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Indiana Department of Education

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Indiana Superintendent of Public Instruction

Mathematics and Science Partnership Request for Proposal

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What funds are available?**
   There is approximately $2 million to award to MSP recipients.

2. **What amount of funds should each applicant propose?**
   Budgets should reflect the size and scope of each applicant's proposed program. Factors that might affect costs include, but are not limited to, the number of teachers included, the amount and type of professional development offered, and the type of evaluation designed, etc. It must be noted that proposed funds are subject to review by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) upon award. The following funding scale provides the tiers applicants can apply for:

   FUNDING SCALE:
   20 - 39 Teacher Participants = $250,000 per cycle
   40 – 59 Teacher participants = $450,000 per cycle
   60 – 80+ Teacher participants = $650,000 per cycle

3. **Where is the list of eligible local education agencies (LEAs)?**
   Interested applicants will need to find an eligible partner by reviewing the eligibility criteria and high need definition outlined in the Request for Proposal. Interested applicants are encouraged to communicate directly to form eligible partnerships.

4. **Are charter schools eligible to apply?**
   Yes.

5. **Does an LEA have to have a free and reduced lunch rate above the state average to apply?**
   Yes.

6. **Does an LEA have to show evidence of low test scores to apply?**
   Yes. As part of the *Needs Assessment*, LEAs should show test scores (local and state data) that support need in the area of mathematics or science.

7. **Does an LEA have to have sign-off from the Teacher's Union to apply?**
   Yes. Applications must include consent from the Teacher's Union.

8. **Does an LEA have to contact area non-publics to gauge their interest?**
   Yes. Eligible partnerships must contact area non-publics to determine whether or not they want to participate. There is a form in the RFP that addresses this matter.

9. **Can existing MSP projects apply for another grant?**
   Yes.

10. **Are LEAs required to partner with an institution of higher education?**
    Yes. Partnerships must include an eligible local education agency and a science, engineering, or mathematics department from an institution of higher education.

11. **Can LEAs partner with other LEAs?**
    Yes. An eligible LEA(s) can partner with other LEAs as long as the eligible LEA is an equal partner in all activities and acts as the fiscal agent.

12. **Can LEAs partner with more than one institution of higher education and/or other organization?**
    Yes.

13. **Can LEAs partner with an institution of higher education from a neighboring state?**
    Yes.

14. **Can LEAs partner with an institution of higher education that is private?**
    Yes.

15. **Can institutions of higher education and/or other organizations be partners for more than one application?**
    Yes.

16. **Can institutions of higher education and/or other organizations contact eligible LEAs?**
    Yes.

17. **Can institutions of higher education and/or other organizations contact LEAs to determine if they are eligible?**
    Yes.

18. Can institutions of higher education and/or other organizations complete the application process on behalf of the LEA?
Applications must reflect collaborative efforts in the program design; writing responsibilities are to be determined by the partnership but should demonstrate teamwork.

19. Are applicants required to apply for both Math and Science?
No. Applicants are to pick among the two Indiana foci. If an eligible partnership wants to apply for a mathematics and a science grant, it is suggested that they submit two separate applications <u>or</u> that they make it very clear within the single application how they are developing and assessing progress in mathematics and science. The current RPF reflects current progress toward STEM education. Applicants can focus on Math but should also incorporate the other disciplines of STEM for relevant integration.

20. Are applicants required to focus on a specific grade span?
No. Applicants can apply for any span of at least three grade levels within K-12.

21. What does the State mean by "comprehensive needs assessment"?
The section of the application that relates to the needs assessment should include all information and data used to determine why the proposed program is necessary. Essentially, the needs assessment should convey the reasons why the school(s) served need the program and must provide proof of this assessment, such as results from a teacher survey, student test data etc. It is highly suggested that the comprehensive needs assessment look at more than one factor in determining need. For example, an application that includes teacher survey data and student test data will be considered stronger than an application that includes only one or the other.

22. What might be used to complete a "comprehensive needs assessment"?
Applicants can use a variety of methods to complete a needs assessment including, but not limited to, the following: state test data, local test data, teacher surveys, teacher credential information, and professional development needs. Again, it is highly recommended that applicants use more than one method to complete a needs assessment.

23. Can summer institutes be less than two weeks?
No. Summer institutes must take place for no less than two weeks and must include follow-up during the school year.

24. Does each day of the summer institute have to be eight hours?
Summer institutes must equal a total of 80 hours. However, the allocation of those 80 hours is dependent on the program design. For example, one design might include a two week summer institute with eight hour days; another design might include a two week summer institute of six hour days with outside assignments or web-based learning for the remaining hours.

25. What does the RFP mean by "teacher-faculty content time"?
This is a reference to the amount of time LEA teachers spend with the higher education faculty.

26. Can applications incorporate the work of education consultants, curriculum specialists, or teacher coaches?
Yes.

27. Can applications include costs for teacher stipends?
Yes.

28. Can applications include costs for overseas travel?
This is not recommended. There are many administrative regulations on overseas travel.

29. Can applications include costs for national travel?
Budgets should include costs for the project director to travel to the Mathematics and Science Partnership conference, which will require out-of-state travel each year. If applications include other national travel (attending a national conference, participating in a content area study, etc.), there must be strong evidence linking this travel to the success of the professional development program.

30. Can applications include costs for an external evaluator?
Yes. They must include costs for an external evaluator since this is a required part of the application.

31. Can external evaluators be part of an institution of higher education?
Yes.

32. Do external evaluators need to attain IRB approval?
Yes. Please note that if IRB approval is not attained by the time of the application, it is acceptable to show proof that it is in the process.

33. Do teacher and student data need to be used in the annual evaluation of the grant?
Yes. Grants will need to report annually on student progress, by way of student pre- and post-test data. ISTEP+ is the best choice for mathematics and applicable science grade levels. For those grade levels in science where ISTEP+ tests are not administered, another test should be used, such as, but not limited to, NWEA or Acuity.

Grants will also need to report annually on teacher progress of content knowledge, by way of teacher pre- and post-test data.

34. What criteria will be used to evaluate and score applications?
The scoring criteria and point system is included in the RFP.

35. How many applications are likely to be received and reviewed?
It is difficult to project the number of applications that will be received and reviewed. Based on past history of the program, it is likely that 15-20 applications will be received.

36. How many grants will be awarded?
It is difficult to project the number of applications that will be awarded. Interested applicants can look at the Indiana MSP Web site to review the profiles of past recipients.

37. Who scores the MSP applications?
Applications are scored by a group of experienced educators (K-12 and higher education) in the areas of mathematics and science.

Learn more about Indiana's Mathematics and Science Partnership Program at http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/curriculum/math-and-science-partnership-program