



**TRIVIUM CONSULTING:
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY BRIEF**



Department of Education

INVESTING in INNOVATION FUND (i3) 2015 SCALE-UP GRANTS

<https://federalregister.gov/a/2015-13673> (CFDA) Number: 84.411A

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Applications Available: **June 8, 2015.**

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: **June 25, 2015.**

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: **August 4, 2015.**

Deadline for Intergovernmental Review: **October 5, 2015.**

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 2-4 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 9-11 awards.

Project Period: 36-60 months

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

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

- (a) An LEA. For purposes of this program, an LEA is an LEA located within one of the 50 States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
- (b) A partnership between a nonprofit organization and —
 - (1) one or more LEAs; or
 - (2) a consortium of schools.

All grantees must:

- (1) Implement practices that are designed to improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, or increase college enrollment and completion rates for high-need students; and
- (2) Implement practices that serve students who are in grades K-12 at some point during the funding period; and
- (3) Demonstrate that it has established one or more partnerships with the private sector, and that organizations in the private sector will provide matching funds in order to help bring results to scale; and





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- (d) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, provide in the application the names of the LEAs with which the nonprofit organization will partner, or the names of the schools in the consortium with which it will partner.

MATCHING FUNDS for SCALE-UP GRANTS

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 Scale-up applicant must obtain matching funds, or in-kind donations, equal to at least five 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 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.

EXPECTATIONS of SCALE-UP GRANTS

An entity that submits an application for a Scale-up grant must include the following information in its application: an estimate of the number of students to be served by the project; evidence of the applicant's ability to implement and appropriately evaluate the proposed project; and information about its capacity (e.g., management capacity, financial resources, qualified personnel) to implement the project at a national level, working directly or through partners. All applicants can and should partner with others to disseminate their effective practices, strategies, and programs and take them to scale.

EVIDENCE STANDARDS for SCALE-UP GRANTS

Scale-up applicants must be able to show strong evidence of effectiveness for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice included in their applications. Applicants should review the requirements





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section of the notice for instructions on how to demonstrate strong evidence of effectiveness and for information on the other eligibility requirements. The evidence standards have been refined in FY 2013 and will likely include the following definitions, all of which are pegged to the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards:

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.

ABSOLUTE PRIORITIES for SCALE-UP GRANTS

The Department includes five absolute priorities in the FY 2015 Scale-up competition from which an applicant must choose one (Exception: see Note on Absolute Priority 5). Each absolute priority constitutes its own funding category. The Department is interested in a diverse portfolio in these areas.

Absolute Priority 1—Improving the Effectiveness of Teachers or Principals

Absolute Priority 2— Implementing Internationally Benchmarked College- and Career-Ready Standards and Assessments

Absolute Priority 3— Improving Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education

Absolute Priority 4— Implementing Comprehensive High School Reform and Redesign

Absolute Priority 5—Serving Rural Communities –Note: funding provided to projects that address one of the absolute priorities above and under which the majority of students to be served are enrolled in rural local educational agencies.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES for SCALE-UP GRANTS

Note there are also three competitive preference priorities in the FY 2015 Scale-up competition for:

- (1) Improving cost-effectiveness and productivity
- (2) Enabling the broad adoption of effective practices
- (3) Novice i3 applicants - a novice i3 applicant is an applicant that has never received a grant under the i3.

The Department will not review or award points under any competitive preference priority that the applicant fails to clearly identify as the competitive preference priority.

DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION POINT of CONTACT

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

