



CARES Act Funding Opportunity: ED Announces COVID-19 Relief to Institutions of Higher Education

Lewis-Burke Associates LLC – August 20, 2020

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) announced it will be publishing a Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) for awards from the new Institutional Resilience and Expanded Postsecondary Opportunity (IREPO) program. Funds to support the IREPO program will come from the Education Stabilization Fund created by the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act* and will support initiatives by institutions of higher education to emerge from the coronavirus pandemic more resilient and able to provide expanded opportunities for students, whether or not they are physically on campus.

Grants made through IREPO can be used for a variety of activities, including student support, resuming on-campus operations, reducing COVID-19 and other disease transmission, and developing innovative educational delivery methods for students who cannot attend classes in person. Grants will be awarded to institutions of higher education with the greatest unmet need from the coronavirus pandemic. ED defines institutions with the greatest unmet needs related to coronavirus as:

1. Institutions of higher education that, as of March 13, 2020, had a full-time student population in which at least 30 percent of full-time students received Pell Grants; and/or
2. Institutions that were underserved by the CARES Act either because they did not receive a loan under the Paycheck Protection Program, and/or the institution serves a large portion of the part-time students; and/or and has other unmet needs that are demonstrated in the application.

All applicants must include information on the number and percentage of students enrolled in the “term immediately prior to the term in which March 13, 2020 occurred” that were eligible to receive a Pell Grant, a description of the institution’s unmet needs, and a timeline for implementing the proposal and metrics for its success.

Additionally, all applications must address the absolute priority of expanding opportunities for students and increasing institutional resiliency. Applications that propose plans to expand remote learning and other innovative educational delivery methods will be given competitive priority, as will those that provide dual enrollment opportunities for rural high school students and/or are Title III or Title V eligible institutions (such as Minority Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities) located in a rural community or Opportunity Zone.

Eligibility: All institutions of higher education, as defined by section 101 of the Higher Education Act, are eligible to apply. Institutions of higher education can apply for IREPO awards individually or as a part of a consortium of other eligible institutions.

Total Funding and Award Size: ED anticipates making \$28 million available for 19 awards between \$1 - \$3 million dollars each. The estimated average size of awards is \$1.5 million. Cost sharing is not required for this grant.

Due Date: The NIA is scheduled to be published in the federal register within two weeks, and applications will be due sixty days after the publication of the NIA. A non-mandatory, but strongly encouraged, notice of intent to apply will be due twenty days after the publication of the NIA.

Sources and Additional Information:

- The unpublished NIA is available at https://s3.amazonaws.com/public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2020-18531.pdf?utm_campaign=pi+subscription+mailing+list&utm_source=federalregister.gov&utm_medium=email.
- Additional information on the IREPO program is available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/heerfirepo.html>.
- The press release on the IREPO program is available at <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/secretary-devos-launches-grant-program-promote-institutional-resiliency-and-expand-educational-opportunity-students>.