

this voluntary pilot project by submitting an application electronically, the data you enter on-line will be saved into a database. We request your participation in e-Application. We shall continue to evaluate its success and solicit suggestions for its improvement.

If you participate in e-Application, please note the following:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- When you enter the e-Application system, you will find information about its hours of operation. We strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to initiate an e-Application package.
- You will not receive additional point value because you submit a grant application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you submit an application in paper format.
- You may submit all documents electronically, including the Title Page which substitutes for ED 424 in the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, the Budget Summary Sheet which substitutes for ED 524 in the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, and all necessary assurances and certifications.
- Your e-Application must comply with any page limit requirements described in this notice.
- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement, which will include a PR/Award number (an identifying number unique to your application).
- Within three working days after submitting your electronic application, fax a signed copy of the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424 in the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education, to the Application Control Center after following these steps:

1. Print the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424, from e-Application.
2. The institution's Authorizing Representative must sign the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424.
3. Place the PR/Award number in the upper right hand corner of the hard copy signature page of the Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424.
4. Fax the signed Title Page, which substitutes for ED 424, to the Application Control Center at (202) 260-1349.

- We may request that you give us original signatures on other forms at a later date.
- *Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of System Unavailability:* If you elect to participate in the e-Application pilot for the Program for North American Mobility in

Higher Education and you are prevented from submitting your application on the application deadline date because the e-Application system is unavailable, we will grant you an extension of one business day in order to transmit your application electronically, by mail, or by hand delivery. For us to grant this extension—

1. You must be a registered user of e-Application, and have initiated an e-Application for this competition; and
2. (a) The e-Application system must be unavailable for 60 minutes or more between the hours of 8:30 and 3:30 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date; or
(b) The e-Application system must be unavailable for any period of time during the last hour of operation (that is, for any period of time between 3:30 and 4:30 p.m., Washington, DC time) on the application deadline date.

The Department must acknowledge and confirm these periods of unavailability before granting you an extension. To request this extension or to confirm the Department's acknowledgement of any system unavailability, you may contact either (1) the person listed elsewhere in this notice under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** or (2) the e-GRANTS help desk at 1-888-336-8930.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education at: <http://e-grants.ed.gov>.

For Applications Contact: Education Publications Center (ED Pubs), PO Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Telephone (toll free): 1-877-433-7827. FAX: (301) 470-1244. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call (toll free) 1-877-576-7734.

You may also contact ED Pubs at its Web site: <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>.

Or you may contact ED Pubs at its e-mail address: edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

If you request an application from ED Pubs, be sure to identify this competition as follows: CFDA number 84.116N.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., 8th Floor, Washington, DC 20006-8544. Telephone: (202) 502-7500 or via Internet: <http://www.ed.gov/FIPSE>.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative

format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact number listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Individuals with disabilities also may obtain a copy of the application package in an alternative format by contacting that number. However, the Department is not able to reproduce in an alternative format the standard forms included in the application package.

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Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1138-1138d.

Dated: September 25, 2003.

Sally Stroup,

Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.

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BILLING CODE 4000-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RIN 1820 ZA31

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR)

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priority.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services establishes a final priority for one new award under the Assistive Technology Act (AT Act) Technical Assistance Program (TA) for NIDRR. The Assistant Secretary may use this priority for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2003 and later years. We take this action to focus attention on an area of national need. We intend this priority to measure and improve the outcomes of the Assistive Technology (AT) State

grant program that serves individuals with disabilities.

Waiver of Delayed Effective Date

The Administrative Procedure Act requires that a proposed rule be published at least 30 days before its effective date, except as otherwise provided for good cause (20 U.S.C. 553(d)(3)). During the 30-day public comment period on this notice, no comments were received. For this reason, and in order to make timely grant awards, the Secretary has determined that a delayed effective date is unnecessary and impracticable.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Donna Nangle, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3412, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2645. Telephone: (202) 205-5880 or via the Internet: donna.nangle@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the TDD number at (202) 205-4475.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

We published a notice of proposed priority in the **Federal Register** on August 14, 2003 (68 FR 48739). There are no differences between the notice of proposed priority and this notice of final priority.

