

Request for Application

Program Guidelines

2025-2026 Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) Specialized Hubs Grant

Authorized by House Bill 2, Section 21.3522, 89th Texas Legislature

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Introduction to the Program Guidelines

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers federal¹ and state grant awards to its subgrantees² to carry out a program. Such entities include primarily school systems (referred to as local educational agencies [LEAs] in statutes), including independent school districts and charter schools; education service centers (ESCs); and, to a lesser degree, institutions of higher education (IHEs), nonprofit organizations (NPOs), and other statutorily allowable organizations. The following Program Guidelines apply to all eligible subgrantees for the designated grant program.

The Program Guidelines, as part of the request for application (RFA), are to be used in conjunction with the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#) and any application instructions or other RFA requirements, as listed for the grant on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. The Standard Application System (SAS) consists of Application Part 1 (PDF narrative schedules) and Application Part 2 (Excel budget schedules). An eligible applicant must submit both parts of the SAS to apply for funding, unless specifically delineated in these guidelines.

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 cross-referenced sections when preparing your application.

Errata Notices

See the [General and Fiscal Guidelines](#), Errata Notices.

¹ TEA is the grantee and pass-through entity for federal education funding awarded by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). *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 pursuant to a subgrant or contract. (34 CFR §77.1) *Pass-through entity* is defined as a recipient or subrecipient that provides a subaward to a subrecipient (including lower tier subrecipients) to carry out part of a federal program. (2 CFR §200.1)

² *Subgrantee* is defined by TEA to be the same as a *subrecipient*, which is defined in 2 CFR §200.1 as an entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity to carry out part of a federal award. The term does not include an individual that is a beneficiary or participant of the program. *Subgrantee* is defined in 34 CFR §77.1 as the legal entity to which a subgrant is awarded and that is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided. For purposes of the request for application (RFA), TEA may use the terms *subgrantee*, *grantee*, *subrecipient*, and *applicant* synonymously.

Contact for Clarifying Information

Grant Program Contact

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Funding Contact

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U.S. Department of Education and/or State Appropriations

The following is provided in compliance with federal appropriations acts:

Category	Amount
Total funds available for this project	\$2,700,000
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	\$2,700,000

Grant Timeline

Due dates related to the grant, including reporting dates, are available in the Critical Events section listed on the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page. Grantees are responsible for regularly monitoring the webpage for updated grant information and for meeting all due dates and other grant requirements.

Grant at a Glance

This section provides detailed information about the grant program.

Program Purpose, Goals, and Objectives

The 2025-2026 Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) Specialized Hubs Grant will provide services and resources to Education Service Centers (ESCs) to develop and deploy supports related to barriers faced with Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) implementation. Specifically, this grant will provide funds for dedicated staff to provide individualized technical assistance to school systems and ESCs in one of the following specialized areas:

Rural Cohort, Texas Portfolios and Texas SLOs, Data Collection, and Engaging Stakeholders.

The goals for this work include:

1. More districts with TIA systems
2. More teachers eligible for TIA within local systems
3. Increased success rates with TIA implementation and validation
4. Increasing retention for TIA Designated teachers

Eligible Applicants

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

Eligibility List

An eligibility list is posted in the Application and Support Information section of the [TEA Grant Opportunities](#) page.

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 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 8% of the total grant award.

Indirect Costs

For this grant program, the grantee may claim a maximum for allowable indirect costs equal to its current approved restricted indirect cost rate.

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, 2025, 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 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, 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:

All Grantees

1. Attend TIA Leads Meetings and other TIA training identified by TEA designated Hub Contact.
2. Understand key milestones and actions of the district TIA journey.
3. Champion statewide TIA participation, expansion, and continuous improvement.
4. Apply TIA knowledge through direct service and support to school systems.
5. Serve as a frontline resource for school systems and other ESCs in area of hub specialization.
6. Create a written service delivery model and assess its effectiveness.
7. Track satisfaction and outcomes of school system and ESC supports to measure impact.
8. Contribute to the continuous improvement and presentation/facilitation of district TIA technical assistance sessions assigned by TEA and related to hub areas of expertise.
9. All materials and communications produced with grant funds must follow the official brand guidelines provided by TEA. This includes proper use of logos, colors, fonts, and messaging tone.
10. Grantees will be responsible for increasing TIA participation and eligibility rates and ensuring successful implementation of TIA, as measured by performance on TIA Applications, TIA Data Submission, TIA Data Validation, and Technical Assistance and Annual Evaluation Surveys. Targets will be proposed and approved by TEA. Grantees that do not meet required goals may be subject to additional review and considerations around funding and continuation.
11. If hosting a website for specialized support, follow all relevant TEA requirements.

