FY 2015 RFA Surveys: Findings and Suggestions for Improvement

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Background

During the Spring of 2014, the Institute of Education Sciences (Institute) released several Requests for Applications (RFAs) for funding in FY 2015. Three of these RFAs were the focus of a customer service survey: the Education Research Grants program (CFDA # 84.305A), Special Education Research Grants program (CFDA # 84.324A), and the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program (CFDA # 84.305H). The Education Research Grants and Special Education Research Grants RFAs were selected for the survey as they are the main discretionary grants programs in the Institute's National Center for Education Research (NCER) and National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER). The Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy RFA was also selected because at the time the survey was conducted, it was one of NCER's newest discretionary grants program. NCER had conducted a similar survey in FY 2014 for its Education Research Grants program and its Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program. NCSER did not hold grant competitions in FY 2014; therefore, this was the first year NCSER conducted any applicant surveys.

The purpose of the surveys was to obtain feedback from applicants regarding the clarity of the requirements and information provided in these three RFAs. The Institute will use the feedback from the surveys to improve future RFAs. This report describes the methods used for the FY 2015 surveys, explains their results, and summarizes respondents' suggestions for RFA improvement. Copies of the survey instruments showing the frequencies of responses to individual questions for the FY 2015 surveys are in Appendices A, B, and C. In addition, copies of the of the survey instruments showing the frequency of responses to individual questions for the FY 2014 surveys are in Appendices D and E.

Method

Survey

A subcommittee of NCER program officers developed and revised the web-based surveys based on feedback from Institute staff and Senior Leadership. NCSER adapted the Education Research Grants survey to fit its RFA. The Education Research Grants and Special Education Research Grants RFA surveys included 77 (71 closed-ended and six open-ended) and 78 items (72 closed-ended and six open-ended) , respectively, focusing on the clarity of information presented in each section of the RFA. Respondents were asked to identify which Topic(s) they applied to in response to the FY 2015 RFAs. They were not asked to identify which Goal(s) they applied to in order to maintain their anonymity; instead, they were asked to identify which Goal section(s) they thoroughly read and to provide information about the clarity and usefulness of the information in those sections. In addition, information was collected about how many applications the respondent had submitted to the Institute in the past, whether the respondent contacted an Institute program officer, and how the FY 2015 RFA compared to previous RFAs. Respondents also rated the length, level of detail, and organization of the RFA using Likert-scale

items with scales that ranged from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating the most favorable response (e.g., very clear, highly useful) and 4 indicating the most unfavorable view (e.g., very unclear, not useful). Items from the Education Research Grants and Special Education Research Grants RFA surveys are included in Appendices A and B.

The survey for the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy RFA included 61 (51 closed-ended and 10 open-ended) items focusing on the clarity and usefulness of information presented in the General Overview and the General Submission and Review Information sections of the RFA. In addition, respondents were asked to identify which Topic(s) (e.g., Research-Practitioner Partnerships in Education; Continuous Improvement Research in Education; Evaluation of State and Local Education Programs and Policies) they applied to, and answer specific questions regarding the clarity of information and requirements provided within the Topic. In addition, information was collected about: how many applications the respondent had submitted to the Institute in the past; how they learned about the RFA; how the FY 2015 RFA compared to the previous year's RFA; whether the respondent contacted an Institute program officer or participated in an Institute webinar; whether they submitted a Letter of Intent; and comments on the length, level of detail, and organization of the RFA. Items from the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy RFA survey are included in Appendix C.

Sample and Procedures

All Principal Investigators (PIs) who applied to the Education Research Grants program, the Special Education Research Grants program, or the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program were contacted via e-mail requesting their participation in the survey. A link to the web-based survey was included in the e-mail. PIs were advised that their responses would remain anonymous and that the survey would be accessible online for three weeks from the date of the original e-mail. Of the 512 PIs contacted for the Education Research Grants Program survey, 337 responded (66% response rate). Of the 231 PIs contacted for the Special Education Research Grants Program survey, 126 responded (55% response rate). Of the 105 PIs contacted for the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program survey, 77 responded (73% response rate).