Note: This notice does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use this priority, we invite applications through a notice in the **Federal Register**. A notice inviting applications for FY 2003 awards was published in the **Federal Register** on August 14, 2003 (68 FR 48741). This notice does not preclude us from proposing or funding additional priorities, subject to meeting applicable rulemaking requirements.

When inviting applications we designate each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority, we give competitive preference to an application by either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an

application that meets the competitive priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority, we are particularly interested in applications that meet the invitational priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Background

The background statement for this priority was published in the notice of proposed priority on August 14, 2003 (68 FR 48739).

Priority

The Assistant Secretary proposes a Data Collection Technical Assistance Project. The purpose of the project is to maintain and support the existing Web-based data collection instrument for the AT Act State grantees and to develop, implement, test, support and maintain a Web-based data collection instrument for the AT Act Protection and Advocacy (P&A) grantees. The Data Collection Technical Assistance Project must:

(a) Maintain and support the existing Web-based data collection instrument for the AT Act State grantees and develop, implement, test, support and maintain a Web-based data collection and analysis system, including a data collection instrument for the AT Act P&A grantees to assess performance outcomes;

(b) Train entities funded under the AT Act in the use of the data collection systems including specific training on the data collection instruments;

(c) Generate analytical reports based on the data collected from the grantees and prepare an annual report on grantees' performance and outcomes, including interpretations of findings;

(d) Identify and evaluate successful strategies that can be linked to increased access to and provision of AT based on the data collected from the grantees, including analyses of use of AT by individuals with disabilities and national trends related to AT use by individuals with disabilities;

(e) Coordinate information dissemination activities and distribute information about access to and provision of AT for individuals with disabilities of all ages to the AT Act State grantees, AT Act P&A grantees, grantees providing TA to the AT Act State grantees and P&A grantees, and the National AT Internet Site; and

(f) Prepare and submit an annual report of findings about program

outcomes, and separately prepare a report on assessment of the reliability of the data collection measures and validity of data collected from the AT Act grantees and P&A grantees, and the extent to which the data addresses the intended purposes of the data collection activities.

Executive Order 12866

This notice of final priority has been reviewed in accordance with Executive order 12866. Under the terms of the order, we have assessed the potential costs and benefits of this regulatory action.

The potential costs associated with the notice of final priority are those resulting from statutory requirements and those we have determined as necessary for administering this program effectively and efficiently.

In assessing the potential costs and benefits—both quantitative and qualitative—of this notice of final priority, we have determined that the benefits of the final priority justify the costs.

Summary of Potential Costs and Benefits

The potential cost associated with this final priority is minimal while the benefits are significant. Grantees may anticipate costs associated with completing the application process in terms of staff time, copying, and mailing or delivery. The use of e-Application technology reduces mailing and copying costs significantly.

The benefits of the Data Collection Project have been well established over the years in that similar projects have been completed. This final priority will generate new knowledge through a dissemination, utilization, training, and technical assistance project.

The benefit of this final priority and proposed applications and project requirements will be the establishment of a new Data Collection Project that generates, disseminates, and promotes the use of new information that will improve access to AT and expand opportunities for employment, education and community life.

Electronic Access to This Document

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To use PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available free at this site. If you have questions about using PDF, call the U.S. Government

Printing Office (GPO), toll free, at 1-888-293-6498; or in the Washington, DC, area at (202) 512-1530.

Note: The official version of this document is published in the **Federal Register**. Free Internet access to the official edition of the **Federal Register** and the Code of Federal Regulations is available on GPO Access at: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/nara/index.html>.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 84.224B, Assistive Technology Act Technical Assistance Program)

Program Authority: 29 U.S.C. 3014.

Dated: September 25, 2003.

Robert H. Pasternack,

Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services.

