



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

**EDUCATION**

**Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) Special Education Enhancement Fund (SEEF) Competitive Grant  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Answers from Application Webinars**

**A. Competition Timeline**

**AI. When will potential applicants hear back that Intent to Apply forms have been received?**

Entities that submitted an Intent to Apply form should have received an acknowledgement email from Brianna Griffin by Jan. 9, 2020. If your organization submitted and did not receive an email, you may contact her at [Brianna.Griffin@dc.gov](mailto:Brianna.Griffin@dc.gov). The list of applicants that submitted the mandatory Intent to Apply form by the deadline is available on the FY20 [SEEF webpage](#).

**AI. If a potential applicant is not certain whether it will apply, should the organization submit an Intent to Apply form anyway?**

Yes. The deadline for Intent to Apply forms was Jan. 8, 2020. As noted in the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) and Request for Applications (RFA), submission of a signed Intent to Apply form is a mandatory requirement to apply for the grant. Entities that submit an Intent to Apply form are not bound to submit an application. The collection of Intent to Apply forms serves two functions: (1) to support connection among potential applicants and partner schools, (2) to enable OSSE to recruit a sufficient number of outside, independent grant reviewers prior to the application submission deadline to support making award decisions as quickly as possible.

**B. Eligibility**

**BI. Are for-profit institutions of higher education (IHEs) eligible to apply as lead applicants? A:**

Yes. Eligible applicants include third-party nonprofit organizations and IHEs (for-profit or nonprofit).

**BII. Are non-LEA current/previous SEEF grantees eligible to apply for this round of funding? A:**

Yes. Current SEEF grantees that meet all eligibility requirements in the RFA are eligible to apply for the FY20 SEEF competition. Eligible applicants must be third-party nonprofits or IHEs.

**BIII. Are two related entities that have separate Employer Identification Numbers (EINs) considered to be separate entities for the purpose of applying for this funding?**

Yes. Each unique EIN is a unique applicant. Applicants will register in OSSE's Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) using the organization/entity's EIN, and are therefore

considered to be separate from a related entity with a different EIN for the purpose of this grant competition.

**BIV. Is a school and/or local education agency (LEA) that was previously a partner for another lead LEA, but wasn't the lead on the grant, eligible to apply for this competition?**

Schools and LEAs are not eligible lead applicants for this competition. Schools and LEAs are encouraged to seek partnerships with eligible applicant nonprofit organizations or IHEs.

School and LEA representatives interested in forming partnerships with applicants may attend the optional in-person partnership facilitation meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2020 from 1-3 p.m. at OSSE, 1050 First St. NE, Washington, DC 20002. Please email Brianna Griffin at [Brianna.Griffin@dc.gov](mailto:Brianna.Griffin@dc.gov) for more information or complete the [interest form](#).

**BV. Are Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) eligible to apply as a third-party nonprofit in partnership with the charter schools they manage/support?**

The SEEF grant provides an opportunity for third-party nonprofit organizations or IHEs to partner with schools and LEAs. CMOs that directly manage/support a school or LEA are eligible to participate in the SEEF grant competition as a partner to a lead applicant alongside its school/LEA, but not as a lead applicant.

**BVI. Will there be a separate SEEF competition where LEAs will be eligible lead applicants?**

At this time, there will not be an additional SEEF competition in FY20. Schools and LEAs are encouraged to seek partnerships with eligible applicant nonprofit organizations or IHEs for the current FY20 competition.

**BVII. If a potential third-party applicant missed the webinars but a representative from one of their partner schools attended, is the applicant still eligible to apply?**

No. Attendance at a pre-application webinar is a mandatory eligibility requirement for SEEF grant applicants. The webinar attendance requirement as well as available date and times were advertised in the grant NOFA and RFA.

## **C. Partnership Requirements**

**CI. How do we demonstrate that our partnerships meet the requirements in the RFA (i.e., at least 50 percent enrolled in target schools, no more than 20 percent enrolled in previous SEEF-grantee LEA schools)?**

Applicants must complete the [Partnership Enrollment Requirements Template](#) and upload it under the "Partner Schools" tab within the SEEF grant application in EGMS. This spreadsheet will automatically calculate enrollment totals across the partnership on the Summary tab.

**CII. Do I need to include a signed partnership agreement for each intended partner school within my application?**

Yes. The signed partnership agreements should outline the duties, roles, and responsibilities of the lead applicant nonprofit or IHE, the partner school, and the partner school's parent LEA. The agreement must be signed by a representative from each of the three involved parties. Applicants may use the template provided in appendix B of the RFA or an alternative format including all components described above.

**CIII. Where should we upload the required partnership agreements for each intended partner school?**

Applicants must upload a partnership agreement, signed by the applicant, partner school, and parent LEA, for each intended partner school. The partnership agreements should be uploaded on the Supporting Documentation tab within the EGMS application. See the [FY20 SEEF webpage](#) for a template.