Because IES was primarily interested in understanding applicants' opinions of the RFA rather than answering specific research questions, only descriptive results are provided. For the closed-ended items, response counts are provided, along with means and standard deviations as applicable. For the open-ended items, themes of responses were noted by two readers separately who then met to discuss their findings. Unfortunately, the data provided are not rich enough for any meaningful qualitative analysis. There was no disagreement between readers regarding the presence of any themes/patterns noted.

Results

Education Research Grants Program and Special Education Research Grants Program RFAs (84.305A and 84.324A)

The majority of the 337 respondents to the Education Research Grants program and 126 respondents to the Special Education Research Grants program surveys indicated having applied to one Topic only (*n* = 309 for NCER and *n* = 111 for NCSER). The percentages of respondents who reported applying to each of

the Topics are consistent with the distribution of applications the Institute received under each of the Topics. The majority of respondents thoroughly read one Goal only (n = 198 for NCER and n = 68 for NCSER), with 77 NCER applicants and 37 NCSER applicants reporting having thoroughly read two Goals and 43 NCER and 8 NCSER applicants indicating they had thoroughly read three or more Goals. Additional details about the Topics and Goals that the respondents read and applied to can be found in Appendices A and B.

A majority (n = 281 for NCER and n = 101 for NCSER) of respondents also reported contacting a program officer as they prepared their applications (see Appendix A, Question 9, and Appendix B, Question 8). The most commonly reported reason for contacting a program officer was to discuss questions about the suitability of a study (n = 156 for NCER and n = 55 for NCSER). Other commonly reported reasons related to resubmitting an application from a previous year (n = 117 for NCER and n = 33 for NCSER), questions about the Goals described in the RFA (n = 79 for NCER and n = 32 for NCSER), and questions about the Topics described in the RFA (n = 74 for NCER and n = 37 for NCSER).

For NCER, 135 (40%) of the respondents reported that their application to the FY 2015 RFA was their first grant application to IES; 111 (33%) respondents had submitted two or three grant applications to the Institute, and 88 (26%) indicated having submitted four or more applications to Institute grant competitions (see Appendix A, Question 1). For NCSER, 33 (26%) of the respondents reported that their application to the FY 2015 RFA was their first grant application to IES; 42 (33%) respondents had submitted two or three grant applications to the Institute, and 51 (40%) indicated having submitted four or more applications to Institute grant competitions (see Appendix B, Question 1).

Compared to RFAs from previous years, the majority of NCER respondents reported that the FY 2015 RFA was either somewhat better (n = 95; 48% of the 198 respondents who answered this question), or no better or worse (n = 79; 40% of 198) in terms of clarity and organization (see Appendix A, Question 2). NCSER applicants had a similar response with 12% (n = 11; 89 respondents answered this question) indicating that the clarity and organization of the FY 2015 was much better, 39% (n = 35) indicating that it was somewhat better, and 48% (n = 43) indicating that it was no better or worse than RFAs from previous years (see Appendix B, Question 2). One major change to the FY 2015 Education and Special Education Research Grant program RFAs was the combination of the RFA and the Application Submission Guide into one document. Many of the respondents reported that this change was much better (n = 164; 50% for NCER and n = 68; 60% for NCSER) than having them as separate documents (see Appendix A, Question 17, and Appendix B, Question 17)

In the FY 2015 RFAs, revisions were made to the descriptions for feasibility, usability, and continuum of rigor for the pilot study in Goal 2 projects. In comparing the FY 2014 and FY 2015 applicant survey response ratings (using a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most favorable) on the clarity of the descriptions of feasibility and usability, the ratings were similar among NCER ratings for FY 2015 (M = 2.0, SD = .9; see Appendix A, Question 27i), NCSER ratings for FY 2015 (M = 1.9, SD = .9; see Appendix B, Question 27i), and NCER ratings for FY 2014 (M = 2.0, SD = .9; see Appendix D, Question 29f).[1] In addition, the ratings on the clarity of the continuum of rigor for Goal 2 pilot studies were also similar for NCER FY 2015 (M = 1.8; SD = .8; see Appendix A, Question 27l), NCSER FY 2015 (M = 1.8; SD = .7; see Appendix B, Question 27l), and NCER FY 2014 (M = 1.9, SD = .9; see Appendix D, Question 29h).

