

Awards for these grants will be open to Year 1 grantees and other applicants who have undertaken a comparable planning process without NIFL funding.

The NIFL believes that the development of content standards based on the three primary adult roles and the four adult learner-defined purposes for literacy will lay the foundation for a nationwide effort to assure that our adult learning system enables adults to develop the skills, knowledge, and abilities they need to fulfill their roles as parents, citizens and workers. Once we can specify what adults need to know and be able to do to fulfill their roles, we can—

(1) reshape learning activities and literacy programs to facilitate development of those skills, knowledge and abilities;

(2) assess adult progress and achievement, and

(3) evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of programs in achieving these outcomes in a process of continuous improvement.

**ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:** Applications will be accepted from—

1. Individual public and private not-for-profit organizations and agencies that represent key literacy consumer, practitioner, provider, administrator, and funder constituencies; and

2. Consortia of such organizations and agencies operating at a state, regional (multi-state), or national level. While such consortia may include for-profit corporations and institutions, especially those that represent employers of adults, no grant will be made for a for-profit organization.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: August 21, 1995.

Available Funds: \$500,000.

Estimated Number of Awards: Up to 10.

Estimated Amount of Each Award: up to \$50,000.

Project Period: 12 months.

**DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM:**

a. An organization or consortium of organizations receiving a planning grant under this program shall launch a comprehensive, collaborative, grassroots process for system reform and improvement, beginning with the development of content standards for adult literacy and basics skills.

b. These planning grants will be the first stage of a multi-year initiative to reform and improve practices in the adult literacy system in order to enhance national progress toward Goal 6.

c. In applying for a planning grant, an applicant's collaborative planning

process for system reform must begin with the development of content standards that—

1. Address one or more of the three critical adult roles—parent, citizen, and worker;

2. Use the four adult learner-defined purposes as a framework;

3. Focus on—

(a) either Adult Basic Education/Adult Second Education or English as a Second Language; or

(b) a particular content area, such as math.

4. draw on knowledge of and establish linkages with already existing standards or curriculum frameworks from K-12 and school-to-work, and occupational skills standards, including SCANS, Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM)

f. During the grant period, which will run from October 1, 1995 to September 30, 1996, grantees will engage in the following activities—

1. Participate in a two-day national meeting to be held no later than November 22, 1995 to establish a common national framework for the program.

2. Conduct and document a minimum of five, day-long focus groups and other appropriate information-gathering events that engage representatives of grantee's constituencies and other literacy stakeholders in discussing the adult role(s) to be focused on in developing content standards and how to use the four purposes as a framework for specifying—

(a) What is taught and how it is taught,

(b) How to define and measure learner progress, and

(c) How to define and evaluate program quality.

3. Establish a broad-based Working Group, including at least one representative from each focus group and representatives of other key literacy stakeholders to develop a long-range plan for system reform that builds on focus group results and includes, at a minimum, strategies for—

(a) Developing, validating, and refining content standards for meeting the four customer-defined literacy purposes in one or more of the adult roles:

(1) Parent/family;

(2) Citizen/involvement in community;

(3) Worker/workforce mobility;

(b) developing and implementing valid and reliable methods for assessing *mastery* (level of acquisition sufficient to achieve desired real-world outcomes) of the skills, knowledge and abilities

specified in the content standards.

Assessment methods must—

(1) Involve multiple measures of student performance;

(2) Provide for participation of students with diverse learning needs;

(3) Be consistent with relevant, nationally recognized professional and technical standards for such assessments; and

(4) Be capable of providing coherent information about student performance relative to the proposed content standards;

(c) Determining the most effective ways to help adults develop or acquire the critical knowledge, skills, and abilities, including—

(1) Key learning tasks;

(2) The kind of teacher/student and student/student discourse to encourage; and

(3) The kinds of tools and materials to be developed.

(d) Developing performance standards that gauge a program's effectiveness in enabling adults to accomplish the four purposes and fulfill their roles, and

(e) Defining new quality standards for programs related to the performance standards.

4. By July 15, 1996, submit the following products to NIFL:

(a) Documentation of focus group results (see item 2 above); and

(b) the long-range plan for system reform (see item 3 above).

These products will be used to support the grantee's competitive application for a multi-year implementation grant.

5. In late April 1996, participate in a three-day meeting to share progress to date with other grantees and the NIFL, and to make recommendations for funding priorities for implementation grants.

6. Maintain regular e-mail and other contact with other grantees throughout the grant period, in order to maximize sharing of information and minimize duplication of effort.

**Project Narrative**

The applicant's project narrative must include detailed descriptions of—

(1) the applicant organization(s) in terms of the experience and capabilities that qualify the applicant to—

(a) Lead a broad-based collaborative planning process for system reform and improvement that begins with the development of content standards;

(b) Lead a subsequent implementation process;

(c) Effect systemic change for literacy and basic skills.

(2) The constituencies and stakeholders to be involved in the project and how they will be involved;