

REQUEST FOR APPLICATION

Program Guidelines

2022-2023 ESC Statewide Services for Students with Visual Impairments (SSVI)

Authorized by General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III,
Rider 15, 87th Texas Legislature;
Texas Education Code (TEC) 30.002(g)

Application Closing Date—5:00 p.m., Central Time
August 8, 2022

TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY

**Special Education Division
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Austin, Texas 78701**

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

TEA, as the pass-through entity¹, is the grantee² from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities³ such as local educational agencies (LEAs), including school districts, charter schools, and education service centers, and to a lesser degree institutions of higher education (IHEs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs) who are the agency's subgrantees⁴. These guidelines apply to all subgrantees of TEA, regardless of whether referenced herein as subgrantee or grantee. For purposes of this document, TEA may use the terms grantee and subgrantee synonymously for its subrecipients.

This part of the request for application (RFA), Program Guidelines, is to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and any application instructions. The Standard Application System (SAS) consists of Application Part 1 (PDF – narrative schedules) and Application Part 2 (Excel - budget schedules) to be completed in order for the applicant to be eligible for funding.

For applicants selected for funding, all guidelines and instructions will be incorporated by reference into the Notice of Grant Award (NOGA).

Reference to the General and Fiscal Guidelines

The Program Guidelines provide information specifically relevant to this grant program. The [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) provide information relevant to all TEA grant programs. Throughout the Program Guidelines, cross-references are given to applicable sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#). It is critical that you review all referenced sections of the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) when preparing your application.

¹ Pass-through entity is defined as a non-Federal entity that provides a subaward to a subrecipient to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR 200.74)

² Grantee is defined as the legal entity to which a grant is awarded and that is accountable to the federal government for the use of the funds provided. The term “grantee” does not include any secondary recipients, such as subgrantees and contractors that may receive funds from a grantee. (34 CFR 77)

³ Non-federal entity is defined as a state, local government, Indian tribe, institution of higher education, or nonprofit organization that carries out a federal award as a recipient or subrecipient. (2 CFR 200.69)

⁴ Subgrantee is defined by TEA to be the same as a subrecipient which is defined as a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal program; but does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such program. (2 CFR 200.93) Subgrantee is defined in 34 CFR 77 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

Contact for Clarifying Information

Program Contact

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Funding Contact

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US Department of Education and/or State Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with the US Department of Education Appropriations Act:

| Category | Amount |
|---|-------------|
| Total funds available for this project | \$5,539,891 |
| Percentage to be financed with federal funds | 0% |
| Amount of federal funds | \$0 |
| Percentage to be financed from nonfederal sources | 100% |
| Amount of nonfederal funds | \$5,539,891 |

Grant Timeline

For all dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, see the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. If a report due date falls on a weekend or holiday, the report will be due the following business day. All dates except the grant ending date may vary slightly as conditions require.

Grant at a Glance

This section provides detailed information about the grant program.

Program Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

The purpose of this program is to provide services, technical assistance, and support to local education agencies (LEAs) that provide services to students with visual impairments. Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) provide support and technical assistance to teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs). Such support and assistance is critical to retention of TVIs throughout the state. Effective TVIs lead to improved outcomes for students with visual impairments.

Eligible Applicants

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Eligibility for Funding.

Eligibility list is posted by Regional Education Service Center.

Shared Services Arrangement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Shared Services Arrangements.

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not allowed.

Cost Share or Matching Requirement

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Cost Share/Match Requirement.

There is no cost share or matching requirement for this grant program.

Supplement, Not Supplant

For supplement, not supplant guidance, see the Supplement, Not Supplant Handbook on the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration's [Training and Other Resources](#) page.

The supplement, not supplant provision does not apply to this grant program.

Limitation of Administrative Funds

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Administrative Costs.

NOTE: Administrative funds include **both** direct administrative costs **and** allowable indirect costs.

Direct Administrative Costs

TEA does not permit direct administrative costs for this grant program.

Indirect Costs

For this state-funded grant, the grantee may claim a maximum for indirect costs equal to **the lesser** of its current, approved unrestricted indirect cost rate or 15%.

To calculate the maximum indirect costs that can be claimed for a grant, complete the [Maximum Indirect Costs Worksheet](#), located on the Grant Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page.

Pre-Award Costs

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Pre-Award Costs.

Pre-award costs are not permitted for this grant.

Application Requirements and Assurances

This section identifies the two types of requirements in which applicants must comply to be eligible for funding:

- Statutory requirements (requirements defined in the authorizing statute)
- TEA program requirements (requirements defined by TEA program staff)

Statutory Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Statutory Requirements.

Per Section 22.0834 of the Texas Education Code (TEC), any person offered employment by any entity that contracts with TEA or receives grant funds administered by TEA (i.e., a grantee or subgrantee) is subject to the fingerprinting requirement. TEA is prohibited from awarding grant funds to any entity, including nonprofit organizations, that fails to comply with this requirement. For details, refer to the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fingerprinting Requirement.