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[1] NCSER did not conduct an applicant survey in FY 2014.

Also, in comparing the FY 2014 and FY 2015 applicant survey responses for the Education Research Grants program, there was a decrease in respondents' ratings of the usefulness of the Research Gaps/examples[2] provided under each Topic. For FY 2014, 89% of respondents rated the research examples as helpful, compared to 79% of respondents in FY 2015 (see Appendix A, Question 5, and Appendix D, Question 6).

The Special Education Research Grants program RFA did not include a section titled Research Gaps in its 2015 RFA; instead, the RFA included a section about considerations for specific topics. The considerations included examples of needed research as well as suggestions for conducting rigorous research (e.g., meeting sample requirements, building collaborative teams). Ninety-eight percent of NCSER respondents found the descriptions of considerations to be helpful (see Appendix B, Question 5).

Overall, the Likert-scale items reflected a positive perception of the RFA. Across these items on both surveys, only three items had an average response that was outside the range of 1.0 to 2.0. The usefulness of the Glossary had an average rating of 2.1 (SD = .7) for both surveys, but the majority of the responses rated the Glossary as "Highly Useful" or "Useful" (see Appendix A, Question 18, and Appendix B, Question 18) For respondents that thoroughly read the requirements for Goal 3, the clarity of the requirements for the cost analysis had an average rating of 2.2 (SD = 1.0) and 2.3 (SD = 0.9) for NCER and NCSER respondents respectively, with 40% and 44% of the respondents reporting the requirement as somewhat unclear or very unclear. (see Appendix A, Question 29j, and Appendix B, Question 29k). Similarly, the clarity of the requirements for the Data Management Plan had an average rating of 2.1 (SD = 1.0) and 2.2 (SD = 0.9) for NCER and NCSER respondents respectively, with 34% and 41% of the respondents reporting the requirements as somewhat unclear or very unclear (see Appendix A, Question 29k, and Appendix B, Question 29l).

The surveys for the Education Research Grants and Special Education Research Grants programs also included six free-response items that asked applicants to provide additional detail or comments to supplement the quantitative items.[3] For NCER, a total of 168 respondents provided at least one comment on a free-response item, and 285 total comments were coded across all six items. For NCSER, 81 respondents provided at least one comment on a free-response item, and 148 total comments were coded across all six items. There were numerous comments regarding the valuable technical assistance provided by program officers, as well as concerns regarding the review process, the organization and clarity of the RFA, the application requirements, and the clarity of the dissemination plan, cost analysis, and Data Management Plan requirements. For the Education Research Grants program, there were also comments about the usefulness of the research gaps section, and, for the Special Education Research Grants program, respondents had comments related to specific research topics and requirements for research focused on children with low-incidence disabilities.

In terms of organization and formatting of the RFA, there were several comments about making the RFA more accessible and user-friendly. Combining the Application Submission Guide information with the RFA was helpful, but it also lengthened the RFA, which, according to some respondents, made it difficult to locate important information. Suggestions for a more streamlined RFA were provided, including

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[2] In FY 2015, these sections were titled Research Gaps, but in FY 2014, there was no specific section for research gaps under the Topics. Instead, examples of funded research were included in the narrative of the Background section of each Topic.
[3] In the interest of brevity, only those open-ended questions that yielded relevant and useful responses for improving the RFA are included in this report.

having separate PDF files for specific Topics and Goals and a table or checklist that summarizes general requirements for Topics and Goals. In addition, several applicants commented on the redundancy of information within the RFA. Example responses include:

> *"Locating information within the RFA was a bit difficult/tedious but having the guidelines combined is better than separated. We just recommend a bit more organizational clarity/efficiency. The glossary was useful."*

