



TRIVIUM CONSULTING: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY BRIEF



Department of Education

TRIVIUM CONSULTING FUNDING OPPORTUNITY BRIEF INVESTING in INNOVATION FUND (i3) 2014 DEVELOPMENT (Pre-Application: <https://federalregister.gov/a/2015-07213> CFDA: 84.411P)

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Deadline for **Notice of Intent to Submit Pre-Application**: April 20, 2015.

Deadline for **Transmittal of Pre-Applications**: April 29, 2015.

Deadline for **Transmittal of Full Applications**: TBA – Entities that submit a highly-rated pre-application will be invited to submit a full application. Other pre-applicants may choose to submit a full application.

Deadline for **Intergovernmental Review**: 60 calendar days after transmittal of full applications.

i3 GRANT FUNDING and PROJECT PERIOD

Scale-up grants: Up to \$20,000,000 with an estimated average size of an award being \$19,000,000. The estimated number of *Scale-up* awards anticipated is 0 to 1 awards.

Validation grants: Up to \$12,000,000 with an estimated average size of an award being \$11,500,000. The estimated number of *Validation* awards anticipated is 2 to 4 awards.

Development grants: Up to \$3,000,000 with an estimated average size of an award being \$3,000,000. The estimated number of *Development* awards anticipated is 9 to 11 awards.

Project Period: 36-60 months

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Entities eligible to apply for i3 grants include either of the following:

- (a) An LEA.
- (b) A partnership between a nonprofit organization and —
 - (1) one or more LEAs; or
 - (2) a consortium of schools.

There are further requirements regarding eligible applicants' prior proven success in closing achievement gaps, increasing student achievement, improving other areas such as high school graduation rates or increased placement of high-quality teachers or principles, establishing partnerships between the private sector to provide matching funds. If the applicant is a non-profit it must indicate the name of LEAs and/or the demographic characteristics of LEAs with which it will partner.

MATCHING FUNDS

To be eligible for an award, an applicant must demonstrate that one or more private-sector organizations, which may include philanthropic organizations, will provide matching funds in order to help bring project results to scale. An eligible Development applicant must obtain matching funds, or in-kind donations, equal to at least 15 percent of its Federal grant award. The highest-rated eligible applicants must submit evidence of 50 percent of the required private-sector matching funds following the peer review of applications. A Federal i3 award will not be made unless the applicant provides adequate evidence that the 50 percent of the required private-sector match has been committed or the Secretary approves the





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eligible applicant's request to reduce the matching-level requirement. An applicant must provide evidence of the remaining 50 percent of required private-sector match three months after the project start date.

PURPOSE of the i3 PROGRAM

The i3 program is designed to generate and validate solutions to persistent educational challenges and to support the expansion of effective solutions across the country to serve substantially larger numbers of students. The central design element of the i3 program is its multi-tier structure that links the amount of funding that an applicant may receive to the quality of the evidence supporting the efficacy of the proposed project. This structure provides incentives for applicants to build evidence of effectiveness of their proposed projects and to address the barriers to serving more students across schools, districts, and States so that applicants can compete for more sizeable grants.

As importantly, all i3 projects are required to generate additional evidence of effectiveness. All i3 grantees must use part of their budgets to conduct independent evaluations of their projects. This ensures that projects funded under the i3 program contribute significantly to improving the information available to practitioners and policymakers about which practices work, for which types of students, and in what contexts. The Department awards three types of grants under this program: *Development* grants, *Validation* grants, and *Scale-up* grants. The *Development* category, which funds grantees with promising but relatively untested ideas, has been the most popular of the three grant categories throughout the previous three i3 competitions.

EXPECTATIONS of DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

We note that in previous i3 Development competitions, the Department has included explicit priority areas for supporting students with disabilities and English learners. Most of the projects in i3's current portfolio are supporting these students in some way. The approach for the FY 2015 competition, as further described below, is to focus on projects that are designed to test new or otherwise promising approaches that may impact a broad spectrum of students, including students with disabilities and English learners. Although the FY 2015 i3 Development competition does not include specific priorities for supporting English learners or students with disabilities, we require applicants to serve high-need student populations, and we encourage them to consider ways in which their proposed projects could serve students with disabilities or English learners

EVIDENCE STANDARDS

In order to be funded an applicant must meet the prescribed evidence standard for the type of application being submitted. These standards have been refined in FY 2013 and apply in this year's application. They will likely include the following definitions, all of which are pegged to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards:

- *Evidence of Promise* — empirical evidence that a program or practice is supported by at least one correlational study with statistical controls, a quasi-experimental study that meets WWC evidence standards *with reservations*, or a randomized controlled trial that meets WWC standards *with or without reservations*, and that the study in question found a statistically significant or substantively important favorable outcome. (**Applies to *Development* applications.**)
- *Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness*— a program or practice having at least one study that: (a) meets the WWC standards *without reservations*, found at least one favorable outcome (and no





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unfavorable outcomes), and has a sample that overlaps with the population or settings proposed to be served through a grant; or (b) meets WWC standards *with reservations*, found at least one favorable outcome (and no unfavorable outcomes), has a sample that overlaps with the population or settings to be served, and has a large sample or multi-site sample. (Applies to *Validation* applications.)

- *Strong Evidence of Effectiveness* — a program or practice having: (a) at least one study that meets WWC standards *without reservations*, found at least one favorable outcome (and no unfavorable outcomes), includes a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to be served, and includes a large sample and a multi-site sample; or (b) at least two studies, each of which meets WWC standards *with reservations*, found at least one favorable outcome (and no unfavorable outcomes), has a sample that overlaps with the populations or settings proposed to be served, and has a large sample and a multi-site sample. (Applies to *Scale-up* applications.)
- *Strong Theory* — a rationale for a proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a “logic model.” (Applies to *Development* applications.)

ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES for the DEVELOPMENT GRANT

The Department includes five absolute priorities in the FY 2015 Development competition, the absolute priorities that are intended to represent persistent challenges in education, new areas of policy focus in which research is scarce, and areas we would like to strengthen the current portfolio of i3 grantee projects. Applicants applying under the Serving Rural Communities priority (Absolute Priority 5) must also address one of the other four absolute priorities established for the FY 2015 i3 Development competition, as described below, while serving students enrolled in rural LEAs (as defined in this notice). We also include one competitive preference priority for novice i3 applicants.

This year's priorities for the *Development* grant category are:

1. Improving the Effectiveness of Teachers or Principals
2. Improving Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education
3. Leveraging Technology To Support Instructional Practice and Professional Development
4. Influencing the Development of Non-Cognitive Factors
5. Serving Rural Communities

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY

Applicants applying under the Serving Rural Communities priority (Absolute Priority 5) must also address one of the other four absolute priorities established for the FY 2015 i3 Development competition, while serving students enrolled in rural LEAs. We also include one competitive preference priority for novice i3 applicants. In order to expand the reach of the i3 program and encourage entities that have not previously received an i3 grant to apply, the Department includes a competitive preference priority for novice i3 applicants. A novice i3 applicant is an applicant that has never received a grant under the i3 program. An applicant must identify whether it is a novice applicant when completing the applicant information sheet.

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION POINT of CONTACT

For further information contact – Kelly Terpak, Telephone: (202) 453-7122 or by email: i3@ed.gov.