TEA Program Requirements

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), TEA Program Requirements.

In addition to the statutory requirements, TEA has established the following program requirements. The applicant must comply with each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:

1. Each ESC will respond to a benchmark survey in the time and manner requested by TEA. The purpose of this survey will be to collect information about the anticipated needs of the ESC pertaining to the provision of training, support, and technical assistance relative to the current allowable uses of SSVI grant funds.
2. Each ESC will respond to an end-of-year survey in the time and manner requested by TEA. The purpose of this survey will be to collect information on the activities actually carried out and expenses incurred for training, support, and technical assistance relative to the anticipated needs identified in the benchmark survey.
3. In accordance with all components in this section, each ESC will develop a regional plan for the provision of training, support, and technical assistance to meet the identified State, regional, and district needs. The regional plan will include activities, resources, and staff necessary to

accomplish coordinated efforts to ensure that students with disabilities have access to and progress in the general educational curriculum. Activities are to be reported to TEA in the time and manner requested via the Special Education Continuous Improvement Plan (SECIP).

Program-Specific Assurances

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Provisions and Assurances.

The program-specific assurances for this grant program are listed in the Application Part 1.

Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) on the Grant Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page for general guidance on allowable activities and use of funds.

Allowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

- Budgeted amounts as approved in the application are to be used for special supplemental services unique to students with visual impairments and may not be used in lieu of educational funds otherwise designated under the TEC or through state appropriations.
- Equipment purchased with SSVI funds for use by specific students may be transferred within the region or to another ESC for use by other students with visual impairments.
- SSVI funds must be used for activities that are directly related to the provision of technical assistance and support to school districts and charter schools, or for direct services to eligible students designed to improve student performance and improve program and services effectiveness for students with visual impairments, under 21 years of age.
- Staff members partially funded out of special education funds must keep appropriate time and effort records and related documentation to support any amounts charged to special education.

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

- Salaries for TVIs (teachers of students with visual impairments)
- Salaries for orientation and mobility instructors
- Bonuses as a recruitment/retention incentive for TVIs and orientation and mobility instructors
- Unique assessments such as clinical low-vision evaluations
- Substitute teachers for TVI staff development
- Low-vision clinics
- Special programs addressing social and recreational skill development
- Parent training
- Support of programs to recruit and train new TVIs within limits of state law
- Staff development (in-state) in areas specific to the needs of students with visual impairments
- Staff travel expenses for all of the above
- Assistive adaptive technology unique to the needs of students with visual impairments
- Infant programs

- Braille transcribers
- Braille production technology
- Repair for equipment purchased with SSVI funds
- Instructional supplies and materials unique to students with visual impairments
- Costs related to program evaluation and improvement
- Support for projects determined by the regional Visual Impairment plan to originate from the ESC
- Salaries of teachers with a Visual Impairment permit enrolled in an intensive Visual Impairment endorsement program if individually approved by TEA
- Other expenditures individually approved by TEA
- Support costs for staff serving TVIs and students with visual impairments at the ESCs, including:
 - Payroll costs
 - Building use fees
 - Telephone
 - Postage
 - Data processing
 - Clerical support
 - Computers
- Travel for Students to Conferences
- Stipends for Non-Employees
- Non-employee Costs for Conferences
- Capital outlay

Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds

Refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) on the Grant Administration Division's

In addition, unallowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

- Debt service (lease-purchase)
- Audit services for state-funded grants
- Field Trips
- Advisory Council
- Cost of Membership in Any Civic or Community Organization
- Hosting or Sponsoring of Conferences
- Out-of-State Travel
- Travel Costs for Officials Such as Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Members

- Trips to TEA Visually Impaired/Orientation and Mobility meetings when virtual options are available
- Teachers not certified as TVIs, unless individually approved by TEA
- Speech therapy
- Physical therapy (PT)
- Occupational therapy (OT)
- Counseling
- Staff assignments that are not specific to the unique needs of students with visual impairments
- Food
- Any other expenditures which are not allowed for state funds
- Administrative costs

Performance Measures

The applicant agrees to collect data and report on the following mandatory performance measures:

The applicant will collect data and report student outcomes/improvement through the performance-based monitoring system. Data will be entered during the Special Education Continuous Improvement Process (SECIP) and State Performance Indicators (SPP) annual data collections.

Attachments

There are two types of attachments that may be required to be submitted with your application:

Required Fiscal-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Fiscal-Related Documentation Required to Be on File, for a general description of fiscal-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

Required Program-Related Attachments

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Required Program-Related Attachments, for a general description of program-related documents that can be required as attachments to the application.

No program-related attachments are required for this grant program.