Request for Application

Program Guidelines

2024-2027 Digital Teaching Micro-Credentials

Authorized by General Appropriations Act (GAA), Article III, Rider 39, 88th Texas Legislature

TEA
Texas Education Agency

Contents

Introduction to the Program Guidelines

TEA, as the pass-through entity[1], is the grantee[2] from the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) and TEA awards subgrants to non-federal entities[3] 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 subgrantees[4]. 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.

Errata Notices

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Errata Notices.

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[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

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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	**$500,000**
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	$500,000

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 Digital Teaching Micro-Credentials project will develop digital teaching courses, and resulting micro-credential, to recognize educator readiness and skill in delivering virtual education with excellence and geared towards student success. The course content will be designed with an educator audience and will include interactive learning opportunities and require demonstration of key knowledge and skills that could result in issuance of a formal micro-credential. The final product should have multiple pathways for educators based on their proficiency in skills with at least one pathway designed for those teaching in full-time virtual or hybrid education settings.

Eligible Applicants

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Eligibility for Funding.

The eligible applicant is Region 13 Education Service Center (ESC).

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 limits the amount of direct administrative costs for this grant program to no more than 5% of the total grant award.

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 Grants Administration Division's Grant Resources page.

Pre-Award Costs

See the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Pre-Award Costs.

Pre-award costs are permitted, if requested, from September 1, 2024, to stamp-in date.

Application Requirements and Assurances

This section identifies the 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)
- Texas Grant Management Standards (requirements defined by the state for Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) and limited other applicants)

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,

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including nonprofit organizations, that fails to comply with this requirement. For details, refer to the General and Fiscal Guidelines, Fingerprinting Requirement.

The following requirements are defined in the statute that authorizes this program. The applicant must comply with each of these requirements in the application to be considered for funding:

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. Provide monthly reports on technical assistance provider progress and associated budgets including expenditures, encumbrances, and remaining balances.
2. Maintain, manage, and support vendors that will provide technical assistance, including providing communications and reimbursement for services.
3. Prepare for and facilitate monthly meetings with TEA program staff to share updates on project progress and reimbursement for services.
4. The grant program will be funded by reimbursement once the NOGA has been issued and the grantee submits payment requests through the Expenditure Reporting (ER) system. See Expenditure Reporting.

Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS)

See the TxGMS for detailed requirements. In general, the TxGMS apply to Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) and limited other applicants. The TxGMS do not apply to school districts or open-enrollment charter schools.

In general, the TxGMS require state-funded grants to follow federal Uniform Grant Guidelines.

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 Grants 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 include only the following:

General Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

- Payroll costs

- Professional and contracted services

- Consumable and durable supplies and materials

- Costs associated with fulfilling the purpose, goals, and objectives of the grant

Other Allowable Operating Costs Requiring Specific Approval in the Grant Application (6400)

Stipends for Non-Employees Other Than Those Included in 6419

Stipends for non-employees other than those included in 6419 may be funded under the grant program. Stipends for non-employees will require pre-authorization in writing. To access the pre-authorization form for participant support costs, refer to the [Forms for Prior Approval, Disclosure, and Justification](#) page.

Unallowable Activities and Use of Funds

Refer to the [Budgeting Costs Guidance Handbook](#) on the Grants Administration Division's [Grant Resources](#) page for general guidance on unallowable costs.

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

- Debt services (lease liabilities for terms greater than 12 months) — unallowable costs include:
  - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Principal Costs (6514)
  - Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) – Interest Costs (6526)
  - Capital Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
  - Capital Lease Liability – Interest Costs (6522)
  - Interest on Debt Costs (6523)
- Audit services for state-funded grants
- Out-of-state travel
- Travel for students to conferences (Does not include field trips)
- Field trips

- Travel costs for officials such as Executive Director, Superintendent, or Board Members
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Cost of membership in any civic or community organization
- Hosting or sponsoring of conferences
- Advisory Council
- Capital outlay
- Any activity not specified above in the Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section

Performance Measures

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

1. 90% of reimbursements and invoices will be paid within 45 days of receipt by the grantees' business office.
2. 90% of vendors will rate the processes related to contracting, invoicing, and reimbursement as satisfactory or higher.
3. Grant budget information will be updated and made available to TEA on or before the 15th day of every month.
4. 85% of milestones related to the vendor solicitation process will be met.

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.