

Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) Competition Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Applicants are reminded that the FY 2024 TQP Notice Inviting Applications (NIA) published in the Federal Register on **April 4, 2024**, is for the funding opportunity. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the NIA in its entirety as it may answer questions that may not be found in this FAQ document.

Eligibility Questions

1. May an eligible partnership apply under the Absolute Priority (AP) 2 to expand or enhance an existing teaching residency program that an Institution of Higher Education (IHE) partner (partner institution) is already implementing?

Yes. However, the partner institution's existing teaching residency program must conform to the requirements specified in section 202(e) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (HEA) and the definition of "teaching residency program" in HEA section 200(22). If its current teaching residency program does not meet the requirements in HEA section 202(e) or definition for a teaching residency program in HEA section 200(22), then the applicant must demonstrate how their TQP project would modify the teaching residency program so that it would meet the requirement in 202(e) and the definition in 200(22).

Please also note that the TQP program has a supplement not supplant requirement (HEA section 202(k)). Therefore, TQP funds may be used to expand or enhance capacity of existing teaching residency programs, however the grant may not be used to pay for services or personnel currently covered by other funds.

You can find the full text of the HEA on the GovInfo website at the following link:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-765/pdf/COMPS-765.pdf>.

2. How might an IHE partner document that it has a school or department of arts and sciences within such partner institution?

An eligible partnership can demonstrate that an IHE's (partner institution's) school or department of arts and sciences is a partner in several ways. For example:

- The partnership could include in the application written confirmation from the dean or other officials of the school or department of arts and sciences that it is a partner.
- The application could include documentation of active representation in the eligible partnership of one or more faculty members from that school of arts and sciences, along with confirmation from the faculty member(s) that: (1) the faculty member(s) represents the school of arts and science; and (2) as the project proceeds, the faculty member(s) will work in close consultation with the school's chair and academic dean to ensure that teaching residents benefit from any subject matter content.

In addition, if a partner institution does not have a school or department of arts and sciences, the eligible partnership may include an additional partner institution that does—provided that the eligible partnership application and project management plan clarify how the multiple partner

institutions, teacher preparation program(s), and school or department of arts and sciences will work together to promote the success of the TQP project.

3. May two-year IHEs be considered partner institutions?

Yes. Two-year IHEs may be partner institutions as long as: (1) they have a formal articulation agreement for a dual program with a four-year IHE participating in the eligible partnership; and (2) the four-year IHE has a teacher preparation program that meets the definition of “partner institution.” See the definition of “partner institution” in HEA section 200(17).

4. How does an eligible applicant determine that its high-need local educational agency (LEA) has at least 20 percent of, or at least 10,000 “children from low-income families”?

HEA section 200(2) defines the phrase “children from low-income families” as described in section 1124(c)(1)(A) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). That ESEA provision requires use of the most recent poverty data issued by the United States Census Bureau. These data may be found in the following link:

- For Census Bureau information: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/saippe.html>

If the Census Bureau data do not include poverty data for a particular LEA, such as a charter school with LEA status, a newly created LEA, or a Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funded school, the eligible partnership should include in its application documentation that supports the conclusion that the level of its students’ family poverty is comparable to 20 percent of, or at least 10,000 children from low income families. The Department will review these submissions on a case-by-case basis.

5. Are all schools within the high-need LEA eligible to receive project services?

No. Only “high-need” schools may receive project services. In addition, teaching residency program participants must teach in a “high-need school” of the high-need LEA in order to meet their service requirement. A high-need school, as defined in HEA section 200(11), includes elementary schools that have at least 60 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (FRPL) and middle or high schools that have at least 45 percent of students eligible for FRPL. Alternatively, a school is considered a “high-need school” if it is ranked in the highest quartile of schools of children from low-income families. See the definition of “high-need school” in HEA section 200(11).

6. Is there a specific definition for “high percentage” that needs to be used for teachers who are not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach, a high teacher turnover rate, or a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensure?

