Welcome to the Federal State Leadership Distance Education Technical Assistance Grant Competition informational webinar. The contents of this webinar complement but do not replace the Request for Grant Application Guidelines. This webinar will be recorded and posted on the Division of Adult Education Grant Competition page.

We will not be answering questions during this webinar. We will provide information at the end on how to submit questions.
This webinar will provide information on the grant application, review and award processes. We will provide a general overview of the required activities and other requirements for grantee. Finally, we will provide suggested resources and grant tips.
The current Pennsylvania professional development system consists of several leadership projects that each focus on one aspect of statewide professional development needs. The projects are designed to work together to provide seamless support to programs.

To address current needs of the field and the requirements of WIOA, the division will fund one project to provide technical assistance to the division and to local programs for distance education.
Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provides funds to be awarded through the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Office of Postsecondary and Higher Education, Division of Adult Education to provide adult basic education services throughout the commonwealth. A portion of these funds, up to 12.5 percent of the federal grant award, is to be used to support state leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA. PDE will use a portion of these funds to fund a project to provide technical assistance to programs funded by the division to provide high-quality distance education in accordance with division policy and guidelines. Under this Request for Grant Applications, the maximum total amount available for the Distance Education Technical Assistance grant is $150,000.

The ultimate goal of division funding is to provide high-quality adult education and family literacy programs that lead to student success. The purpose of the Distance Education Technical Assistance grant is to support programs to achieve this goal.
Section 223 of WIOA establishes required and allowable activities to be supported with state leadership funds. The activities that will be supported by the work of this project are the provision of technical assistance to support instructional and programmatic practices for distance education and the use of technology for instruction.
The maximum funding available for this grant is $150,000. Applicants may apply for less than the maximum dollar amount. However, agencies are not in competition to provide services at the lowest cost. The goal is to provide services to ultimately increase the success of students in adult education and family literacy programs through supporting local programs to offer quality distance education.

The project funded under this priority will
• Provide support to programs in planning, implementing, and evaluating the distance learning portion of their programming;
• Provide support to instructors in providing distance education;
• Identify and manage a list of division-approved distance products/curricula;
• Identify and share other quality distance education resources with the field of adult education; and
• Provide technical assistance to the division in the selection of approved curricula and on the development of distance education policy.

When deciding whether to apply, applicants should consider whether they will be able to provide the services and activities described within the maximum amount available. No additional funding will be available.
Applicants for this funding must have documented experience in the delivery of services that are outlined in the priority. Each applicant’s experience with proposed activities will be taken into account when making funding decisions. Successful applicants will be required to submit documentation that verifies experience and education requirements have been met. All successful applicants will have expertise in the following areas:

- Adult learning;
- The federally-funded adult basic and family literacy education system;
- Professional development and training for educators; and
- Technologically-delivered professional development.

The project will be led by a director who has experience in adult education as a program administrator and expertise in distance education. Other individuals working on this project must have experience in the field of adult education and experience in distance education. This project must have a plan for personnel changes that ensures that newly hired staff meet the required level of education and experience as outlined in the proposal.
All applications will be reviewed except those that are incomplete or not completed by the application deadline.

Grant applications will be reviewed and scored by a team of three individuals, including staff from PDE and peer reviewers. Peer reviewers will be non-applicants who have past experience in adult education or the provision of professional development. Reviewers will be screened for conflict of interests and will not benefit financially from grant awards.
The grant period will be for a term of one year, July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019, with the option to renew for up to two additional years. Funding for the renewal years will be negotiated annually and provided through annual contract renewals. PDE reserves the right to shorten or extend the three-year grant cycle as the situation warrants. Each year’s renewal option and grant amount will be based on the several criteria, including the amount of the annual appropriation.

Funds will be awarded to the highest scoring applicant with a score of at least 68 out of 90. The successful application may require revisions or submission of additional information prior to approval.
Grant applications will be submitted through PDE’s eGrants system. The Grant Requirements section of the Request for Grant Application Guidelines provides details on getting access to the Federal State Leadership Distance Education Technical Assistance grant application in eGrants. In the meantime, to allow applicants to review the content of the grant application, we have posted a PDF of the grant content to the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage. Please note that the grant content document is for reference only, as the applications will be submitted through eGrants.