> *"The RFA was much clearer than in the past. I outlined the RFA, thinking that this would provide a guide for preparing the proposal. However, because of redundancy, this was not a clear guide to the way the proposal should be organized, and I found myself having to rewrite many sections in order to try to eliminate redundancy. It would be helpful if the RFA paralleled proposal sections without redundancy. Because I spent so much time with the forms, in the end I was not able to make all the changes in the narrative that I needed. Also, the distinction between grant requirements and program requirements is difficult to keep in mind, especially given all the other requirements. "*

> *"Any concrete checklists of all things needed; requirements; etc. would be helpful…"*

In terms of the clarity of the application requirements, there was a mixture of comments regarding the specificity and number of requirements included in the RFA. Some applicants thought more specificity was needed in describing the requirements (e.g. theory of change; dissemination plan), while others thought the RFA was becoming too prescriptive. Several applicants also commented on their uncertainty as to whether they needed to address every section of the proposal in the order outlined in the RFA, or if they could organize their narrative differently. In addition, some applicants thought the 25-page limit was not sufficient to cover all the requirements in the RFA, while other applicants thought it would be better to reduce the required number of pages. Example responses include:

> *"Having been associated at some level with the RFAs since the start of IES, I think the RFAs are becoming overly prescriptive. It seems to me that the RFA cannot envision every possible issue-- yet it reads as if this is the goal."*

> *"The RFA seems to get longer each year and add new things that need to be included. On one hand, that provides scaffolding as we write our proposals. On the other hand, at times I feel like it limits creativity. As I wrote this year, my thought processes were organized more around 'attaining the right answer' so that the work would get funded instead of producing truly creative work with strong potential for changing the field."*

> *"The length is extensive and the level of detail high. It is a challenge to meet all criteria in the space limit permitted - but I guess that's the point. It's a challenge that's worth undertaking."*

Finally, across both surveys, there were many comments focusing on the clarity of the requirements for the dissemination plan, cost analysis, and Data Management Plan. In particular, applicants were uncertain about what should be included in the dissemination plan in relation to the purpose of their project (e.g., in relation to the Goal they applied under). There were also a few comments suggesting that either the narrative page limit be increased or allow the information for the dissemination and cost analysis plan be included in an appendix. Example comments include:

"The level of detail that is required is challenging to provide in 25 pages - and the addition of additional material (cost analysis and dissemination plan) just eats up space. It should go in an appendix, like the data plan."

"As RFA requirements continue to expand, consider if different application page limits might be appropriate across the goal structure, particularly permitting 2-3 additional pages for Goal 3 and Goal 4 projects."

"It's not entirely clear what IES views as the ideal dissemination plan--audiences, types of communications, and goals of the communications."

"I would like more information, perhaps examples, on the section regarding cost effectiveness, or the impact on cost related to the study. The information was good in alerting us to include the topic, but difficult to know exactly how to include it, in consideration of the many other pieces of information required by the proposal."

"… determining timing of dissemination activities was challenging. I did not want to include dissemination activities prematurely (before my study was done and I knew findings were substantiated) but also didn't want to pack everything into the last year. Also, there is no gold standard for appropriate dissemination activities. Whereas journal articles do not appear to be sufficient, at what point is the PI going too far and "selling" their research as opposed to sharing it. There need to be some parameters put on this because I could see this going wrong."

For the FY 2015 Education Research Grants RFA, the open-ended comments regarding the Research Gaps corroborate the quantitative findings reported earlier. There continues to be confusion about the purpose of the identified research gaps. Several applicants commented that they were not sure if research addressing the gaps would be given funding priority, while others stated that the identified research gaps were not helpful because they did not play a role in funding decisions. Several applicants also stated that they already had a clear idea of the research they were going to propose, so the identified gaps were not helpful in shaping their research agenda. Others saw identified gaps as too narrow or limited and thought the gaps should be identified by the field rather than by the Institute. In general, the comments on the research gaps were mainly neutral to negative. Example responses regarding the research gaps include:

"It wasn't helpful for me because I already had a clear vision of what my project would be about when I applied, so knowing the gaps didn't affect my application. Also, it said something like "research on the gap topics won't be prioritized in the application review," so I'm not sure why you bother including the descriptions at all. It didn't bother me that they were there, though."