**CIV. My organization has been working with school-based staff to form a partnership. Must I also receive a signature from the school's LEA?**

Yes. Each signed partnership agreement must be signed by an LEA representative. Qualified LEA representatives are defined as having fiscal or operational management responsibilities at the LEA level. The partnership agreement must also be signed by a school leader, which may be a principal, assistant principal, or other school leader with day-to-day instructional or operational management responsibilities at the building level.

**CV. Are letters of support from the partner schools required?**

No, letters of support from partner schools are not required. Each signed partnership agreement must explain the duties, roles, and responsibilities of the applicant, partner school, and parent LEA.

**CVI. Is my organization required to participate in the in-person partnership facilitation meeting?**

No. OSSE will host an optional in-person partnership facilitation meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2020, from 1-3 p.m. at OSSE, 1050 First St. NE, Washington, DC 20002. School leaders and special education points of contact from all target high-need partner schools have been invited. Potential applicants are not required to attend, but may benefit from making connections at this meeting if partner schools have not yet been identified.

**CVII. Is there a minimum number of schools and/or students that must be served through an application partnership?**

No. However, the number of students being served may be taken into consideration when OSSE determines the funding level for each awarded application.

**CVIII. Can a school/LEA make it known that they are open to being approached by third-party nonprofits or IHEs?**

Yes. School and/or LEA staff may attend the partnership facilitation meeting and speak directly with applicants and/or complete the [interest form](#) by Friday, Jan. 17 to demonstrate

interest to applicants about potential partnerships. OSSE will be sharing the list of interested schools/LEAs with all organizations that submitted Intent to Apply forms.

#### **D. Grant Application and Priorities**

##### **DI. Must grant programs exclusively target one priority student population, or are programs permissible where additional priority student populations are a clear focus but not an exclusive focus?**

Applicants must select a minimum of one of the priority student populations to target through the SEEF grant project. Applicants may select more than one priority student population to target; however, approaches for each selected population will be scored by reviewers separately, and only the top score in this subsection will count toward the total application score. If awarded, applicants may use grant funds to target and serve more than one priority student population.

##### **DII. Must the proposed work exclusively target students within one or more of the priority subgroups, would a project still qualify if the work is expected to impact a significant number of the students within the overall student population at the partnerschools?**

No. The proposed interventions are not required to solely impact students within the priority subpopulations.

##### **DIII. Would an applicant qualify if their proposed work focuses on a subset of teachers within selected school partners, or must any grant-funded work be school-wide (i.e., impacting all general education or special education teachers in the building, versus some)?**

The FY20 SEEF competition does not include a requirement related to whether the proposed strategies impact all or a subset of teachers within the building.

#### **E. Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS)**

##### **EI. Where should I go if I have questions about EGMS?**

Potential applicants may contact the EGMS help desk by calling (202) 719-6500 or emailing [OSSE.Callcenter@dc.gov](mailto:OSSE.Callcenter@dc.gov). There is also a recorded [EGMS training](#) on OSSE's website.

##### **EII. Our Central Data application is listed as "Final Approved." Are we able to proceed with the SEEF application?**

All applications must be submitted through EGMS. Each year, applicants to any OSSE grant must complete the Assurances tab of the Central Data application prior to submitting any grant application. If an organization has not already completed it for a different grant, prior to creating an FY20 SEEF grant application, applicants must complete the Assurances tab of the 2020 Central Data application. If awarded, prior to receiving funds, applicants must complete and submit the entire 2020 Central Data application.

If an applicant has a status of “Final Approved” for their 2020 Central Data application, no further action is required at this time.

## **F. Budgeting and Allowable Costs**

### **FI. Is this grant eligible for indirect costs?**

Yes. Any OSSE grantee **must** have an indirect cost rate approved by OSSE, if it plans on claiming indirect costs. Once a grantee has an approved rate, that rate will be entered in EGMS and will appear as a special indirect cost line item at the bottom of each budget page. This is the only place that indirect costs can be budgeted and claimed. Grantees are not permitted to enter indirect costs in the “OTHER” tab of the budget. The criteria for receiving an approved rate vary, depending on the type of entity. The following is required for each type of entity:

**Nonprofits** may either use the De Minimis rates of 10 percent Unrestricted and 8 percent Restricted as long as they have never previously negotiated an indirect cost rate with the federal government, or provide a letter each fiscal year with a current approved rate from another federal agency.

**IHEs** must provide a letter each fiscal year from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) stating their approved indirect cost rate. If the letter does not specify a separate restricted and unrestricted rate, the De Minimis rate of 8 percent will be used as the restricted rate. The rate on the letter will be used as the unrestricted rate.

### **FI. For the 30 percent that must be spent by the midpoint of the grant period (Nov. 30, 2020), can overhead/indirect costs be counted toward that 30 percent?**

Yes. All grantees will be required to obligate at least 30 percent of their total award by Nov. 30, 2020, including any indirect costs that have been claimed under the approved indirect cost rate.