017, and every subsequent November 1st of each grant-funded year, the grantee submits an *Annual Project Progress Report* to the Nebraska Department of Education. These reports will serve as the basis for the State Board of Education's *Innovation Grant Program Annual Report* to the Legislature.

### ***State Board of Education's Innovation Grant Program Annual Report***

On or before December 1, 2017, and every December 1st thereafter, the State Board of Education will electronically submit an *Innovation Grant Program Annual Report* to the Clerk of the Legislature. This report includes each funded project's progress, evaluation results, and *Best Practices Allowance*, if implemented.

### ***Summative Evaluation of Progress Report***

On or before July 1, 2019, each grant project must submit a *Summative Evaluation of Progress Report* to the State Board of Education and the Legislature's Education Committee. This report includes the results of all *Project Evaluations* conducted, to date. The *Summative Evaluation Report* serves as the basis for the State Board's recommendation on which projects represent an innovative best practice, a model for a State-supported program, or local issue or promising practice for further study.

## II. Competitive Grant Application Process

### Competitive Grant Application Process and Program Timeline

The Nebraska Department of Education has established a dual-step competitive grant application process for the *Innovation Grant Program*. To apply for a grant, an eligible applicant initially submits a *Pre-Application* to the Department. Applicants with highly rated *Pre-Applications* are subsequently invited to submit a full *Grant Application*. However, other applicants may also submit a *Grant Application*. This two-tiered application process is intended to save prospective applicants time, effort and money, while promoting diligent project planning and the quality of *Grant Applications*.

Nebraska Department of Education's *Innovation Grant Program* Webpage:  
[https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation\\_grant.html](https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation_grant.html)

- **Pre-Applications Due: Thursday, October 20th, 2016**
- **Highly Rated Pre-Application Notification: Friday, November 4th, 2016**  
Following review of all *Pre-Applications* received, the Nebraska Department of Education notifies applicants with highly rated *Pre-Applications*. Applicants with *Pre-Applications* not highly rated are also notified.
- **Grant Applications Due: Wednesday, December 14th, 2016**  
The full *Grant Application*, including a proposed *Project Evaluation Plan*, must be electronically submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education, no later than 5:00 p.m. CST, using the *Innovation Grant Program* webpage.
- **Proposed Project Evaluation Plans Due: Wednesday, December 14th, 2016**  
A proposed *Project Evaluation Plan* must be electronically submitted as part of the full *Grant Application*, no later than 5:00 p.m. CST.
- **Grant Award / Denial Notification: Friday, January 6th, 2017**  
Following review of all *Grant Applications* successfully submitted, the Nebraska Department of Education notifies applicants of grant award or denial.
- **Innovation Grant Program Workshop: January, 2017**  
Grant recipients and independent evaluators are required to attend the Nebraska Department of Education's *Innovation Grant Program Workshop* in January, 2017. Participants from each funded project should include: the *Authorized Representative*, the independent evaluator, and two (2) additional project staff or partners. This workshop will further orient grantees to the *Innovation Grant Program's* requirements for *Phase I – Development Grant* projects and evaluation.
- **Finalized Project Evaluation Plans Due: Friday, March 3rd, 2017**  
Based on initial review of the proposed *Project Evaluation Plan*, the grantee and independent evaluator may be required to revise or expand the initial *Plan*. A finalized comprehensive *Project Evaluation Plan* must be submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education, no later than 5:00 p.m. CST, using the *Innovation Grant Program* webpage.

- **Implementation and Evaluation of Funded Projects: January, 2017 through June, 2019**  
Grantees implement *Phase I – Development Grant* projects, working with the independent evaluator to generate evidence of an innovative best practice or method and the project’s capacity for future success and statewide significance.
- **Annual Project Progress Reports Due: Wednesday, November 1st, 2017, and every November 1st thereafter.**  
Grant recipients electronically submit an Annual Project Progress Report to the Nebraska Department of Education, by November 1st of each grant-funded year of project operation.
- **State Board of Education’s Innovation Grant Program Annual Report Due: Friday, December 1st, 2017, and every December 1st thereafter.**  
The State Board of Education electronically submits an Innovation Grant Program Annual Report to the Clerk of the Legislature every year by December 1st.
- **Summative Evaluation of Progress Reports Due: Monday, July 1, 2019**  
Grantees electronically submit a Summative Evaluation of Progress Report to the State Board of Education and the Legislature’s Education Committee.

## Selection Criteria

*Innovation Grant Program* funds will be awarded to projects deemed sufficiently innovative, with a high chance of success and potential statewide significance. The grant program’s dual-step competitive grant application process uses an abbreviated set of *Selection Criteria* for the initial *Pre-Application*, followed by more extensive *Selection Criteria* for the full *Grant Application*. The applicant’s response to each of the *Selection Criterion* described below serves as the basis for how the *Grant Application* is assessed and scored. A *Grant Application* may earn up to 100 total points\*, with the specific points assigned to each criterion indicated in parentheses. *Grant Applications* requesting the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority* may earn up to 103 total points\*.

### **Significance (up to 35 points)**

In determining the significance of the proposed project, the following is considered:

- The extent to which the project involves the identification, development or demonstration of an innovative promising practice or method that builds on, or is an alternative to, an existing process, product, strategy or intervention(s) addressing similar needs;
- The extent to which the project will, or is expected to, improve education outcomes or related transitions for the student population(s) it serves;
- The project’s potential for statewide significance; and
- The project’s potential to be both replicable and scalable.

### **Quality of Project Design and Management Plan (up to 45 points)**

In determining the quality of the proposed project’s design, the following is considered:

- The extent to which the stated goals, objectives and targeted outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable;
- The adequacy of the *Project Management Plan* to achieve those goals, objectives and outcomes, on time and within budget, based on clearly defined responsibilities, milestones and timelines for accomplishing project tasks;
- The applicant’s capacity to successfully implement the project, on time and within budget;
- The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operations and evaluation of the project;

- The extent to which the *Project Logic Model* provides a well-developed conceptual framework illustrating the relationships between the project's key components, activities, outputs and targeted outcomes for the student population(s) served; and
- The adequacy of mechanisms for disseminating information about the project to support further development, expansion, or validation.

### **Quality of Project Evaluation Plan (up to 20 points)**

In determining the quality of the proposed *Project Evaluation Plan*, the following is considered:

- The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by a rigorous independent *Project Evaluation* and appropriateness of the method(s) for how each question is addressed;
- The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence of the project's effectiveness; and
- The extent to which the proposed *Project Evaluation Plan* and *Project Budget* include sufficient resources to carry out a rigorous independent evaluation effectively.

### **Optional Competitive Preference Priority (up to 3 points)**

Applicants choosing to pursue the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority of Matching Funds* must include a formal request in the *Grant Application's Budget Narrative*. In determining the adequacy of this request, the applicant's brief description of the following is considered:

- The type(s) of *Matching Funds* (*Cash Outlay* and/or *In-Kind Donations*);
- The dollar amount of *Matching Funds* and percent of the total *Project Budget* that they represent; and
- The source(s) of *Matching Funds*, accompanied by a signed and dated *Pledge Letter(s)*.

**Evidence must be provided that at least 50% of *Matching Funds* have been pledged or secured by the time of *Grant Application*.**

## **Grant Application Review and Scoring**

### **Grant Application Review**

All *Grant Applications* successfully submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education by the established deadline will be reviewed and scored. Only information included in the *Application* may be considered by the grant reviewer.

Reviewers' comments and numerical scores reflect an overall assessment of the quality of the *Grant Application* based on the *Selection Criteria* previously described. Comments indicate why the applicant's response to each criterion is considered *Fully Developed*, *Well Developed*, *Adequately Developed*, *Poorly Developed*, or *Not Addressed*. The numerical score indicates how well or poorly the applicant responded to the criterion. A written summary of reviewers' comments and scores will be provided to each applicant when notified of grant award or denial.

**Suggested Point Scale for Scoring**

Suggested point ranges for scoring an applicant’s response to each *Selection Criterion* are provided below.