"I would delete them. People who are applying for these grants know the research gaps - they are a distraction for new people in that they are likely to think that if they are not focusing in one of the gap areas that they shouldn't submit. (I had to clarify this for several young faculty)".

For the FY 2015 Special Education Research Grants RFA, the open-ended comments identified research topics where further clarification is needed. For example, it was noted that the definition of a comprehensive intervention in the Autism Spectrum Disorders topic remains confusing, specifically, that "at times it suggests all domains, and other times very narrow domains." Applicants also noted that further clarification could be added to highlight unique challenges of researchers focused on children

with low-incidence disabilities. In particular, respondents noted that research with children with low-incidence disabilities may require use of single-case research designs and smaller sample sizes. An applicant noted that "more explicit information…would help both reviewers as well as those submitting proposals" focusing on low-incidence populations.

Suggestions for Improvement

In sum, while most respondents indicated they felt the FY 2015 Education Research Grants and Special Education Research Grants RFAs were clear and helpful, there continue to be several areas in the RFAs that can be further clarified and would benefit from additional revision. Suggestions for improving the RFAs include:

- Clarifying the requirements for the dissemination and cost analysis plans;
- Adding appendices and checklists that summarize general requirements for Topics and Goals;
- For the Education Research Grants RFA, clarifying the purpose of the Research Gaps section, or deleting it from the RFA entirely; and
- For the Special Education Grants RFA, clarifying the definition of "comprehensive interventions" under the Autism Spectrum Disorders topic, and providing recommendations for researchers focused on children with low-incidence disabilities.

Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy RFA (84.305H)

The majority of the 77 respondents to the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy RFA (84.305H) survey reported applying to the Research-Practitioner Partnerships in Education Research Topic (n = 55). In general, the distribution of survey respondents across the three Topics under the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy RFA was proportionate to the number of applications the Institute received across the Topics and was comparable to the FY 2014 survey distribution of respondents and actual applications. Most of the applicants heard about the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy grant opportunity at the Institute either from a co-worker, friend, or colleague (n = 30) or by having read it on the Institute's website (n = 25) (see Appendix C, Question 1). The majority of respondents had submitted a Letter of Intent (n = 59) (see Appendix C, Question 5), with a somewhat larger percentage (77%) reporting having done so than last year's respondents (56%) (see Appendix E, Question 4) . Most of the respondents contacted a program officer as they prepared their applications (n = 61) (see Appendix C, Question 8). Of those who contacted a program officer, 40 reported having done so to address questions about the suitability of the planned study for the RFA, and 36 reported having talked to a program officer regarding questions about the partnerships for the proposed study, making those two the most common reasons respondents gave for contacting a program officer (see Appendix C, Question 9). A notably lower percentage this year (6%) indicated having contacted a program officer regarding the topics described in the RFA, relative to last year (12%).

The application history item was changed for the FY 2015 survey to inquire specifically about the number of submissions to the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program. For the majority of respondents (n = 49), the application they submitted in FY 2015 was their first to the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program; twenty-six indicated that they had submitted two or three, and only one person reported having submitted four or more applications to this grant program (see Appendix C, Question 3).

As was the case with the Likert-scale responses to the Education Research Grants program survey, the Likert-scale responses to the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program survey were, on average, favorable. Of the 49 Likert-scale items, only five had an average score of 2.0 or worse, two of which were better than 2.0 when rounded to two decimal places (i.e., the utility of the webinar; and the utility of the glossary; see Appendix C, Questions 12 and 25). Similar to responses from the FY 2014 survey, one of the items receiving a comparatively low (but, on balance still favorable) rating was the item on the clarity of the instructions for the cost analysis plan (M = 2.1, SD = .6) (see Appendix C, Question 37h). Most respondents also rated the clarity of the requirements and recommendations for tracking the success of the partnership as somewhat clear (n = 55, M = 2.0, SD = .7) (see Appendix C, Question 27e).