The Department does not set threshold of what constitutes a high percentage of teachers not teaching in the academic subject areas or grade levels in which the teachers were trained to teach, a high teacher turnover rate, or a high percentage of teachers with emergency, provisional, or temporary certification or licensure. Therefore, eligible applicants should include in their applications documentation to support the conclusion that any LEA they would identify as a high-need LEA has one of these teacher-need characteristics. The Department will review these submissions on a case-by-case basis.

7. Is a charter school eligible to be a member of an eligible partnership?

Yes. A charter school may be eligible in one of two ways. First, a charter school is eligible as a required member of the eligible partnership under HEA section 200(6)(A) if it: (1) Is considered an LEA by the State in which it is located; and (2) meets the definition of a high-need LEA in HEA section 200(10). Second, a charter school may be an optional member of the eligible partnership under HEA section 200(6)(B)(x), provided it meets the definition of a high-need school in HEA section 200(11).

If a charter school is considered an LEA in the State in which it is located, the Department strongly recommends the applicant submit documentation that supports that the State considers the charter school an LEA.

8. May an individual member of an eligible partnership be a partner in more than one application?

Yes. An individual entity may be a member of more than one TQP grant application, but an eligible partnership may not receive a TQP grant more than once in a five-year period (see HEA section 203(a)(2)). The partnership can only be awarded one TQP grant within a five-year period. Therefore, eligible partnerships awarded a grant during the FY 2020, FY 2022, and FY 2023. TQP competitions are ineligible to receive a new grant as those TQP grants were awarded less than five years ago. However, individual entities may be a member of more than one partnership simultaneously.

9. If a 2019 TQP grant has received a no cost extension which extends it's 5-year grant cycle, is this grant eligible to receive a FY 2024 award using the same eligible partnership from the FY 2019 TQP grant?

Yes. FY 2019 TQP grantees that have a grant that is scheduled to end prior to October 1, 2024, are eligible to apply to the FY 2024 TQP competition, even if their grant is later extended through a no-cost extension.

10. May FY 2020, FY 2022, or FY 2023 TQP eligible partnership grantees receive a FY 2024 TQP grant?

No. HEA section 203(a)(2) prohibits an eligible partnership from receiving more than one TQP grant award during a five-year period. The FY 2020, FY 2022, and FY 2023 TQP grants were awarded less than five years ago. As noted in Question 8, individual members of eligible partnerships that received awards in the FY 2020, FY 2022 and FY 2023 TQP grant competitions are eligible to apply in this competition so long as they apply as members of a different eligible partnership than the one that received an award in the last five years and demonstrate their need for the additional TQP grant consistent with HEA section 203(a)(2).

11. May an eligible partnership be awarded multiple grants in the FY 2024 TQP grant competition if the applications are addressing different absolute priorities?

The same eligible partnership cannot receive another grant during the 5-year grant period if the same eligible partnership submits an application for a different absolute priority. Section 203(a)(2) of the HEA prohibits the same eligible partnership from receiving multiple TQP grants during the 5-year grant period. Priorities and/or absolute priorities are not a factor and do not change the same eligible partnership prohibition.

12. How may a current TQP grantee be eligible to participate in the FY 2024 TQP competition?

In order to be eligible to receive a FY 2024 TQP grant, individual members of an eligible partnership awarded a grant less than five years ago must find all-new partners to form a new eligible partnership. For example, if ABC University was awarded a TQP grant in FY 2020 and seeks to apply for a new grant in the FY 2024 TQP competition, ABC University's application for the FY 2024 TQP competition cannot include any of the same entities that make up the partnership that received the FY 2020 TQP grant. See HEA section 203(a)(2). In addition, applicants may not propose projects that provide the same services to the same recipients as those in their existing TQP grants.

13. How does an individual member of an existing eligible partnership demonstrate the need for another TQP grant?

HEA section 203(a)(2) does not define how an individual member should demonstrate the need for another TQP grant. Therefore, applicants should use their best judgment in describing why an additional TQP grant is needed. Applications that do not demonstrate the need for an additional TQP grant, consistent with HEA section 203(a)(2), may not be reviewed.