Selection Criteria	Maximum Point Value	Quality of Applicant’s Response to Selection Criteria				
		Not Addressed	Poorly Developed	Adequately Developed	Well Developed	Fully Developed
Significance	35	0	1 - 16	17 - 27	28 - 32	33 - 35
Quality of Project Design and Management Plan	45	0	1 - 21	22- 34	35 - 41	42 - 45
Quality of Project Evaluation Plan	20	0	1 - 9	10 - 16	17 - 18	19 - 20
Optional Competitive Preference Priority*	3*	0	1	2	2 - 3	3
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS: 100 (or 103* with Optional Competitive Preference Priority)</b>						

## III. Grant Application Instructions

### Completing and Submitting A Grant Application

Before developing a *Grant Application*, applicants should have a thorough understanding of the *Innovation Grant Program*'s purpose, design and priorities as well as the competitive grant application process. Interested applicants are encouraged to review the *Grant Application Guide and RFP* in its entirety prior to completing and submitting an *Application* to the Nebraska Department of Education. *Grant Applications* not meeting the specified requirements and established deadlines will not be reviewed or scored.

Applicants are encouraged to review their *Grant Application* for clarity prior to submission. The *Application* will be assessed and scored by multiple grant reviewers; therefore, it is important to ensure that it can be understood by someone who is unfamiliar with the proposed project.

#### **Formatting**

A "page" is 8.5 x 11 inches, on one side only, with 1 inch margins at the top, bottom and both sides. However, the page numbers and applicant identifier can be outside the 1 inch margin.

Double-space (no more than three (3) lines per vertical inch) all text in the *Project Narrative* and *Budget Narrative*, including titles, headings, quotations, and references. Charts, graphs, captions, and footnotes may be single-spaced.

Use a 12-point font size throughout the primary text of the *Grant Application*. Headings may be up to a 14-point font. Use one (1) of the following fonts consistently throughout the entire *Grant Application*: Times New Roman, Garamond, Helvetica, or Arial.

#### **PDF File**

The *Grant Application*, all *Appendices* and required forms must be submitted as a PDF (*Portable Document Format*) file, in read-only, non-modifiable format. Do not submit an interactive or fillable PDF file or password-protected file as it will not be reviewed or considered.

#### **Electronic Submission**

All *Grant Applications* must be electronically submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education, **on or before 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST) on Wednesday, December 14, 2016**, using the *Innovation Grant Program* webpage:

[https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation\\_grant.html](https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation_grant.html).

Each applicant successfully submitting a *Grant Application* will be sent an e-notification acknowledging receipt. Late submissions will not be reviewed or considered. To ensure fairness to other applicants, no changes or additions in a *Grant Application* will be accepted after the established deadline.

## Grant Application Components

Under Nebraska's *Innovation Grant Program*, a complete *Grant Application* consists of the components listed below. Applicants may use this "Checklist" to assist in ensuring all required sections of the *Grant Application* are successfully completed and submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education by the established deadline.

- Cover Sheet**
- Table of Contents**
- Project Abstract – *Limited to 2 Pages***
- Project Narrative – *Limited to 25 Pages***
  - Description of the proposed project, the challenge or problem to be addressed, and how the innovative promising practice or method will accomplish this
  - *Priority Consideration*
  - Stated goal(s), specific objectives and targeted outcomes
  - Description of the student population(s) served and estimated number
  - *Project Management Plan*
  - *Project Logic Model*
  - Project's potential for statewide significance
  - Project's potential to be both replicable and scalable
  - Mechanism(s) for disseminating project information in future phases
  - Any cost savings to be achieved
- Project Budget**
  - **Budget Narrative - *Limited to 3 pages***
  - **Line Item Budget Form(s) – 1 Form for each funded year of project operation**
  - Request for *Optional Competitive Priority Preference*, if applicable
- Project Evaluation Plan – *Limited to 15 Pages***
- Appendices**
  - Support Letters
  - *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)*, if applicant represents a combination of entities
  - Pledge Letters, if requesting *Optional Competitive Priority Consideration*
  - Other Related Information
- Assurances and Certifications**
- Required Forms**
  - Grant Application Information Sheet
  - Line Item Budget Form
  - Standard Forms

Templates for the required forms are available on the NDE *Innovation Grant Program* webpage: [https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation\\_grant.html](https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation_grant.html)

## **Grant Application Instructions:**

### **Cover Sheet, Table of Contents and Project Abstract**

Each *Grant Application* must include a *Cover Sheet*, *Table of Contents*, and brief *Project Abstract*.

#### **Cover Sheet**

The *Grant Application's Cover Sheet* includes the following header: "**Department of Education Innovation Grant Program – Grant Application**" within the required 1 inch page margins. The *Cover Sheet* also includes:

- Title of the proposed project;
- Applicant's name (the *Local Education Agency*); and
- Date that the *Grant Application* is submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education.

#### **Table of Contents**

The *Table of Contents* lists the title of each section of the *Grant Application*, followed by the corresponding page number. The *Table of Contents* may be single and/or double spaced.

#### **Project Abstract**

Applicants must submit a brief *Abstract* of the proposed project, **up to a maximum of two (2) pages in length**. The *Project Abstract* includes:

- Title of the proposed project;
  - Applicant's name (e.g., the school district or ESU);
  - Type of grant requested (*Phase I – Development Grant*);
  - *Priority Consideration* to be addressed by the project;
  - Notation of *Optional Competitive Preference Priority*, if applicable;
  - Brief description of the project;
  - Stated goal(s), specific measurable objectives and targeted outcomes;
  - Brief description of the student population(s) served, including estimated number and demographics;
  - Any special project features;
  - Project partners, if applying as a combination of entities; and
  - Independent Evaluator's name.
-

## **Grant Application Instructions: Project Narrative**

The *Project Narrative* serves as the applicant's opportunity to respond to the *Innovation Grant Program's Selection Criteria*. This section of the *Grant Application* should clearly articulate how the proposed project will improve education outcomes or related transitions for the student population(s) served through an innovative promising practice or method. The *Project Narrative* includes:

- Description of the challenge or problem to be addressed by the project;
- Description of the project;
- *Priority Consideration* to be addressed by the project;
- Stated goal(s), specific measurable objectives and targeted outcomes;
- Descriptive and statistical profile of the student population(s) served, including estimated number and demographics;
- *Project Management Plan* (see below);
- *Project Logic Model* (see below);
- Project's potential for statewide significance;
- Project's potential to be both replicable and scalable;
- Mechanisms proposed for disseminating project information to support further development, validation, replication and potential scale-up; and
- Any cost savings to be achieved by reductions in other programs, if the project is successful.

### ***Project Management Plan***

The *Project Narrative* includes a clearly-stated comprehensive *Project Management Plan* that provides detailed information about the project's implementation during the grant-funded years of operation:

- Operational design;
- Designated staff, their respective roles, responsibilities and resumes\*;
- Project partners, their respective roles and responsibilities, if applicable;
- Specific activities, tasks and key milestones, with corresponding start / end dates and total months in duration; and
- A complete set of performance metrics with baseline measures and annual targets.

The *Project Management Plan* counts toward the *Project Narrative's* twenty-five (25) page limit. However, project staff resumes\* should be included as an *Appendix* in the *Grant Application*; and therefore, not counted toward the *Project Narrative's* page limit.

Grantees are required to update the *Project Management Plan* at least annually to reflect implementation in subsequent project years. The updated *Project Management Plan* is included in the *Annual Project Progress Report* submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education, no later than November 1st of each grant-funded year.

### ***Project Logic Model***

The *Project Narrative* includes a well-developed *Logic Model*, depicting how the proposed project's stated goals, specific objectives and targeted outcomes will be achieved. It should clearly illustrate the relationships between the project's key components and targeted outcomes, both theoretically and operationally. The *Project Logic Model* includes:

- The key components of the proposed project (inputs);
- Project activities;
- Project outputs (product or service delivered) for the student population(s) served; and
- Targeted outcomes.

The *Logic Model* counts toward the *Project Narrative's* 25 page limit.

## **Page Limit**

The *Project Narrative* is limited to a maximum of 25 pages. This page limit does not include the *Cover Sheet*, *Table of Contents*, *Project Abstract*, *Project Budget*, *Project Evaluation Plan*, *Appendices*, *Assurances and Certifications*, or required forms. However, the *Project Management Plan* and *Project Logic Model* do count toward the 25-page limit.

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## **Grant Application Instructions: Project Budget**

The *Project Budget* should be viewed as a crucial final check in clarifying the proposed project's practical application of the *Innovation Grant Program*. The *Budget* is a statement of anticipated costs for which grant funds, as well as any optional *Matching Funds*, will be used to support and implement the project. It includes only costs that are allowable, reasonable and necessary to achieving the project's stated goal(s), specific objectives and targeted outcomes. The *Project Budget* has two (2) sections:

- A detailed *Budget Narrative*, limited to three (3) pages; and
- A *Line Item Budget Form* for each grant-funded year of project operation.