12. Lead monthly check-ins with TEA staff to review activities, progress towards goals, review budget, and address barriers.
13. Conduct mid-year and end of year step backs focused on outcomes and continuous improvement.
14. Maintain strong working relationships with other ESC TIA staff and District Leadership as measured by the quarterly ESC survey from TEA.
15. Create and maintain an annual workplan that is reviewed and approved by TEA.
16. Provide documentation of the use of grant funds through quarterly budget updates on template provided by TEA and the submission of an annual report.
17. Complete and submit all necessary benchmarks, tasks, and requirements.
18. Participate fully for the duration of the grant.
19. Collaborate and communicate with TEA in the time and manner requested by TEA.
20. Leverage existing ESC capacity around area of specialization to support this work.
21. Present ESC and School System sessions at the Annual TIA Conference and comply with timelines for conference-related session creation.
22. Submit resources, tools, and presentation decks to TEA for feedback and approval before sharing with school systems or other ESCs. Follow branding and writing style guidelines provided by TEA.
23. Grantees must be able to hire and identify a TIA Specialized Hub Lead who will serve as the primary grant contact and lead the ESCs efforts with the Specialized Hub.
24. Grantees will share their staffing plans, including reporting structure on team and within grantee's organization, dedicated percentage on grant, roles and key functions with TEA. Changes to staffing plan, including, but not limited to, changes in split funded roles, reporting structure, or promotions should be shared with TEA.
25. In addition, ESCs must meet the following grant expectations related to staffing:
 - a. 100% of capacity of Specialized Hub Lead is dedicated to this position – no split funding.
 - b. Salary is determined by each individual ESC's local policies.
 - c. Specialized Hub Lead must join or send a representative to greater than 90% of required training, meetings, and other engagements.
 - d. Limit any split funded positions for ESC Hub Staff, and when proposed:
 - i. Ensure the funding is not going to an existing function.
 - ii. Ensure that there is no alternative.
 - iii. Ensure the position type and focus areas meet the needs of this grant.

26. 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. The grantee is required to regularly request payment for allowable expenditures as grant program requirements are carried out.

Rural Cohort ESCs

1. Establish a criterion for the evaluation of eligibility of rural districts through the review of Letters of Intent (LOIs) in a manner that prioritizes districts in most need of support for successful implementation of a local designation system. Prioritization should be communicated to districts and allow for the support of no more than 25 districts per hub.
2. Direct any districts not selected for the Rural Cohort to services in their region and/or other specialized hubs as appropriate.
3. Provide Rural Cohort services at no cost to the selected districts through data submission.
4. Support the development, implementation, and expansion of TIA systems.
5. Identify best practices for supporting small and rural districts and share with ESCs.
6. Provide support to districts to prepare for data submission in year two and a subsequent offboarding process that facilitates district support from the regional ESC.
7. Provide training to other ESCs on TIA development and implementation in a rural context.
8. Develop and implement a TIA training series and Trainer of Trainers (TOT) series with on-site coaching for New ESC Leads and ESC TIA staff identified by TEA for additional support.
9. Provide exemplars for expansion and implementation, including system design, data submission, and system implementation.
10. Collaborate with partner rural hub to ensure cohesive messaging and support.
11. Promote TIA awareness for other, non-TIA ESC staff.

Texas SLOs and Portfolio Hub ESC

1. Communicate with school systems and ESC TIA teams about training and available specialized resources for SLO and Portfolio models.
2. Provide training and system support for school systems implementing SLOs and portfolios.
3. Provide TOT formatted training for ESC SLO contacts.
4. Manage existing and create new SLO and Portfolio exemplars targeted in areas for expansion of eligible teachers through a newly developed site page for stakeholder use.
5. Analyze teacher eligibility trends and create updated Portfolio and SLO exemplars.
6. Offer independent scoring capacity building for school systems with SLOs and Portfolios.
7. Consult on district local designation system weighting, eligibility, and overall implementation of student growth measures.

8. Maintain the Texas SLO Ip and Website. Create and make available training materials for relaunched Texas SLO process for all ESCs and SLO leads.

TIA Data Collection Hub ESC

1. Communicate with districts and ESC TIA teams about training and ESC Hub developed specialized resources for data collection and analysis.
2. Provide support and resources related to existing school system data infrastructure.
3. Provide training and support related to data collection at no cost to school systems and ESCs.
4. Host one-on-one consultations with school systems, to include those using a variety of commonly used data tools and include service plans customized to the needs of the district in consultation with their regional ESC leads. Include onboarding, offboarding, and satisfaction surveys.
5. Support Value-Added (VAM) work and build district and ESC understanding.
6. Develop a service model for TEA-referred districts based on level of need. Submit to TEA contact for feedback and approval.
7. Conduct surveys and needs assessments to identify services and resources needed by school systems and ESC TIA teams to support effective data collection and analysis.

