Funding Opportunities: The Institute of Education Sciences Seedling to Scale and Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Grant Programs

Lewis-Burke Associates LLC – June 20, 2024

The U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences (IES) National Center for Education Research (NCER) has released a solicitation including two competitions related to education innovation and scalable education research and development (R&D). The first being their brand-new Seedlings to Scale grant program, the second being the Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice program.

Former IES Director Mark Schneider was a champion of an ongoing effort to establish a fifth center within IES that would conduct advanced research projects agency, or ARPA-like, education research activities. While waiting for Congress to authorize this center, Dr. Schneider established the IES Accelerate, Transform and Scale (ATS) Initiative and the Seedlings to Scale program to support more risk-informed, innovative, and high reward activities that fit within the existing IES legislative budget and authority. Seedlings to Scale is intended to be a three-stage funding program which will invest in three phases of innovation in products, policies, and processes that will initially start as "seedlings" and grow into scalable solutions. The new Seedlings to Scale solicitation is currently funding only Phase One projects for the Seamless Personalized Education Experiences Delivered at Scale (SPEED at Scale) focus area. Phase One proposals should focus on teams clarifying the problem they are addressing, building the solution, and laying the plan for further research and development. The SPEED at Scale focus area calls on applicants to provide solutions for teachers to provide personalized and seamless instruction for PreK-12 students. Phase One awardees will have the opportunity to apply for Phase Two funding, which will include developing the solution into an initial version. IES may also decide to fund projects to Phase Three which will include evaluating the impact of the solution across multiple sectors and contexts. The project period will be up to one year for Phase One.

The Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Program will support proposals that create ATS Initiative Hubs that improve education outcomes by creating scalable solutions that work to close achievement gaps. The ATS Initiative Hub will support new programs within the ATS initiative and provide support to IES in coordination of these programs. The project period will last up to five years.

Award Information: IES intends to make up to 12 awards for the Phase One SPEED at Scale teams for the Seedling to Scale Grant Program with a funding ranging between $300,000 to $500,000. Additional awards may be made dependent on availability of funds. The Research networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice will make one ATS Initiative Hub award with a funding amount ranging between $500,000 to $1,500,000.

Deadlines: Applications will be due by **August 15, 2024** for both of these programs.

Eligibility: Those eligible to apply include Institutions of higher education, nonprofit or for-profit organizations, and private entities.

Sources and Additional Information

- The Notice Inviting Applications for both of these programs is located at https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/06/17/2024-13268/applications-for-new-awards-from-seedlings-to-scale-grant-program-and-research-networks-focused-on
- The Seedlings to Scale program page and Request for Applications (RFA) can be found at https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/program.asp?ID=2132.
- The Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems program page and Request for Applications (RFA) can be found at https://ies.ed.gov/funding/grantsearch/program.asp?ID=2114.
- Additional information on the Accelerate, Transform, and Scale Initiative is available at https://ies.ed.gov/ats-initiative/index.asp.