Careful deliberation should go into the *Project Budget* to ensure the financial support requested is sufficient to carry out the project in an effective manner.

### ***Multi-Year Projects***

Applicants may apply for a *Phase I – Development Grant* through the *Innovation Grant Program*, with funding for up to thirty (30) months. The duration of the proposed project, in months, must be determined by the time of *Grant Application*. A *Line Item Budget Form*, accompanied by the corresponding narrative justifications, must be submitted as part of the *Grant Application* for each grant-funded year of project operation.

### ***Rigorous Independent Evaluation***

All projects funded through the *Innovation Grant Program* are required to generate evidence of effectiveness, culminating in the identification, development, validation, replication, and potential scale-up of an innovative best practice or method. Consequently, all applicants must devote a portion of their *Project Budget* to conducting a rigorous independent *Project Evaluation*, including annual updates. **It is essential that adequate funds for this purpose are specified in the *Project Budget*.**

### ***Innovation Grant Program Workshop***

The *Project Budget* must also include estimated costs for four (4) project staff (e.g., the *Authorized Representative*, independent evaluator, and two (2) other project staff or partners to attend the Nebraska Department of Education's *Innovation Grant Program Workshop* planned for January, 2017.

### ***Combination of Entities***

Applicants representing a combination of entities, including at least one school district or Educational Service Unit (ESU), should not submit multiple *Budgets* for each project partner. Only one (1) combined *Project Budget* may be submitted, representing the costs of all entities involved.

## **Budget Narrative**

The *Budget Narrative* describes the proposed project's multi-year activities and specific costs associated with those tasks during each grant-funded year of operation, as well as the total cost to successfully implement and evaluate the overall project. The *Budget Narrative* describes how expenditures included in the *Line Item Budget* support the stated goal(s), specific objectives and targeted outcomes. It provides an itemized budget breakdown and justification, organized into the budget categories listed on the *Line*

*Item Budget Form*. Narrative justifications are included for all expenditures supported by *Innovation Grant Program* funds, as well as any optional *Matching Funds*.

Applicants are encouraged to re-check all costs specified in the *Budget Narrative*, comparing those amounts to each line item cost and the combined totals listed in the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*. **Both the *Budget Narrative* and *Line Item Budget Form* use whole dollar amounts only.**

### ***Authorized Representative and Fiscal Agent***

The proposed project's *Authorized Representative* and *Fiscal Agent* must be specified in both the *Budget Narrative* and *Grant Application Information Sheet*.

### ***Optional Competitive Preference Priority – Matching Funds***

If an applicant chooses to pursue the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority of Matching Funds*, this must be formally requested at the beginning of the *Budget Narrative*, as well as noted in the *Grant Application Information Sheet*. It should be clearly stated and include a discussion of the *Matching Funds* to be provided:

- Type of *Matching Funds* (*Cash Outlay* and/or *In-Kind Donations*);
- Dollar amount of *Matching Funds* and percentage of the total *Project Budget*; and
- Source(s) of those funds, accompanied by a signed and dated *Pledge Letter(s)*.

**Evidence that at least 50% of *Matching Funds* have been pledged or secured is required by the time of *Grant Application*.** *Pledge Letter(s)* should be included as an *Appendix* in the *Grant Application*; and therefore, not counted toward the *Budget Narrative's* three (3)-page limit.

### ***Page Limit***

The *Budget Narrative* is limited to 3 pages. This page limit does not include the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*.

### ***Line Item Budget***

All project expenditures to be reimbursed with *Innovation Grant Program* funds, as well as those provided through any optional *Matching Funds* (both *Cash Outlay* and *In-Kind Donations*), must be listed in the *Line Item Budget*. The dollar amount of each expenditure is enumerated on the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*, accompanied by a corresponding justification in the *Budget Narrative*.

Applicants are encouraged to carefully re-check all dollar amounts and combined totals on the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*, comparing those to the amounts specified in the *Budget Narrative*. **Both the *Line Item Budget Form(s)* and *Budget Narrative* use whole dollar amounts only.** A copy of the *Line Item Budget Form* is provided in the *Required Forms* section of this *Guide and RFP*.

### ***Optional Competitive Preference Priority – Matching Funds***

Applicants requesting the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority* must include the *Matching Funds*, in the form of *Cash Outlay* and/or *In-Kind Contributions*, on the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*. Both the *Line Item Budget* and *Budget Narrative* should reflect the total *Project Budget*, based on the combined total of *Innovation Grant Program* funds and any optional *Matching Funds*.

To be eligible for the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority*, an applicant must secure *Matching Funds*, equal to at least 25% of the total *Project Budget* amount. For example, an applicant with a total *Project Budget* of \$100,000 must secure at least the minimum 25% in *Matching Funds* (\$25,000) and request the remaining 75% (\$75,000) in State grant funds. **Under the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority*, evidence must be provided that at least 50% of *Matching Funds* have been pledged or secured by the time of *Grant Application*. However, 100% of *Matching Funds*, including both *Cash Outlay* and *In-Kind Contributions*, are listed on the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*.**

## **Line Item Budget Categories**

For each grant-funded year of project operation, an itemized cost breakdown of all expenditures must be provided on a *Line Item Budget Form*. Expenditures are organized into the following categories:

- **Project Staff** – Specify each project staff’s job position, base salary, wages and FTE.
- **Fringe Benefits** - The grant recipient’s normal fringe benefits contribution may be charged to the project. Specify each project staff receiving those benefits, by job position, and the corresponding total dollar amount of fringe benefits. Include an explanation of how this rate was calculated in the *Budget Narrative*. If fringe benefits related to direct salaries and wages are treated as an *Indirect Cost*, leave the *Fringe Benefits Budget Category* blank.
- **Travel** - Include travel costs for the project staff and independent evaluator(s) only. Provide a breakdown of costs associated with each trip taken (e.g., lodging, meals and mileage), with a corresponding justification in the *Budget Narrative*. Include the estimated cost for project staff and the independent evaluator to attend the Nebraska Department of Education’s *Innovation Grant Program Workshop planned for January 2017*.
- **Independent Project Evaluation** – Specify each evaluation staff’s job position, base salary, wages and FTE. Indicate any additional expenditures directly related to project evaluation, including annual updates in the *Project Evaluation Plan*.
- **Contractual** – Include the costs for all project-related contractual services specifically incurred through actions that the applicant takes in conjunction with an established procurement system. Consultant fees, expenses and travel costs should be listed if the consultant’s services are obtained through a written binding agreement or contract. Identify the contractor, the contract’s purpose, description of primary services, and the total contract amount in the *Budget Narrative*. **Do not include contractual services related to Project Evaluation in this budget category;** those should be specified in the *Independent Project Evaluation* budget category described above.
- **Professional Development** - Indicate training-related expenses for project staff’s professional development, including registration fees and resource materials. Also include any expenses incurred through professional development events hosted by the grant recipient, such as participant stipends and training site rental fees. Specify the amount of any stipends and estimated number of participants receiving a stipend in the *Line Item Budget*, accompanied by a corresponding justification in the *Budget Narrative*.
- **Equipment** – Specify all tangible equipment, the cost per unit and the number of units purchased, including instruments, machines, apparatus or sets of articles that meet ANY of the following:
  - Under normal conditions of use can be expected to last longer than one (1) year;
  - Does not lose its identify through fabrication or incorporation into a different or more complex unit;
  - Is non-expendable;
  - Retains its appearance and character throughout use;
  - Is of significant value; and/or
  - May be small and attractive.Equipment purchases of \$5,000 or more is capitalized (depreciated). A justification for all equipment purchased must be provided in the *Budget Narrative*.
- **Supplies and Materials** – Include all tangible expendable personal property. Direct supplies and materials differ from equipment in that they are consumable and of a relatively low unit cost. Supplies and materials purchased with grant funds must directly benefit the project and be necessary to achieving stated goal(s), specific objectives and targeted outcomes. An explanation of how the cost of supplies and materials is determined should be provided in the *Budget Narrative*.
- **Other** - Indicate all direct costs not covered under any of the above budget categories, such as printing and communication costs. Do not include costs that are included in the applicant’s *Indirect Cost Rate*.
- **Direct Costs Sub-Total** - The sum of all line expenditures included in the above budget categories.

- **Indirect Costs Sub-Total** – Indicate the applicant’s approved *Indirect Cost Rate* and all *Indirect Costs* to be charged to the grant.