The survey also included 10 free-response items that asked applicants to provide additional detail or comments to supplement the quantitative items. A total of 62 respondents provided at least one comment on a free-response item, and 141 total comments were coded across all 10 items. The general comments that were offered were on par with the closed-ended responses.[4] For example, one person said, "*the revised RFA for this year's submissions (in August 2014) was much clearer and more appropriate for those of us who want to do design-based research using continuous improvement. What a welcome change! The new RFA is very specific; I knew what you wanted me to talk about in each part.*" One respondent gave a favorable comparison of this RFA to those of other funding agencies, saying, "*I am not able to compare this RFA to previous IES RFAs, however, when compared to RFAs from other entities, the language, examples, and guidance were very clear.*"

A couple of specific concerns were mentioned by multiple respondents. One area of concern was the notion of tracking the success of the partnership in the Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships in Education topic. Example comments include:

"*Ongoing assessment is still vague in our minds.*"

 "*This is new to IES and clarity has not been attained with regard to pilot studies and ongoing assessment.*"

 "*Some specific examples of how one might track the partnership may be useful.*"

 "*It seemed you wanted a novel idea -- something other than the obvious, but there were no real contours around what the expectations were. If it is indeed open-ended and a quest for a novel idea, then there should still be some guidelines about the limitations of what is meant by tracking success.*"

In addition, the joint letter of agreement created difficulty for some applicants. Example comments include:
"*The Joint Letter requirement [is] very awkward.*"

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[4] In the interest of brevity, only those open-ended questions that yielded relevant and useful responses for improving the RFA are included in this report.

"The requirements for the joint letter was unclear because one portion of the RFA said to submit 2 letters - one from the research institution and one from the education agency. Then in another section, the RFA stated to submit a joint letter,"

"The joint letter was not clearly articulated in relation to the individual organization letters."

"While the purpose of the joint letter of agreement was clear, going about creating one was a significant challenge for us because we have six participating districts."

"The purpose of the joint letter of agreement was very clear. And practically helpful as it required us to articulate our respective roles more clearly than we might have otherwise. Signatures on that letter proved to be more complicated than anticipated as it reads like a scope of work and the university was hesitant to sign or allow me as PI to sign without funding awarded. Including that letter had to be okayed by university counsel and the AVP for Research."

There were also a few comments questioning the fundamental approach of the partnerships. Examples include:

"If the goal is to develop shared goals for research in the partnership, then a research agenda for the proposal is premature. The research proposed was developed more out of our agenda as researchers than out of the shared goals of the partnership and the cooperating schools."

"Talk more about why partnerships to study certain problems--partnerships in of themselves can be quite useless and sometimes ideas developed can result in sound partnerships--sorry I am really worried that our focus is on the process and guidelines which change and yet the nagging sustaining issues of equity, access, and performance both cognitive and socio emotional learning remain quite rarely discussed."

Suggestions for Improvement

Overall, respondents to the FY 2015 Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy RFA viewed the RFA positively and thought the FY 2015 revisions were clear and helpful. There continue to be, however, several areas in the RFA that can be further clarified and would benefit from additional revision. Suggestions for improving the RFA include:

- Removing redundant requirements in the application narrative;
- Providing additional illustrations and/or explanations on the mutual benefit to researchers and school districts for partnering to conduct education research;
- Providing more information about the expectations for tracking the success of a partnership; and
- Providing greater clarification on the requirements of the joint letter of agreement, including clarifying the circumstances under which a joint letter of agreement is or is not needed.

FY 2015 NCER Education Research Grants Program (CFDA# 84.305A) RFA Survey

1. Including the application(s) you submitted to the Education Research Grants (CFDA# 84.305A) FY 2015 Request for Applications (RFA), how many IES grant applications have you submitted as the Principal Investigator? (Count previous submissions of the same application as separate applications.)

N = 334

- o 1   135 (40.4%)
- o 2-3   111 (33.2%)
- o 4+   88 (26.4%)
- ➔ If #1 = 1, then go to #3.
- ➔ If #1 = 2-3 or 4+, then go to #2.