14. Who may be the fiscal agent or lead applicant for the grant?

The fiscal agent or lead applicant may be any member of the eligible partnership. The eligible partnership should decide which partner will be the fiscal agent and lead applicant, identify this partner in its application, and enter into an agreement that details the activities that each member of the group plans to perform and binds each member of the group to every statement and assurance made by the applicant in the application. See 34 CFR §§75.127-129, "Group Applications," for more information.

15. May a non-US citizen participate in the TQP program?

A potential participant's citizenship is not the issue. Instead, grantees should ensure that potential participants are legally eligible for employment in the US.

Section 202 (e)(2)(B) of the HEA describes the selection of individuals as teacher residents, which includes the eligibility requirements for a teacher resident for the TQP program. This section does not include any language that prohibits non-US citizens from participating in the TQP program as teacher residents. However, an individual must be legally eligible to work in the United States. A non-US citizen may be legally eligible to work in the United States with proper employment authorization. The grantee should contact its human resources department with any questions.

Additionally, HEA section 202(d)(1)(A)(ii)(II) requires that the grantee prepare new or prospective teachers to meet the applicable State certification and licensure requirements. The applicant should review their State's credential/licensure requirements on whether non-US citizens are eligible to apply for a teacher credential in that State.

16. May an eligible partnership apply for more than one TQP grant in the FY 2024 competition?

Yes. Applicants may apply for as many TQP grants as they like, however, only one TQP grant will be funded from each eligible partnership.

Programmatic and General Application Questions

17. Must an application include a needs assessment?

Yes. The application must include a needs assessment of all the partners in the eligible partnership with respect to the preparation, ongoing training, professional development, and retention of general education and special education teachers, principals, and, as applicable, early childhood educators. This needs assessment will help applicants determine the type of educator's needed in the partner district(s). Applicants are strongly encouraged to explicitly identify their needs assessment in Appendix C of the program narrative. See HEA section 202(b)(1).

Competition Priorities Questions

18. Absolute Priority 1 requires that applicants implement reforms in each teacher preparation program assisted with TQP funds. Does that mean that the eligible partnership must reform ALL of the partner IHE's teacher preparation programs inclusive of all subjects and grade levels, including those not housed in its college, school, or department of education?

No. In addressing Absolute Priority 1, applicants may propose use of TQP funds to implement TQP-funded reforms and other required activities either within all teacher preparation programs that the partner IHE administers or within one or more particular teacher preparation programs that need particular assistance to implement the TQP-funded reforms and other required activities. Applicants will need to identify in their applications the teacher preparation program(s) that TQP funds would reform. See HEA section 202(d)(1).

19. Under Absolute Priority 1, may grantees use TQP funds to pay teacher candidate stipends or tuition reduction to prospective teachers? May TQP funds pay the costs of their certification or State testing?

No. The HEA does not authorize the use of TQP funds for teacher candidate stipends, tuition, or other student support costs such as fees for certification or State testing under Absolute Priority 1.

20. Under Absolute Priority 2, what is a teaching resident's service obligation, and who is responsible for tracking whether, upon completion of their teaching residencies, residents have met the service obligation?

In order to receive the one-year living stipend or salary that eligible partnerships must make available to them: (1) residents must submit an application that includes an agreement to work, (2) work as a full-time teacher immediately upon successful completion of the residency for not less than three years in a high-need school in a high-need LEA in the eligible partnership, and (3) the agreement also must specify that a resident who does not fulfill this service obligation must repay these funds to the eligible partnership. See HEA section 202(e)(2)(C)(iii) and (iv) for more information.

Eligible partnerships are responsible for tracking residents' employment after completing the teaching residency program based on the terms of the repayment agreement, and for requiring residents who do not fulfill their service obligation to repay the living stipend or salary that they received.

Eligible partnerships must then use recovered funds for additional activities consistent with the purposes of the TQP program. All grantees will be expected to submit an annual performance report to the Department documenting their success in addressing the TQP performance measures, including three-year employment retention. This is a measure of the percentage of program completers who were employed by the high-need LEA or early childhood education program for three consecutive years after initial employment.