The *Indirect Cost Rate* for each school district and Educational Service Unit (ESU) is available on the Nebraska Department of Education’s Finance and Organizational Services webpage: <https://www.education.ne.gov/FOS/ASPX/IndirectCost/Default.aspx>

- **TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET** - The sum of the *Direct Costs Sub-Total* and *Indirect Costs Sub-Total*, reflecting all project-related expenditures listed in each budget category.

### ***Reimbursement of Expenditures***

The *Innovation Grant Program* is fiscally structured on a *Reimbursement Payment* basis. Grantees will be reimbursed only after expending funds as specified in the *Project Budget* and supporting documentation has been submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education. **Grant funds must be obligated by June 30, 2019, and expended by August 31, 2019.**

Detailed information about allowable costs, general grants management principles and expenditure reimbursement is provided in the *Nebraska Department of Education’s State and Federal Grant Management Requirements and Guidance*, available on the Nebraska Department of Education’s Federal Programs webpage: <https://www.education.ne.gov/federalprograms/index.html>

## **Grant Application Instructions: Project Evaluation Plan**

Applicants are required to submit a proposed *Project Evaluation Plan* as part of the full *Grant Application*. Sufficient funds to conduct a rigorous independent evaluation of the project must be specified in the *Project Budget*. The *Project Evaluation Plan* includes:

- *Priority Consideration* to be addressed by the project;
- Key questions to be addressed through project evaluation;
- Specific evaluation methods to address each key question and, if well-implemented, produce evidence of:
  - The project’s progress toward the stated goal(s), specific objectives and targeted outcomes
  - The project’s effectiveness in identifying, developing or demonstrating an innovative promising practice or method
  - The project’s potential for statewide significance
  - The project’s potential to be both replicable and scalable
  - Any cost savings that may be achieved by reductions in other programs, if the project is successful
- Project performance metrics, with clearly specified baseline measures and annual targets corresponding to key milestones;
- Data collection methods and measures;
- An *Evaluation Management Plan* which includes:
  - Operational design
  - Evaluation staff, their respective roles, responsibilities and resumes\*
  - Collaborative partners, their respective roles and responsibilities
  - Specific activities, tasks and key milestones, with corresponding start / end dates and total months in duration
  - Proposed resources to carry out a rigorous independent evaluation effectively

Resumes\* of project evaluation staff should be included as an *Appendix* in the *Grant Application*; and therefore, not counted toward the *Project Evaluation Plan*'s fifteen (15) page limit.

### **Page Limit**

The *Project Evaluation Plan* is limited to a maximum of 15 pages. The *Evaluation Plan* does not count toward the *Project Narrative*'s page limit.

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## **Grant Application Instructions: Appendices**

Applicants may choose to provide supplemental information related to the proposed project as an *Appendix* to the *Grant Application*. Applicants are strongly encouraged not to include lengthy *Appendices* or substantive project-related information; all such information must be included in the *Project Narrative* and *Project Budget*. Suggested *Appendices* include:

- Resumes of project staff and independent evaluator(s);
- *Letters of Support* to demonstrate the commitment of collaborative partners and broad support from stakeholders critical to the project's long-term success;
- *Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)*, if the applicant represents a combination of entities;
- *Pledge Letters*, if the applicant requests the *Optional Competitive Preference Priority*;
- Required forms; and
- Other information relevant to the project.

All *Appendices* must be included in the *Grant Application* as a PDF (*Portable Document Format*) file, in read-only, non-modifiable format. Do not submit an interactive or fillable PDF file or password-protected file as it will not be reviewed or considered. Each *Appendix* should be labeled with its own unique title (e.g., *Appendix A - Support Letters*). Do not submit two (2) or more files that have the same name.

Applicants may attach as many as ten (10) *Appendices* to the *Grant Application*. However, *Appendices* should be limited to a reasonable number and length. If there are multiple documents to be attached as an *Appendix*, merging them into a single PDF file is recommended. Applicants should limit the size of file attachments. Documents containing graphics or scanned material should be avoided as those can greatly increase the size of an attachment and result in difficulty opening the file.

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## **Grant Application Instructions: Assurances and Certifications**

A *Grant Application* and any subsequent grant award made through Nebraska's *Innovation Grant Program* constitute a legally binding agreement between the applicant and the Nebraska Department of Education. The *Grant Application* contains a set of general *Assurances and Certifications*, which constitute the applicant's agreement to comply with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements related to the administration of the *Innovation Grant Program* and management of any funds received. These *Assurances and Certifications* include:

- Civil Rights;
- Conflict of Interest;
- Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters;
- Drug-Free Workplace Requirements;
- Environmental Tobacco Smoke; and
- Lobbying.

## **Grant Application Instructions: Required Forms**

A series of required forms must be completed and submitted to the Nebraska Department as part of each *Grant Application* to the *Innovation Grant Program*. A brief description of each form is provided below.

Templates for the required forms are available on the Nebraska Department of Education's *Innovation Grant Program* webpage:

[https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation\\_grant.html](https://www.education.ne.gov/dataservices/innovation_grant.html).

### ***Grant Application Information Sheet***

The *Grant Application Information Sheet* collects summary information about the applicant and proposed project to assist the Nebraska Department of Education in assessing the potential response to the *Innovation Grant Program* competition, overall pool of applicants and *Priority Considerations* being pursued.

### ***Line Item Budget Form***

A *Line Item Budget Form* is completed and submitted as part the *Grant Application* for each grant-funded year of project operation. All project-related expenditures to be reimbursed with *Innovation Grant Program* funds, as well as any supported through optional *Matching Funds* (both *Cash Outlay* and *In-Kind Donations*), are documented on the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*. Each expenditure is listed in the appropriate budget category, using whole dollar amounts. Applicants should carefully re-check all dollar amounts and the combined totals on the *Line Item Budget Form(s)*.

### ***Retention of Grant Records***

All *Innovation Grant Program* grant recipients must maintain a complete copy of their *Pre-Application* and full *Grant Application*, as well as other related documents and reports. These records and other supporting information are used by the Nebraska Department of Education, as well as State and local auditors, to determine the grant project's fiscal and programmatic compliance. All grant-related documents must be retained for:

- Three (3) years from the final date for filing any claim for reimbursement or until all outstanding claims have been resolved; and
- An annual audit has occurred.

Additional information about State-funded grant records retention is available on the Nebraska Secretary of State's *Records Management* website:

<http://www.sos.ne.gov/staticrecordsmgmt.htm>



**NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM – GRANT APPLICATION INFORMATION SHEET**

NDE Form: 02-081  
Date Approved: 09-30-16  
Date Due: 12-14-16

**- FOR OFFICE USE ONLY -**

<b>TYPE OF APPLICANT</b> <i>(Indicate Type of Applicant with "X")</i>		<b>DATE RECEIVED</b> <i>(Month, Day and Year)</i>	
Public School District			
Educational Service Unit		<b>NDE COUNTY DISTRICT NUMBER</b>	<b>COUNTY</b> <i>(County's Name)</i>
Other Local Education Agency <i>(Specify)</i>			

**- APPLICANT INFORMATION -**

<b>APPLICANT'S NAME</b> <i>(Local Education Agency)</i>			
<b>Address</b> <i>(Street, City and Zip Code)</i>			
<b>AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE'S NAME</b>			
<b>Address</b> <i>(Street, City and Zip Code)</i>			
<b>Phone Number</b>		<b>Email Address</b>	
<b>FISCAL AGENT'S NAME</b>			
<b>Address</b> <i>(Street, City and Zip Code)</i>			
<b>Phone Number</b>		<b>Email Address</b>	

**- PROJECT INFORMATION -**

<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>			
<b>PRIORITY CONSIDERATION</b> <i>(Select ONLY ONE, with "X")</i>		<b>TYPE OF GRANT</b> <i>(Phase I Development Grants ONLY)</i>	
<b>High Needs Students</b>		<b>Phase - I Development Grant</b>	
<b>Students in "Needs Improvement" School</b>		<b>Phase II - Validation Grant</b>	
<b>Focus on AQuESTT Tenet</b>		<b>Phase III - Scale-Up Grant</b>	
<b>Leveraging Technology</b>		<b>LENGTH OF GRANT</b> <i>(Number of Months - 30 Months Maximum)</i>	
<b>OPTIONAL COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY: Matching Funds</b> <i>(% of Total Project Budget Amount - 25% Minimum)</i>			

**- PROJECT DESCRIPTION -**

*In 250 words or less, briefly describe the project, including goals, objectives and targeted outcomes for the student population(s) served.*



**NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INNOVATION GRANT PROGRAM – LINE ITEM BUDGET FORM**

NDE Form: 02-081  
Date Approved: 09-28-16  
Date Due: 12-14-16

**- APPLICANT AND PROJECT INFORMATION -**

<b>APPLICANT'S NAME</b> <i>(Local Education Agency)</i>	
<b>Address</b> <i>(Street, City and Zip Code)</i>	
<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	

**- BUDGET YEAR -**

<b>Complete a Line Item Budget Form for EACH PROJECT YEAR in Operation.</b> <i>Indicate the appropriate Project Year and corresponding Fiscal Year that this Form represents with "X".</i>	Project Year 1	X	Fiscal Year 2016-2017	X
	Project Year 2		Fiscal Year 2018-2019	
<b>LENGTH OF GRANT</b> <i>(Number of Months)</i>	Project Year 3		Fiscal Year 2019-2020	

**- LINE ITEM BUDGET -**

BUDGET CATEGORY		Innovation Grant Funds	Optional Match Funds	% of Total Budget	Budget Category Total
<b>PROJECT STAFF</b> <i>(Specify by Staff Position)</i>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
<b>Staff Position:</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Staff Position:</b>		\$	\$		
<b>FRINGE BENEFITS</b> <i>(Specify by Staff Position)</i>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
<b>Staff Position:</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Staff Position:</b>		\$	\$		
<b>PROJECT STAFF TRAVEL</b>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$		\$
<b>Transportation</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Lodging</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Meals</b>		\$	\$		
<b>INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATION</b>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
<b>Evaluator Staff Position:</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Evaluator Staff Position:</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Expenses</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Travel</b>		\$	\$		
<b>CONTRACTUAL</b>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
<b>Consultant Fees</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Expenses</b>		\$	\$		
<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
<b>Event / Registration Fees:</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Site Rental / Expenses - For Project-Sponsored Events Only</b>		\$	\$		
<b>Participant Stipends - # attending Project-Sponsored Event</b>		\$	\$		
<b>EQUIPMENT</b> <i>(Specify)</i>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
		\$	\$		
<b>SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS</b> <i>(Specify)</i>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
		\$	\$		
<b>OTHER</b> <i>(Specify)</i>	Sub-				
<b>Total:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
		\$	\$		
<b>DIRECT COSTS SUB-TOTAL:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
<b>INDIRECT COSTS SUB-TOTAL:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$
<b>TOTAL:</b>		\$	\$	%	\$

## IV. Additional Information

### AQuESTT TENETS

#### The Six Tenets of AQuESTT



The framework is designed around the following six tenets:



## Grant Application Definitions

### Nebraska's Innovation Grant Program Terminology

The following definitions are specific to Nebraska's *Innovation Grant Program*.

**Combination of Entities** - Two or more entities, including a participating school district or Educational Service Unit (ESU), acting collaboratively for the purpose of applying for and implementing a project funded through the *Innovation Grant Program*. (Source: *Nebraska Revised Statute (NRS) §79-1054*)

**High-Needs Students** – Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who: (1) are far below grade level; (2) are at risk of not graduating with a regular high school diploma on time; (3) have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma; (4) have a disability; (5) are English Learners (EL); (6) are migrant; (7) live in poverty; (8) are homeless; (9) are involved in the child welfare, juvenile/criminal justice or behavioral health system; (10) are in foster care or other out-of-home placement; or (11) have been incarcerated.

**Innovation** - A process, product, strategy or intervention, featuring new practices or methods that are advanced, original and creative, which will improve significantly upon the outcomes reached with status quo options and ultimately reach widespread effective usage.

**Innovation Grant Program** – A State-funded grant program providing grant recipients with financial assistance to identify, develop, demonstrate, validate, replicate and expand (scale up) an innovative best practice or method to improve: (1) education outcomes for early childhood, elementary, middle school or high school students; (2) transitions between any successive stages of education; or (3) transitions between education and the work force. (Source: *NRS §79-1054*)

**Optional Competitive Priority Preference** – An optional consideration given to applicants that “match” *Innovation Grant Program* funds using local dollars secured through community partners, the private sector and philanthropic organizations.

**Phase I - Development Grant** – A State-funded award of financial assistance given to a grant recipient to support the identification, development, demonstration and initial evaluation of an innovative promising practice or method expected to improve education outcomes or related transitions for students.

**Phase II - Validation Grant** – A State-funded award of financial assistance given to a grant recipient to further substantiate a project's designation as an innovative best practice or model for a State-supported program through a rigorous independent evaluation, focusing on the specific student population(s), school settings and contexts in which the practice or method is most effective.

**Phase III - Scale-Up Grant** – A State-funded award of financial assistance given to a grant recipient to support further evaluation, replication and expansion (scale-up) of an innovative best practice or model for a State-supported program that improves education outcomes or related transitions for students.

**Priority Consideration** – A competitive grant application factor taken into account when assessing which proposed projects best meet the intent and purpose of the *Innovation Grant Program* by: (1) serving “High Needs” students; (2) serving students in “Needs Improvement” schools; (3) focusing on AQuESTT tenets; or (4) leveraging technology to support instructional practice and professional development.

**Project Logic Model** – A well-specified conceptual framework that illustrates the relationships among the project's key components (inputs), activities, outputs and targeted outcomes for the student population(s) served, both theoretically and operationally.

**Project Partner** – An external entity, acting collaboratively with a *Local Education Agency* (school district or Educational Service Unit), for the purpose of applying for and implementing a project funded through the *Innovation Grant Program*.

**Rigorous Independent Evaluation** – An evaluation of a grant project that is designed and carried out independent of, but in coordination with, any employees of the entities who seek to identify, develop, demonstrate or expand on an innovative best practice or method to improve education outcomes or related transitions for students.

**Selection Criteria** – Specific considerations which serve as the basis for how a *Pre-Application* and full *Grant Application* are assessed and scored by a grant reviewer.

## **Education Terminology**

Many of the following terms are statutorily defined or derived from rules and regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Education or Nebraska Department of Education, as referenced in the citation after each definition.

**AQuESTT (Accountability for a Quality Education System Today and Tomorrow)** – Nebraska’s system of school improvement and support, adopted by the State Board of Education to measure the performance of public schools and school districts and establish performance classifications through a framework that describes quality and accountability. This framework addresses two (2) broad categories of quality education systems: (1) *Student Success and Access*; and (2) *Teaching and Learning*. (Source: 92 NAC 10-002.01)

**AQuESTT Tenet** – A statement(s) used to describe conditions which contribute to quality education systems in public schools and school districts. Under the broad category of *Student Success and Access*, tenets include: (1) *Positive Partnerships, Relationships and Student Success*; (2) *Transitions*; and (3) *Educational Opportunities and Access*. Under the *Teaching and Learning* category, tenets include: (1) *College and Career Ready*; (2) *Assessment*; and (3) *Educator Effectiveness*. (Source: 92 NAC 10-002.02)

**Child with a Disability** – A child who has been verified pursuant to 92 NAC 51 as a child with autism, a behavior disorder (emotional disorder), deaf-blindness, a developmental delay, a hearing impairment including deafness, an intellectual disability, multiple impairment, an orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, a speech-language impairment, a traumatic brain injury, or a visual impairment including blindness, who because of this impairment needs special education and related services. (Source: 92 NAC 51-003.08)

**Department** – The Nebraska Department of Education, which is comprised of the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education. (Source: 92 NAC 10-002.07)

**Early Childhood Education Program** – A pre-kindergarten part-day or full-day center-based education program or in-home family support (home-based) education program, established by a School Board or Educational Service Unit (ESU), designed to serve children who have not reached the age of five on or before July 31st of the current school year. (Source: 92 NAC 11-002.25)

**Educational Service Unit (ESU)** – An educational service provider in the state’s system of elementary and secondary education, as described in Nebraska’s *Educational Service Units Act*. (Sources: NRS §79-1202, NRS §79-1204, and 92 NAC 84-002.07)

**Elementary School Grades** – Those grades designated by a school district as *Elementary*, but not to include any above the 8th Grade. (Sources: NRS §79-101(4) and 92 NAC 10-002.08)

**English Learner (EL) or Limited English Proficient (LEP) Student** – A student who is enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary school or secondary school who: 1) was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English; 2) is Native American or Alaska native, or a native resident of the outlying areas and who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual’s level of *English Language Proficiency*; or 3) who is migratory, whose native language is a language other than English, and who comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant. (Source: 92 NAC 15-002.02)

