

IDEA Part B Grants to States – NOFO/RFP Frequently Asked Questions

Fiscal Year 2026 Illinois Special Education Leadership Academy

1. **Who is eligible to apply?**

Local Education Agencies, institutions of higher education, other public agencies, and private nonprofit organizations are eligible to apply. The State of Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act requires applicants to complete [pre-qualification requirements](#).


2. **What is the review and selection process for applications?**

ISBE is required to design and execute a merit-based review and selection process for competitive grant applications. This process is incorporated by reference in all applicable funding opportunities. Applicants are advised to refer to the [ISBE merit-based review policy](#).

3. **What is the grant period and award for this competitive application?**

The grant period will begin no sooner than July 1, 2025 and will extend from the execution date of the grant until June 30, 2026. Successful applicants may reapply via continuing application for up to three additional year(s). One grant will be awarded in FY 2026 (Year 1 of the project) in an amount not to exceed \$186,000. It is the intention of ISBE to fund this project for three years (through FY 2028). The annual grant award in successive years of the grant period will be \$186,000. Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon compliance with federal and state law, state grant-making rules, passage of sufficient appropriations for the program, and satisfactory performance in the preceding grant period. No promise or undertaking made in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)/Request for Proposals (RFP) is an assurance that a grant agreement will be renewed, nor does this NOFO/RFP create any right to or expectation of renewal.

4. **How may a proposal application be submitted to ISBE?**

Electronic Submission: Completed proposals should be submitted electronically no later than 4 PM August 18, 2025 by scanning all documents and required signatures into PDF and submitting the application  through [Fed -- Sp Ed -- IDEA Discretionary -- ISELA RFP Documents](#). Select “Create or Upload” to attach files.

5. **Will late proposal submissions be accepted?**

No, late proposals will not be accepted for ISBE review.

6. **When will the grant award be announced?**

It is anticipated that successful applicants will receive a Notice of Award via email approximately 90 days after the application deadline. The award letter is NOT an authorization to begin performance or expenditures. After the merit-based appeal timeframe has ended, awardees will receive additional information from the program area that includes the next steps for finalizing the grant.

7. **Where will any changes to NOFO/RFP requirements be located?**
ISBE will post any changes made to the NOFO/RFP to the [Grants Funding Opportunities webpage](#).
Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.
8. **Who is the ISBE contact for any questions or concerns related to this NOFO/RFP process?**
Sherry Bochenek, Supervisor
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