If a grantee is unable to “carry out additional activities that are consistent with the purposes” of their TQP program, then, consistent with how the Department handles unspent funds, the funds must be returned to the Federal Government.

21. What is meant by a deferral of the teaching resident’s service obligation on the grounds of “inability to secure employment in a school served by the eligible partnership”?

A deferral of the teaching resident’s service obligation on the grounds of an “inability to secure employment in a school served by the eligible partnership” (HEA section 202(e)(2)(C)(iv)(II)) may result when the schools served by the eligible partnership are not currently hiring for the teaching resident’s subject area, licensure, or experience.

22. Under Absolute Priority 2, may payment of the participants’ “one-year living stipend or salary” be made with either TQP grant funds or with non-Federal match funds?

Yes. The living stipend or salary may be paid with TQP funds, non-Federal match funds, or a combination of the two.

The TQP statute does not define the term “living stipend or salary.” Therefore, the applicant should describe in the budget and budget narrative (and elsewhere in the application, as relevant) a reasonable and necessary amount that it proposes to provide as a living stipend or salary to its teaching residents. This living stipend may be granted for a maximum of one year, as specified by HEA section 202(e)(2)(C)(i).

23. How are living stipends or salaries categorized for accounting purposes with the partner IHE and teacher residents?

Applicants should follow the partner institution policy regarding the appropriate tax characterization of the required living stipend or salary for teacher residents. Additionally, teacher residents are not eligible to receive fringe benefits as they are not employees of the partner institution.

24. May grantees use TQP funds to pay, tuition reduction to project participants, the costs of participants’ certification, or State testing?

No. The HEA does not authorize the use of TQP funds for tuition reduction or other student support costs such as fees for certification or State testing.

However, applicants must provide a one-year living stipend or salary consistent with HEA section 202(e)(2)(C)(i) and a participant may choose to use the living stipend for their tuition.

25. May individuals who are already certified to teach in one area participate in the teaching residency program as a way of becoming certified in another area?

No. The definition of a “teaching residency program” in HEA section 200(22) provides that the program is for “prospective teachers.” Moreover, the purpose of the TQP program is to increase the quality of prospective and new teachers and recruit highly qualified individuals, including minorities and individuals from other occupations, into the teaching force. See HEA section 201.

26. May an applicant seek TQP funding to prepare multiple cohorts of teachers in a teaching residency program?

Yes, an applicant may propose to prepare multiple cohorts of teachers within the five-year grant cycle in years 1-5. Teacher candidates and teacher residents should be placed in cohorts to facilitate professional collaboration among program graduates and between graduates and mentor teachers in the receiving schools. Teacher candidates and teacher residents should not matriculate through the TQP program individually.

However, if an applicant proposes to start cohorts in years 4 and 5 of the grant cycle, they must remember that all project activities must be completed within the five-year budget period. If cohorts are proposed in year 4 and 5, the Department will expect it to describe in the application how it will provide them with the required minimum two-year induction support, professional development, and networking opportunities during and after the end of the five-year grant performance period. See HEA section 202(e)(2)(A)(vii) for more information.

27. What is the required length of the teaching residency program?

The teaching residency program must be designed so that participants may complete it within 18 months. This means that the program must be designed so that within an 18-month period, residents may receive the necessary mentoring and instruction and earn a Master’s degree and initial teacher certification or licensure. TQP program funds may only be used to pay for residents’ stipends or salaries for a one-year (12-month) period of that program. See HEA section 200(22) for more information.

28. What additional teacher resident selection criteria may an applicant include for selecting eligible individuals?

In addition to the specified criteria, an applicant, consistent with HEA section 202(e)(2)(B)(ii), may include other attributes linked to effective teaching for selecting teacher residents, which may be determined by interviews or performance assessments, as specified by the eligible partnership.

This could, for example, include requiring prospective teacher residents to perform a sample teaching lesson or interviewing with a panel of current teachers, to help select the most appropriate teacher residents for the applicant’s proposed program. Additionally, applicants should consider any partner IHE or State requirements that must be met prior to admission into the college or school of education.