**High School Grades** – All Grades 9 through 12 in a school system organized with a four-year high school, and Grades 10 through 12 in a school system organized with a three-year high school. (Sources: NRS §79-101(6) and 92 NAC 10-002.10)

**Homeless Student** – An individual who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of 42 U.S.C., 11302(a)(1). This includes children and youth who: (1) are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or campgrounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals; (2) have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of 42 U.S.C. 11302(a)(2)(C); (3) are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and (4) migratory children who qualify as homeless. (Sources: McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act – Title X, Part C of Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and 92 NAC 19-002.09)

**Local Education Agency (LEA)** – A public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control and direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary or secondary schools. In Nebraska, this includes a public school district or Educational Service Unit (ESU). (Source: Elementary and Secondary Education Act)

**Middle School Grades** – Grades designated by the school system as *Middle School* which may include any Grades from 4 through 9. *Middle School* typically includes at least Grades 7 and 8. Common *Middle School Grade* configurations are Grades 6 through 8 or Grades 7 through 9. (Source: 92 NAC 10-002.14)

**Migrant Student** – A migratory child eligible for *Migrant Education Program* services if all the following conditions are met: 1) the child is not older than 21 years of age; 2) the child is entitled to a *Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)* through grade 12 under State law or is below the age of compulsory school attendance; 3) the child is a migratory agricultural worker or a migratory fisher, or the child has a parent, spouse or guardian who is a migratory agricultural worker or migratory fisher; 4) the child moved within the preceding thirty-six months in order to seek or obtain qualifying work, or to accompany or join the migratory agricultural worker or migratory fisher described above, in order to seek or obtain qualifying work; and 5) with regard to the move described above, the child has moved from one school district to another. (Source: Title I, Part C of Elementary and Secondary Education Act, §1309)

**Needs Improvement School** – A public school or school district, classified through the *AQuESTT System* of school improvement and support as “*Needs Improvement*”, based on a combination of ratings in six (6) areas: (1) *Status*; (2) *Improvement*; (3) *Growth*; (4) *Graduation*; (5) *Non-Proficiency*, and (6) *Participation*. (Source: Nebraska’s *AQuESTT System*)

**Pre-Kindergarten Program** – An *Early Childhood Program* provided for children who have not reached the age of five years by the date for Kindergarten entrance provided in *Section 79-214 of Nebraska Revised Statutes*. (Source: NRS §79-101(4))

**School** - An individual attendance center within a school system which provides elementary, middle, secondary and/or high school education. (Sources: NRS §79-101(2) and 92 NAC 10-002.19)

**School District** - The territory under the jurisdiction of a single school board as authorized in *Chapter 79 of Nebraska Revised Statutes*. (Sources: NRS §79-101(1) and 92 NAC 10-002.20)

**Student** – All persons (including children, emancipated minors, and adults) between the ages of five and twenty-one who have not completed high school. (Source: 92 NAC 19.002.18)

## **General Grant Terminology**

The following definitions are common terms used in a variety of grant programs, as provided in the Nebraska Department of Education's State and Federal Grants Management and Guidance Manual.

The Grants Management and Guidance Manual is available on the Nebraska Department of Education's Federal Programs webpage:  
<https://www.education.ne.gov/federalprograms/index.html>

**Approval Date** – The date that a *Grant Application* is approved by the grantor.

**Assurances and Certifications** – Legally binding written agreements between the grantee and grantor specifying the applicable statutory and regulatory requirements that the applicant will comply with throughout the administration of the grant project and management of all funds received.

**Authorized Representative** - A person who legally acts on behalf of the grant recipient, serving as the primary liaison between the grantee and the grantor. The governing body of a *Local Education Agency (LEA)* delegates their authority to this individual to act as the *Authorized Representative* of the school district or Educational Service Unit (ESU) receiving grant funds.

**Cash Outlay** - The grant recipient's cash spending, which may come from non-Federal or non-State revenues, individuals, agencies, institutions, private organizations and foundations.

**Competitive Discretionary Grant** – A grant awarded based on its highest ranking in a competition among applicants. Submission of a *Grant Application* does not ensure that the applicant will be awarded a grant.

**Nebraska's Innovation Grant Program  
Is statutorily structured as a *Competitive Discretionary Grant Program*.**

**Continuation Grant** – A new grant award which provides “another grant period” of project funding under an approved timeline specified in a competitive or non-competitive discretionary grant.

**Equipment** – Any instrument, machine, apparatus or set of articles that meets ANY of the following: (1) under normal conditions of use can be expected to last longer than a year; (2) does not lose its identify through fabrication or incorporation into a different or more complex unit; (3) is non-expendable; (4) retains its appearance and character through use; (5) is of significant value; and/or (6) may be small and attractive.

**Fiscal Agent** – An individual or entity authorized by the grantee to administer the project and all funds awarded. The *Fiscal Agent* cannot be a separate legal entity created solely to administer the grant.

Under the *Innovation Grant Program*, only a school district or Educational Service Unit (ESU) can serve as the *Fiscal Agent* for a funded project.

**Fiscal Year (FY)** – A twelve month fiscal period, specified by statute or regulation. This may be based on: (1) **Calendar Year** – January 1st to December 31st; (2) **Federal Fiscal Year** – October 1st to September 30th; (3) **School Fiscal Year** – September 1st to August 31st; or (4) **State Fiscal Year** – July 1st to June 30th.

**Grant** - An award of financial assistance, in the form of money or property in lieu of money, to an eligible recipient for a defined purpose, as permitted by the associated grant program's requirements or regulations.

**Grant Award Notification (GAN)** – Official notification of approval for grant funding based on approval of a *Grant Application* submitted to the Nebraska Department of Education

**Grantee** – The entity receiving grant funds from an associated grant program.

**In-Kind Contributions** – The value of non-cash contributions made by the grant recipient, other individuals, agencies, institutions, private organizations or foundations. *In-Kind Contributions* may include charges for real property and equipment as well as the value of goods and services directly benefitting and specifically identifiable to a grant project.

**Matching Funds** – Local dollars secured by a grantee that “match” State or Federal grant funds for an approved project. *Matching Funds* generally represent a specified percentage of the total project cost. These funds may be in the form of *Cash Outlay* and/or *In-Kind Donations*.

**Outstanding Obligations** – Any debt for which funds were obligated prior to the end of the grant project and is expected to be paid within 45 days following the *Project End Date*.

**Project Budget** – A statement of anticipated costs for which grant funds and any applicable *Matching Funds* will be used to support of the activities and strategies undertaken by a project in order to meet the associated grant program's goals.

**Project End Date** – The last date that funds can be obligated or spent on an approved grant project, as specified in the *Grant Award Notification (GAN)*. All project activities must be completed between the *Project Start Date* and *Project End Date*. Additionally, any funds obligated before the *Project End Date* must be liquidated within 45 days after the *Project End Date*. Any delay past 45 days may jeopardize payment.

**Project Start Date** – The beginning date when funds can be obligated for approved grant activities as specified in the *Grant Award Notification (GAN)*. The *Project Start Date* cannot precede: (1) the *Project Start Date* specified in the *GAN*; (2) the beginning of the fiscal year for which the funds are appropriated; and (3) notification of approval and issuance of a *GAN* for competitive and non-competitive discretionary grants or the receipt of an approvable *Grant Application* and *Budget* request for *Formula Grant* funds.

## Authorizing Legislation

### **Nebraska Revised Statute (NRS) §79-1054. State Board of Education; establish innovation grant program; application; contents; department; duties; report; Department of Education Innovative Grant Fund; created; use; investment.**

(1) The State Board of Education shall establish a competitive innovation grant program with funding from the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund pursuant to section 9-812. Grantees shall be a school district, an educational service unit, or a combination of entities that includes at least one school district or educational service unit. For grantees that consist of a combination of entities, a participating school district or educational service unit shall be designated to act as the fiscal agent and administer the program funded by the grant. The state board shall only award grants pursuant to applications that the state board deems to be sufficiently innovative and to have a high chance of success.

(2) An application for a grant pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall describe:

- (a) Specific measurable objectives for improving education outcomes for early childhood students, elementary students, middle school students, or high school students or for improving the transitions between any successive stages of education or between education and the workforce;
- (b) The method for annually evaluating progress toward a measurable objective, with a summative evaluation of progress submitted to the state board and electronically to the Education Committee of the Legislature on or before July 1, 2019;
- (c) The potential for the project to be both scalable and replicable; and
- (d) Any cost savings that could be achieved by reductions in other programs if the funded program is successful.