[FR Doc. 03-24703 Filed 9-29-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RIN 1820 ZA30

National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research

AGENCY: Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Department of Education.

ACTION: Notice of final priorities.

SUMMARY: The Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services announces final priorities for the Alternative Financing Mechanisms Program (AFP) under title III of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (AT Act) that is administered by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) and the Access to Telework Fund Program (Telework) under section 303(b) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Rehab Act), that is administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The Assistant Secretary may use these priorities for competitions in fiscal year (FY) 2003 and later years.

Waiver of Delayed Effective Date

The Administrative Procedure Act requires that a proposed rule be published at least 30 days before its effective date, except as otherwise provided for good cause (20 U.S.C. 553(d)(3)). In order to make timely grant awards, the Secretary has determined that a delayed effective date is impracticable.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Carol Cohen, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW., room 3420, Switzer Building, Washington, DC 20202-2645. Telephone: (202) 205-5666 or via the Internet: carol.cohen@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the TDD number at (202) 205-4475.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: We published a notice of proposed priorities and change to the application process for the Alternative Financing Mechanisms Program (AFP) and the Access to Telework Fund Program (Telework) in the **Federal Register** on August 5, 2003 (68 FR 46411). There are no significant differences between the notice of proposed priorities and this notice of final priorities.

Public Comment

In the notice of proposed priorities, we invited comments on the proposed priorities. The only substantive comments we received suggested changes the law does not authorize us to make under the applicable statutory authority.

Note: This notice does not solicit applications. In any year in which we choose to use one or more of these priorities, we invite applications through a notice in the **Federal Register**. A notice inviting applications for FY 2003 awards was published in the **Federal Register** on August 5, 2003 (68 FR 46418).

When inviting applications we designate each priority as absolute, competitive preference, or invitational. The effect of each type of priority follows:

Absolute priority: Under an absolute priority, we consider only applications that meet the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(3)).

Competitive preference priority: Under a competitive preference priority, we give competitive preference to an application by either (1) awarding additional points, depending on how well or the extent to which the application meets the priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(i)); or (2) selecting an application that meets the competitive priority over an application of comparable merit that does not meet the competitive priority (34 CFR 75.105(c)(2)(ii)).

Invitational priority: Under an invitational priority, we are particularly interested in applications that meet the invitational priority. However, we do not give an application that meets the priority a competitive or absolute preference over other applications (34 CFR 75.105(c)(1)).

Priorities

Eligibility for an AFP Grant

States that receive or have received grants under section 101 of the AT Act are eligible for an AFP grant. Under section 3(a)(13)(A) of the AT Act, State means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Eligibility for a Telework Grant

States as defined in the AT Act and governing bodies of American Indian tribes located on Federal and State reservations consistent with section 7(19)(B) of the Rehab Act are eligible for a Telework grant. Consortia of States and American Indian tribes are also eligible for a Telework grant.

Joint Administration of Grants

States may jointly apply for and administer an AFP grant and a Telework grant. States that submit one application for the two priorities must meet the requirements for each priority and will compete separately under each priority.

Background

The background statements for the following priorities were published in the notice of proposed priorities on August 5, 2003 (68 FR 46411).

Priority 1: Alternative Financing Mechanism Program

The purpose of these requirements is to increase the funding for and provision of AT (Sec. 2(b)(1)(A)). The AFP will: (1) achieve the program's short-term goal of purchasing AT through alternative financing mechanisms for individuals with disabilities, and other eligible parties; and (2) achieve the program's long-term goals of establishing a nationwide network of permanent State AFPs that promote independence and choice.

States that receive or have received grants under section 101 of the AT Act are eligible to compete for an AFP (Sec. 303(a)). In its application, a State must identify and describe one or more of the following types of AFP programs that the State will implement:

- (1) a low-interest loan fund;
- (2) an interest buy-down program;
- (3) a revolving loan fund;
- (4) a loan guarantee or insurance program;
- (5) a program operated by a partnership among private entities for the purchase, lease, or other acquisition of AT devices or AT services; or