29. May teacher mentors under the TQP program receive stipends?

Yes. TQP funds may be used to provide reasonable and necessary stipends or other supplemental compensation to teachers who have taken on additional responsibilities related to mentoring the teaching residents. Supplemental compensation may include bonuses, salary differentials, incentives, or performance pay, based on the mentor teacher’s extra skills and responsibilities.

30. May TQP funds be used to secure replacement teachers for times when mentor teachers are working on TQP responsibilities outside their classrooms?

Yes. TQP funds may be used to cover the costs of replacement teachers as long as the LEA, under its established policies, would not pay for these costs in the absence of the TQP project (which therefore would constitute impermissible supplanting of other Federal, State, or local funds).

31. Is Early Childhood Education (ECE) a required component of the Absolute Priority for TQP projects?

No. However, applicants that propose to prepare teachers to teach in early childhood education programs must focus their activities on providing project participants with the knowledge and skills they need in early childhood education. See HEA sections 202(b)(6)(E)(i), (b)(6)(K), and (b)(7)(D); HEA sections 200(4), 200(12), 200(17)(B)(iii), and 200(23)(H).

32. Are paraprofessionals eligible to participate in a TQP project?

Under AP 1 and AP 3 paraprofessionals may participate in a TQP grant regardless of degree attainment as the goal of the pre-bac model is to graduate with an undergraduate degree and teacher certification.

Under AP 2 and AP 4 paraprofessionals must be a recent graduate of a four-year IHE as goal of the residency model is to obtain a master's degree and teacher certification.

33. What is a "mid-career professional"?

A mid-career professional is someone in a profession other than teaching who has moved past entry-level but is not nearing the end of his or her career. A mid-career professional entering the teaching profession can bring specialized content knowledge, often in hard-to-staff subjects, into schools for the benefit of students. TQP applicants might consider factors such as the following when designing a teacher preparation program that includes mid-career professionals:

- Skills, certifications, and other professional qualifications;
- Relevance of the professional subject area expertise to the teaching need;
- Years in the profession; and/or
- Supervisory status.

34. For applicants addressing AP 3 or AP4, may they propose a project that just provides services to those interested in the leadership model?

No. Applicants addressing AP 3 or AP 4 must implement the leadership model with a pre-baccalaureate model (AP1) or a residency model (AP2). The leadership model is not a standalone absolute priority.

Applicants applying for a grant under AP 3 must submit a proposal for both the leadership and pre-bac models. Additionally, both models must be part of the same proposed project, and applicants must include how TQP grant funds will be used to support both the leadership and pre-bac models.

35. Applicants applying for a grant under AP 4 must submit a proposal for both the leadership and residency models. Additionally, both models must be part of the same proposed project, and

applicants must include how TQP grant funds will be used to support both the leadership and residency models. For AP 3 and AP 4, can projects improve/reform an existing school leadership model, or are applicants required to create a new school leadership model?

There is no requirement under the HEA that requires applicants to create a new school leadership model. For AP 3 or AP 4, applicants may create a new or reform an existing school leadership model so that it meets all statutory requirements for the TQP leadership model.

36. For AP 3 and AP 4, can projects train existing school leaders or are they limited to new school candidates only?

In order to be eligible for the school leadership program under this subsection, an individual shall be enrolled in or preparing to enroll in an institution of higher education, and shall— (A) be a— (i) recent graduate of an institution of higher education; (ii) mid-career professional from outside the field of education with strong content knowledge or a record of professional accomplishment; (iii) current teacher who is interested in becoming a school leader; or (iv) school leader who is interested in becoming a superintendent; and (B) submit an application to the leadership program. Section 203(f)(2).

37. Must school leadership candidates already have a master's degree to participate in the project or should the school leadership project lead to a master's degree?

There is no requirement under the HEA that requires school leadership candidates to have a Master's degree prior to participation in the school leadership model. Please see the eligibility requirements in Question 26. There is also no requirement under the HEA that requires the leadership model to lead to a Master's degree.

