Department of Education
FIRST IN THE WORLD PROGRAM
VALIDATION GRANTS
https://federalregister.gov/a/2015-11337 (CFDA 84.116)

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Applications Available: **May 11, 2015**

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: **June 30, 2015.**

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: **August 31, 2015.**

FUNDING

Type of Award: Discretionary grants.

The range of awards listed below is the total amount for a 48 month budget period.

Estimated Range of Awards: $6,000,000-$10,000,000.

Estimated Average Size of Awards: $7,000,000.

See the Budget Instructions in the application package.

Estimated Number of Awards: 0-5.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible Applicants: Institutions of higher education, combinations of such institutions, and other public and private nonprofit institutions and agencies.

Current eligibility approval as defined by the Department's FY 2015 eligibility process for Title III and/or Title V of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended; an open grant under one of the Department's Title III, Parts A and F and/or Title V programs; or a designation as a Historically Black College or University or a Tribally Controlled College. The second criterion includes: Specific enrollment percentages for minority students served; and, if applicable, needy student and educational and general expenditure criteria for determining income eligibility.

Evidence Standard and Logic Model: All applications must meet the evidence standard of Strong Theory and include a logic model. Applicants may submit a rationale for any intervention(s) that has not been tried or that only has been marginally considered and explored at the applicant institution or elsewhere.

COST SHARING OR MATCHING

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

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PURPOSE

The FITW program is designed to support the development, replication, and dissemination of innovative solutions and evidence for what works in addressing persistent and widespread challenges in postsecondary education for students who are at risk for not persisting in and completing postsecondary programs, including, but not limited to, adult learners, working students, part-time students, students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, students with disabilities, and first-generation students.

The focus of the FITW program is to build evidence for what works in postsecondary education by testing the effectiveness of these strategies in improving student persistence and completion outcomes. For FY 2015, the Department will award two types of grants under this program: "Development" grants and "Validation" grants. These grants differ in terms of the level of evidence of effectiveness required for consideration of funding, the level of scale the funded project should reach, and, consequently, the amount of funding available to support the project.

This notice invites applications for Validation grants only. Validation grants provide funding to support the expansion and replication of projects supported by moderate evidence of to a scaled multi-site sample, which would include multiple institutions of higher education, including multiple institutions within a State system.

All Validation grantees must evaluate the effectiveness of the project at each partner entity. The evaluation design will be assessed on the extent to which it could meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations.

ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES

Absolute Priority 1: —Improving Success in Developmental Education
- Projects designed to improve student success in developmental education or accelerate student progress into credit-bearing postsecondary courses.

Absolute Priority II: —Improving Teaching and Learning
- Projects designed to improve teaching and learning.

Absolute Priority III: — Improving Student Support Services
- Projects designed to improve the supports or services provided to students prior to or during the students' enrollment in postsecondary education

Absolute Priority IV: — Influencing Development of Non-cognitive Factors
- Projects that are designed to improve students' mastery of non-cognitive skills and behaviors (such as academic behaviors, academic mindset, perseverance, self-regulation, social and emotional skills, and approaches toward learning strategies) and enhance student motivation and engagement in learning.

TRIVIUM CONSULTING:
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY BRIEF

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ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The selection criteria for the FY 2015 Validation competition are designed to ensure that applications selected for funding have the best potential to generate substantial improvements and research in student outcomes, and include well-articulated plans for the implementation, dissemination, and evaluation of the proposed projects. Applicants should review the selection criteria and submission instructions carefully to ensure their applications address this year's criteria. Applicants should note that we screen for eligibility at multiple points before, during, and after the review process. Applicants that are determined to be ineligible at any point in the review process will not receive a grant award regardless of peer reviewer scores or comments.

If we determine that a Validation grant application is not supported by moderate evidence of effectiveness, either because the study submitted does not meet the standard or is not closely relevant to the proposed project, the application will not be considered for funding.

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION POINT of CONTACT

Please contact: Frank Frankfort, Telephone: (202) 502-7513. You may send emails to OPEFITWValidation@ed.gov.