The eGrants system home page has several user guides. In addition, we will post some grant-specific tips to the Division of Adult Education Grant Competitions webpage.

The Statewide Distance Learning Project grant application will open on Wednesday, February 28, 2018. The grant application deadline is April 3, 2018 at 2:00 PM. At that point, the eGrants system will close the grant. In order to complete the grant, all sections must be marked complete. Once all sections are marked complete, the applicant will click the Complete button. The eGrants system records the exact time that the applicant clicks the button. Once the grant has been successfully completed, the status will be Submitted for Peer Review.
Once you begin working on the grants in eGrants, be sure to read all of the Help buttons. They are blue circles with a question mark in them next to the question. You click on the blue circle and it will bring up a box with the help information. The help buttons provide the maximum characters allowable for the answer and lists information that must be addressed in the answer. Note that the maximum characters includes spaces.

When composing the responses for each item in the grant application, make sure the answers address the information that is being requested. Avoid including information that is not relevant to the item. Make sure the responses are clear and concise, and do not assume that the reviewers know your program. Reviewers should not have to search the answer for the necessary information or try to interpret agency-specific terminology.
Unfortunately, eGrants does not allow for any formatting, bulleted or numbered lists or paragraphs. The system also has problems recognizing special characters.

Some applicants write the content of their grant applications in a Word or Pages document and then copy and paste the information into eGrants. If you choose to do this, make sure the text is plain text without any formatting before copying and pasting. This will prevent issues such as apostrophes showing up as question marks and other format conversion issues.

Save often. At the bottom of each section is a Save and Continue button, which allows you to save the information that has been entered and keeps you on the same page. The Save button will save the information and take you back to the Grant Application Detail page.

The eGrants system times out after 20 minutes of inactivity. However, it occasionally times out before that and while you are working on the grant. It is important to save regularly.
Before completing the budget, review sections 600-609 of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Guidelines. This covers allowable uses of funds, how to allocate allowable costs to the budget, and other fiscal requirements. Please note that in some cases, the Division of Adult Education uses the function and object codes differently than PDE’s Division of Federal Programs. Applicants must refer to the Adult Education and Family Literacy Guidelines when completing the budgets.

The Division of Adult Education uses function code 2300 for administrative costs, which are capped at 5% of the grant amount. The following costs are administrative costs and must be charged to Function Code 2300:

1. All administrative activities related to the grant, including fiscal, personnel, and grant administration;
2. Planning costs, including the costs associated with planning and coordination with workforce system partners; and
3. Costs of contracted professional development for state leadership project staff.

The cost of contracted professional development refers to funds paid to the larger agency to cover the cost of mandated agency professional development or training and the fees paid to outside professional development providers to provide professional development to project staff. It does not refer to project staff time participating in professional development activities. It also does not refer to the cost of professional
development provided to local adult education and family literacy programs as part of the services of this project.

Any restricted indirect costs charged to the grant are also considered administrative costs and are included in the 5% cap.

The division may consider approving a higher amount when the 5 percent cap is too restrictive to allow for adequate planning and administration. Applicants that believe that they have a strong case for a waiver to the 5% cap should budget the expected administrative costs. The division will consider the request when successful application is being processed.
This concludes the Federal State Leadership Distance Education Technical Assistance grant competition webinar. Questions must be sent to ra-able@pa.gov. The subject line of the email should say “Distance Education TA Project 099”. Division of Adult Education staff will periodically post responses to submitted questions on the Department of Education website for all applicants to review. Do not send questions directly to division staff.
For more information on the Federal State Leadership Funds Competition please visit PDE’s website at www.education.pa.gov

The mission of the department is to academically prepare children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. The department seeks to ensure that the technical support, resources and opportunities are in place for all students, whether children or adults, to receive a high quality education.

Information regarding the Federal State Leadership competition will be available on the PDE website www.education.pa.gov under Postsecondary & Adult Education > Adult Basic and Family Literacy Education.