38. Should I address the CPPs in the application narrative, or in some other part of the application?

Applicants are strongly encouraged to clearly state in the Application Abstract which CPP(s) they intend to address. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to include their CPP response location in the Table of Contents (TOC) of the application. An applicant's response to the CPP should be a separate response within the application narrative and labeled accordingly. Applicants that do not explicitly state which CPP(s) they are addressing might not receive additional points.

39. Do Predominantly Black Institutions (PBI) meet the criteria for minority-serving institutions under CPP 1?

The NIA defines minority-serving institutions as those institutions eligible under Title III and Title V of the HEA. Title III, Part F of the Higher Education Act includes predominately black institutions as minority-serving institutions. Thus, PBIs are eligible as minority-serving institutions to receive CPP points under CPP 1.

Please see HEA § 371 (c)(9) for the full definition of a predominately black institution. Any institution meeting this definition would be considered for points under CPP 1.

We do not make individual eligibility determinations before an application period closes, the applicant is strongly encouraged to demonstrate with documentation that they classify as a

minority-serving institution, in addition to addressing the CPP. We will review the application when the application period closes.

40. What proof should an applicant provide to show minority severing or Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) status to meet CPP1?

The applicant should provide documentation consistent with the eligibility requirements under Title III (HEA Section 371) or Title V (HEA Section 502).

Evaluation Questions

41. What measures should be included in the applicant's evaluation plan?

Applicants should include both the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) measures found in the FY 2024 NIA and measures that are unique to the applicant's project as part of their evaluation plan. Applicants will report on all these measures annually as part of the annual performance report. Several of the TQP GPRA measures do not yield results in Years 1 and 2. An explanation of how to report on these measures and possible options to reduce the grantee reporting burden will be provided to successful applicants shortly after awards have been made.

Applicants should also consider including Individual Project Measures. Individual Project Measures speak to the specific goals and objectives being proposed by your project as no two TQP projects goals and outcomes will differ across programs.

42. In evaluating TQP projects, must eligible partnerships use an outside evaluator?

No. Those eligible applicants that wish to use an outside evaluator may also wish to consider selecting the evaluator and identifying it in the application using procedures in 34 CFR §75.135, which allows a contract for data collection, data analysis, evaluation services, or essential services to use the informal, small-purchase procurement procedures in the Uniform Guidance. See 2 CFR §200.320(b).

Whether or not the eligible partnership uses an outside evaluator, the Department strongly recommends that applicants provide a detailed list of responsibilities for the selected evaluator in its application.

Budget Questions

43. What is the limitation on administrative expenses for the grant?

Per HEA section 203(d), an eligible partnership that receives a grant may use not more than two percent (2%) of the funds provided to administer the grant. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide a detailed budget narrative that explains how their proposed budget adheres to the two percent administrative cost cap. More information on the administrative cap, including a webinar describing the cap, can be found on the TQP program website.

44. How does an eligible partnership determine the amount of indirect costs that it may charge to the TQP grant?

Under 34 CFR §75.563 and §76.563(c), the indirect cost rate that an eligible applicant may use to charge indirect costs to TQP funds may be no more than eight percent. In addition, because the TQP

eligible partnership is a group applicant (see 34 CFR §§75.127-75.129), under 34 CFR §75.564(e), the eligible partnership must use a restricted indirect cost rate (RICR) that is no greater than the amount of the lead applicant's RICR if that rate is less than eight percent. Under 34 CFR §75.128(b), the members of the eligible partnership need to enter into an agreement that details the responsibilities of each partner, and this agreement should, among other things, identify how indirect costs will be apportioned among members of the eligible partnership. For more information on indirect costs, see 34 CFR §§75.560-75.561 and §§75.563-75.564.

45. How may a lead applicant that does not have an RICR obtain one?

If a lead applicant that does not have an approved RICR would like to obtain one, please email the Department's Indirect Cost Rate Group at IndirectCostGroup@ed.gov for instructions. The Department will provide direct support if it is the cognizant Federal agency. The cognizant Federal agency is the Federal agency that provides the most direct Federal funding to the lead applicant.

*Please review the Effective Education Development (EED) Division Match/Cost Share FAQ documents for additional information on match/cost share for EED programs.