Engaging Stakeholders Hub ESC

1. Communicate with school systems and ESC TIA teams about training and available specialized resources.
2. Provide support, tools, and training related to development and implementation of formative stakeholder engagement surveys.
3. Support the interpretation, review, and next steps related to TEA administered survey results.
4. Develop materials for engaging teachers and stakeholders, such as school leaders, board members, and parents.
5. Review statewide TIA required survey results to identify trends, gaps, and recommendations.
6. Consult with school systems/ESCs around stakeholder engagement best practices.
7. Support and promote the Student Survey Pilot and its ongoing use as an optional local designation system component.
8. Provide communications and marketing materials geared towards teachers, school leaders, boards, and other stakeholders and ensure staff or contracted employees with expertise in marketing are hired.
9. The grantee may engage a vendor who has national experience in education consulting and current experience leading statewide appraisal system refresh through effective stakeholder engagement to do the following:

- a. Consult on the design and development of a full suite of tools, protocols, and training resources for the Stakeholder Engagement Hub. These materials will help ESCs support districts in building stronger community relationships, increasing teacher investment, and improving retention. This support should include:
 - i. An audit of existing resources and practices across ESCs.
 - ii. A set of customizable tools and templates, including stakeholder mapping guides, messaging frameworks, and engagement protocols.
 - iii. Training modules and facilitation guides ESCs can use to build district capacity.
 - iv. Sample implementation calendars aligned to key TIA milestones.
 - v. Feedback and survey data collection tools that districts can use to monitor impact and continuously improve.
 - vi. Collaborative sessions with the Stakeholder Engagement Hub to build comfort, fluency, and ownership of the tools.
- b. Grantees must:
 - i. Maintain strong working relationships
 - ii. Complete and submit all necessary benchmarks, tasks, and requirements.
 - iii. Collaborate and communicate with TEA in the time and manner requested by TEA.

Texas Grant Management Standards (TxGMS)

See the [TxGMS](#) for detailed requirements. In general, the TxGMS apply to regional 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 the federal Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG), 2 CFR part 200.

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.

Note regarding travel costs, if allowable per guidance below: Any personnel approved in this grant must be reimbursed for travel according to the applicant's written policies and procedures; however,

reimbursement may not exceed State of Texas mileage allowance, General Services Administration (GSA) hotel rate, and per diem rate existing in the current Texas State Appropriations Act. The state travel guidelines require only reimbursement of actual costs paid and, therefore, prohibit per diem payments to travelers without reconciliation to actual costs expended. Note: Contractor travel is paid as it is described in the individual contract, not to exceed the State rates, and may or may not be delineated out specifically in the contract.

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
- In-state travel necessary to meet the program requirements of this grant. Travel costs must follow the travel guidance provided at the beginning of this Allowable Activities and Use of Funds section.
- TIA Conference Fees

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:
 - a. Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) — Principal Costs (6514)
 - b. Subscription-based Information Technology Arrangement (SBITA) — Interest Costs (6526)
 - c. Capital Lease Liability — Principal Costs (6512)
 - d. Capital Lease Liability — Interest Costs (6522)
 - e. Interest on Debt Costs (6523)
- Audit services for state-funded grants
- Capital outlay
- Out-of-State Travel
- Travel for students to conferences

- Field trips
- Stipends for non-employees
- Non-employee costs for conferences
- Travel costs for officials such as executive director, superintendent, or board members
- Cost of membership in any civic or community organization
- Hosting or sponsoring of conferences
- Advisory council
- 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. Hub-specific measures and deliverables established by TEA and reviewed in ongoing partnership for quality and alignment to grant goals
2. Number of supported districts participating in, expanding, and renewing TIA local designation systems
3. Evidence of communication regarding available resources and support in area of specialization
4. Evidence of services provided to school systems and other ESCs related to key milestones in the TIA program and area of specialization
5. Percent of teachers eligible by districts served; plans to increase eligibility percentage
6. Grant budget and staffing
7. Fees and payments received for TIA services (if approved and applicable)
8. District Teacher Retention Practices and evidence of teacher buy-in
9. School system and ESC satisfaction with services and resources provided by hubs
10. Performance Management:
 - a. For grantees that do not meet performance measures or other criteria determined by TEA, TEA will provide notice along with required corrective actions included in an improvement plan.
 - b. Grantees that still don't meet requirements may be subject to funding loss or required staffing changes.

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.