(3) Based on evaluations received on or before July 1, 2019, for each grant, the State Board of Education shall recommend the grant project as:

- (a) Representing a best practice;
- (b) A model for a state-supported program; or
- (c) A local issue for further study.

(4) For grant projects that are recommended as best practices, the State Board of Education may establish criteria allowing such best practices to be included in the best practices allowance to school districts pursuant to section 79-1004 beginning with aid calculated for school fiscal year 2021-22. The criteria shall:

- (a) Specify qualifications for a school district to participate in the best practices allowance for each best practice to be included in the allowance;
- (b) Specify a best practices dollar amount based on eighty-five percent of the estimated costs related to each best practice included in the allowance that would not otherwise be incurred without the best practice, that do not replace other such costs, and that are not included in another allowance;
- (c) Specify an accountability process which will result in a future aid correction if a school district is found to be in violation of any of the qualifications; and
- (d) Specify any other criteria deemed relevant by the state board.

(5) On or before November 1, 2020, and on or before November 1 of each year thereafter, the department shall certify to each qualifying school district the amount of the best practices cost pursuant to

this section for such school district and the total best practices cost for all qualifying school districts to be included in the calculation of state aid for the next school fiscal year.

(6) On or before December 1, 2017, and on or before December 1 of each year thereafter, the state board shall electronically submit a report to the Clerk of the Legislature on all such grants, including, but not limited to, the results of the evaluations for each grant and on the best practices allowance if the allowance has been implemented. The state board may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out this section, including, but not limited to, application procedures, selection procedures, and annual evaluation reporting procedures.

(7) The Department of Education Innovative Grant Fund is created. The fund shall be administered by the State Department of Education and shall consist of transfers pursuant to section 9-812, repayments of grant funds, and interest payments received in the course of administering this section. The fund shall be used to carry out this section. Any money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

**Source:** Laws 2015, LB519, § 2.

**Effective Date:** August 30, 2015

**Cross References:**

**Nebraska Capital Expansion Act**, see section 72-1269.

**Nebraska State Funds Investment Act**, see section 72-1260.

**Nebraska Revised Statute (NRS) §9-812. State Lottery Operation Trust Fund; State Lottery Operation Cash Fund; State Lottery Prize Trust Fund; created; transfers; Education Innovation Fund; created; use; Nebraska Education Improvement Fund; created; use; investment; unclaimed prize money; use.**

(1) All money received from the operation of lottery games conducted pursuant to the State Lottery Act in Nebraska shall be credited to the State Lottery Operation Trust Fund, which fund is hereby created. All payments of the costs of establishing and maintaining the lottery games shall be made from the State Lottery Operation Cash Fund. In accordance with legislative appropriations, money for payments for expenses of the division shall be transferred from the State Lottery Operation Trust Fund to the State Lottery Operation Cash Fund, which fund is hereby created. All money necessary for the payment of lottery prizes shall be transferred from the State Lottery Operation Trust Fund to the State Lottery Prize Trust Fund, which fund is hereby created. The amount used for the payment of lottery prizes shall not be less than forty percent of the dollar amount of the lottery tickets which have been sold.

(2) A portion of the dollar amount of the lottery tickets which have been sold on an annualized basis shall be transferred from the State Lottery Operation Trust Fund to the Education Innovation Fund, the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund, the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund, the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund, the Nebraska State Fair Board, and the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund as provided in subsection (3) of this section. The dollar amount transferred pursuant to this subsection shall equal the greater of (a) the dollar amount transferred to the funds in fiscal year 2002-03 or (b) any amount which constitutes at least twenty-two percent and no more than twenty-five percent of the dollar amount of the lottery tickets which have been sold on an annualized basis. To the extent that funds are available, the Tax Commissioner and director may authorize a transfer exceeding twenty-five percent of the dollar amount of the lottery tickets sold on an annualized basis.

(3) Of the money available to be transferred to the Education Innovation Fund, the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund, the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund, the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund, the Nebraska State Fair Board, and the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund:

- (a) The first five hundred thousand dollars shall be transferred to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund to be used as provided in section 9-1006;
- (b) Beginning July 1, 2016, forty-four and one-half percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund;
- (c) Through June 30, 2016, nineteen and three-fourths percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the Education Innovation Fund;
- (d) Through June 30, 2016, twenty-four and three-fourths percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund;
- (e) Forty-four and one-half percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund to be used as provided in the Nebraska Environmental Trust Act;
- (f) Ten percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the Nebraska State Fair Board if the most populous city within the county in which the fair is located provides matching funds equivalent to ten percent of the funds available for transfer. Such matching funds may be

obtained from the city and any other private or public entity, except that no portion of such matching funds shall be provided by the state. If the Nebraska State Fair ceases operations, ten percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the General Fund; and

(g) One percent of the money remaining after the payment of prizes and operating expenses and the initial transfer to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund shall be transferred to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund to be used as provided in section 9-1006.

(4)(a) The Education Innovation Fund is created. At least seventy-five percent of the lottery proceeds allocated to the Education Innovation Fund shall be available for disbursement.

(b) For fiscal year 2014-15, the Education Innovation Fund shall be allocated, after administrative expenses, as follows: (i) The first one million two hundred thousand dollars shall be transferred to the Excellence in Teaching Cash Fund to fund the Excellence in Teaching Act; (ii) the next allocation shall be distributed to local systems as grants for approved accelerated or differentiated curriculum programs for students identified as learners with high ability pursuant to section 79-1108.02 in an aggregated amount up to the amount distributed in the prior fiscal year for such purposes increased by the basic allowable growth rate pursuant to section 79-1025; (iii) the next one million eight hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be allocated to early childhood education grants awarded by the State Department of Education pursuant to section 79-1103; (iv) the next one million dollars shall be transferred to the Early Childhood Education Endowment Cash Fund for use pursuant to section 79-1104.02; (v) the next two hundred thousand dollars shall be used to provide grants to establish bridge programs pursuant to sections 79-1189 to 79-1195; (vi) the next ten thousand dollars shall be used to fund the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children; (vii) the next two million dollars shall be allocated for distance education equipment and incentives pursuant to sections 79-1336 and 79-1337; (viii) the next one million dollars shall be transferred to the School District Reorganization Fund; (ix) up to the next one hundred forty-five thousand dollars shall be used by the State Department of Education to implement section 79-759; and (x) the next three hundred thirty-five thousand dollars shall be allocated to local systems as grants awarded by the State Department of Education to assist schools in evaluating and improving career education programs to align such programs with the state's economic and workforce needs. Except for funds transferred to the School District Reorganization Fund, the Early Childhood Education Endowment Cash Fund, or the department for early childhood education grants pursuant to section 79-1103, no funds received as allocations from the Education Innovation Fund pursuant to this subdivision may be obligated for payment to be made after June 30, 2016, and such funds received as transfers or allocations from the Education Innovation Fund that have not been used for their designated purpose as of such date shall be transferred to the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund on or before August 1, 2016.

(c) For fiscal year 2015-16, the Education Innovation Fund shall be allocated, after administrative expenses, as follows: (i) The first one million two hundred thousand dollars shall be transferred to the Excellence in Teaching Cash Fund to fund the Excellence in Teaching Act; (ii) the next allocation shall be distributed to local systems as grants for approved accelerated or differentiated curriculum programs for students identified as learners with high ability pursuant to section 79-1108.02 in an aggregated amount up to the amount distributed in the prior fiscal year for such purposes increased by the basic allowable growth rate pursuant to section 79-1025; (iii) the next one million nine hundred fifty thousand dollars shall be allocated to early childhood education grants awarded by the State Department of Education pursuant to section 79-1103; (iv) the next one million dollars shall be transferred to the Early Childhood Education Endowment Cash Fund for use pursuant to section 79-1104.02; (v) the next ten thousand dollars shall be used to fund the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children; (vi) the next two million five hundred thousand dollars shall be

allocated for distance education equipment and incentives pursuant to sections 79-1336 and 79-1337; (vii) the next one million dollars shall be transferred to the School District Reorganization Fund; (viii) up to the next one hundred forty-five thousand dollars shall be used by the State Department of Education to implement section 79-759; and (ix) of the amount remaining, (A) three million dollars shall be retained in the Education Innovation Fund to transfer to the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund on June 30, 2016, and (B) the remaining amount shall be allocated to local systems as grants awarded by the State Department of Education to assist schools in evaluating and improving career education programs to align such programs with the state's economic and workforce needs. Except for funds transferred to the School District Reorganization Fund, the Early Childhood Education Endowment Cash Fund, or the department for early childhood education grants pursuant to section 79-1103, no funds received as allocations from the Education Innovation Fund pursuant to this subdivision may be obligated for payment to be made after June 30, 2016, and such funds received as transfers or allocations from the Education Innovation Fund that have not been used for their designated purpose as of such date shall be transferred to the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund on or before August 1, 2016.

(d) The Education Innovation Fund terminates on June 30, 2016. Any money in the fund on such date shall be transferred to the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund on such date.

(5) The Nebraska Education Improvement Fund is created. The fund shall consist of money transferred pursuant to subsections (3) and (4) of this section, money transferred pursuant to section 85-1920, and any other funds appropriated by the Legislature. The fund shall be allocated, after actual and necessary administrative expenses, as provided in this section for fiscal years 2016-17 through 2020-21. A portion of each allocation may be retained by the agency to which the allocation is made or the agency administering the fund to which the allocation is made for actual and necessary expenses incurred by such agency for administration, evaluation, and technical assistance related to the purposes of the allocation, except that no amount of the allocation to the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund may be used for such purposes. On or before December 31, 2019, the Education Committee of the Legislature shall electronically submit recommendations to the Clerk of the Legislature regarding how the fund should be allocated to best advance the educational priorities of the state for the five-year period beginning with fiscal year 2021-22. For fiscal year 2016-17, an amount equal to ten percent of the revenue allocated to the Education Innovation Fund and to the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund for fiscal year 2015-16 shall be retained in the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund. For fiscal years 2017-18 through 2020-21, an amount equal to ten percent of the revenue received by the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund in the prior fiscal year shall be retained in the fund. For fiscal years 2016-17 through 2020-21, the remainder of the fund shall be allocated as follows:

- (a) One percent of the allocated funds to the Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant Fund to carry out the Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant Program Act;
- (b) Seventeen percent of the allocated funds to the Department of Education Innovative Grant Fund for competitive innovation grants pursuant to section 79-1054;
- (c) Nine percent of the allocated funds to the Community College Gap Assistance Program Fund to carry out the community college gap assistance program;
- (d) Eight percent of the allocated funds to the Excellence in Teaching Cash Fund to carry out the Excellence in Teaching Act;
- (e) Sixty-two percent of the allocated funds to the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Fund to carry out the Nebraska Opportunity Grant Act in conjunction with appropriations from the General Fund; and
- (f) Three percent of the allocated funds to fund distance education incentives pursuant to section 79-1337.

(6) Any money in the State Lottery Operation Trust Fund, the State Lottery Operation Cash Fund, the State Lottery Prize Trust Fund, the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund, or the Education Innovation Fund available for investment shall be invested by the state investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.

(7) Unclaimed prize money on a winning lottery ticket shall be retained for a period of time prescribed by rules and regulations. If no claim is made within such period, the prize money shall be used at the discretion of the Tax Commissioner for any of the purposes prescribed in this section.

**Source:** Laws 1991, LB 849, § 12; Laws 1992, LB 1257, § 57; Laws 1993, LB 138, § 28; Laws 1993, LB 563, § 24; Laws 1994, LB 647, § 5; Laws 1994, LB 694, § 119; Laws 1994, LB 1066, § 11; Laws 1995, LB 275, § 1; Laws 1995, LB 860, § 1; Laws 1996, LB 900, § 1015; Laws 1996, LB 1069, § 1; Laws 1997, LB 118, § 1; Laws 1997, LB 347, § 1; Laws 1997, LB 710, § 1; Laws 1997, LB 865, § 1; Laws 1998, LB 924, § 16; Laws 1998, LB 1228, § 7; Laws 1998, LB 1229, § 1; Laws 1999, LB 386, § 1; Laws 2000, LB 659, § 2; Laws 2000, LB 1243, § 1; Laws 2001, LB 797, § 1; Laws 2001, LB 833, § 1; Laws 2001, Spec. Sess., LB 3, § 1; Laws 2002, LB 1105, § 418; Laws 2002, LB 1310, § 3; Laws 2002, Second Spec. Sess., LB 1, § 1; Laws 2003, LB 367, § 1; Laws 2003, LB 574, § 21; Laws 2004, LB 1083, § 83; Laws 2004, LB 1091, § 1; Laws 2006, LB 1208, § 1; Laws 2007, LB638, § 16; Laws 2009, LB286, § 4; Laws 2009, LB545, § 1; Laws 2009, LB547, § 1; Laws 2009, First Spec. Sess., LB2, § 1; Laws 2010, LB956, § 1; Laws 2011, LB333, § 1; Laws 2011, LB575, § 7; Laws 2011, LB637, § 22; Laws 2012, LB1079, § 9; Laws 2013, LB6, § 9; Laws 2013, LB366, § 8; Laws 2013, LB495, § 1; Laws 2013, LB497, § 1; Laws 2014, LB967, § 2; Laws 2015, LB519, § 1.

**Effective Date:** August 30, 2015

#### **Cross References**

**Excellence in Teaching Act**, see section 79-8,132.

**Expanded Learning Opportunity Grant Program Act**, see section 79-2501.

**Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children**, see section 79-2201.

**Nebraska Capital Expansion Act**, see section 72-1269.

**Nebraska Environmental Trust Act**, see section 81-15,167.

**Nebraska Opportunity Grant Act**, see section 85-1901.

**Nebraska State Funds Investment Act**, see section 72-1260.

## **General Assurances and Certifications**

The following general Assurances and Certifications shall be included in the application submission.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS**

No person shall, on grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age, be excluded from participation in or subjected to discrimination in any program or activity funded, in whole or in part, by federal funds. The subrecipient certifies there is compliance with the following:

- \* Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 45 USC 2000d et seq., which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
- \* Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 USC 794, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
- \* Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, 20 USC 1681 et seq., which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
- \* The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, 42 USC 6101 et seq., which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance;
- \* All regulations, guidelines, and standards lawfully adopted under the above statutes by the United States Department of Education;
- \* The Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 USC 12101 et seq., is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in the areas of accessibility, employment, public services, public accommodations, transportation, and communications.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

As the duly authorized representative of the subrecipient, I certify that the subrecipient will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.

### **FINANCIAL**

1. Local educational agencies will submit required statistical, financial, and descriptive reports to the Nebraska Department of Education.

### **DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION AND OTHER RESPONSIBILITY MATTERS**

1. As required by Executive Order 12549 and implemented at 34 CFR Part 85, the subrecipient certifies that it and its principals:
  - a. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded by any Federal department or agency;

b. Have not within a three-year period preceding this proposal been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

c. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification; and

d. Have not within a three-year period preceding this application/proposal had one or more public transactions (Federal, State or local) terminated for cause or default.

2. Where the prospective primary participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

### **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Subrecipients Other Than Individuals The subrecipient certifies that it will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by:

a. Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;

b. Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about –

i. The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;

ii. The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;

iii. Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and

iv. The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;

c. Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph (a);

d. Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph (a) that, as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will –

i. Abide by the terms of the statement; and

ii. Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction;

e. Notifying the agency in writing, within ten calendar days after receiving notice under paragraph (d)(2) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction.

Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to every grant officer or other designee on whose grant activity the convicted employee was working, unless the Federal agency has designated a central point for the receipt of such notices. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant;

f. Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under paragraph (d)(2), with respect to any employee who is so convicted –

i. Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or

ii. Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;

g. Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f).

The subrecipient may insert in the space provided below the site(s) for the performance of work done in connection with the specific grant:

Place of Performance (Street address, city, county, state, zip code)

\_\_\_\_\_ Check if there are workplaces on file that are not identified here.

## 2. Subrecipients Who Are Individuals

a. The grantee certifies that, as a condition of the grant, he or she will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance in conducting any activity with the grant;

b. If convicted of a criminal drug offense resulting from a violation occurring during the conduct of any grant activity, he or she will report the conviction, in writing, within 10 calendar days of the conviction, to NDE.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL TOBACCO SMOKE**

The Pro Children Act requires that smoking not be permitted in any portion of any indoor routinely owned or leased or contracted for by an entity and used routinely or regularly for provision of health, day care, education, or library services to children under the age of 18, if the services are funded by Federal programs either directly or through State or local governments, by Federal grant, contract, loan, or loan guarantee. The subrecipient certifies that it will comply with the requirements of the Act and that it will require this certification in any subawards.

**HATCH ACT**

As the duly authorized representative of the subrecipient, I certify that the subrecipient will comply with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

**LOBBYING**

The subrecipient certifies that:

1. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
2. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
3. The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients

**Signature of Certifying Official**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Title**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_