2. Compared to Education Research Grants Program (84.305A) RFAs from previous years, the clarity and organization of the FY 2015 RFA is _____

N = 198
M = 2.3; SD = 0.7

- o much better.   20 (10.1%)
- o somewhat better.   95 (48.0%)
- o no better or worse.   79 (39.9%)
- o somewhat worse.   2 (1.0%)
- o much worse.   2 (1.0%)

3. To which Topic(s) did you apply in response to the FY15 RFA?

N = 337

- ☐ Cognition and Student Learning   51 (15.1%)
- ☐ Early Learning Programs and Policies   45 (13.4%)
- ☐ Education Technology   12 (3.6%)
- ☐ Effective Teachers and Effective Teaching   48 (14.2%)
- ☐ English Learners   13 (3.9%)
- ☐ Improving Education Systems: Policies…   24 (7.1%)
- ☐ Mathematics and Science Education   36 (10.7%)
- ☐ Postsecondary and Adult Education   44 (13.1%)
- ☐ Reading and Writing   23 (6.8%)
- ☐ Social and Behavioral Context for Academic Learning   68 (20.2%)

4. Rate the clarity of the distinction in the RFA between application requirements and application recommendations.

N = 337
M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

- o Very Clear   163 (49.1%)
- o Somewhat Clear   135 (40.7%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   28 (8.4%)
- o Very Unclear   6 (1.8%)

5. Each RFA Topic section includes a description of research gaps. Did you find these descriptions helpful?

N = 333

☐	Yes	262 (78.7%)
☐	No	71 (21.3%)

➔ If #5 = No, then go to #6.
➔ If #5 = Yes, then go to #7.

6. Please comment on how the descriptions of the research gaps could be improved.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

7. Did you interpret these research gaps as indicative of IES research priorities? **N = 332**

☐	Yes	280 (84.3%)
☐	No	52 (15.7%)

8. Did you contact an IES program officer as you prepared your application(s) for the FY2015 competition? **N = 335**

☐	Yes	281 (83.9%)
☐	No	54 (16.1%)

➔ If #8 = No, then go to #11
➔ If #8 = Yes, then go to #9

9. For what reason(s) did you contact an IES program officer? (Please check all that apply.) **N = 337**

☐	Question(s) about the suitability of the study for the Grants…program	156 (46.3%)
☐	Question(s) about the Topics described in the RFA	74 (22.0%)
☐	Question(s) about the Goals described in the RFA	79 (23.4%)
☐	Question(s) about the budget for your proposed study	44 (13.1%)
☐	Question(s) about your eligibility to apply	25 (7.4%)
☐	Question(s) about the application process	70 (20.8%)
☐	Question(s) about the review process	71 (21.1%)
☐	Question(s) about resubmitting a previous application…	117 (34.7%)
☐	Other	34 (10.1%)

➔ If #9 = Other, then go to #10
➔ If #9 = all other responses, then go to #11

10. Provide the reason indicated as "Other" in the previous item that you contacted an IES program officer.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

11. Rate the clarity of the Student Education Outcomes section of the RFA (pp. 2-3). **N = 330**
M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

o	Very Clear	167 (50.6%)

○ Somewhat Clear	124 (37.6%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	15 (4.6%)
○ Very Unclear	2 (0.6%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	22 (6.7%)

12. Rate the clarity of the Authentic Education Settings section of the RFA (pp. 2-3).

N = 332
M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

○ Very Clear	190 (57.2%)
○ Somewhat Clear	93 (28.0%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	13 (3.8%)
○ Very Unclear	6 (1.8%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	30 (9.0%)

13. Rate the overall clarity of Part IV of the RFA, Competition Regulations and Review Criteria (pp. 76-80).

N = 328
M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

○ Very Clear	158 (48.2%)
○ Somewhat Clear	125 (38.1%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	23 (7.0%)
○ Very Unclear	3 (0.9%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	19 (5.8%)

14. Rate the overall clarity of Part V of the RFA, Preparing Your Application (pp. 81-88).

N = 326
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

○ Very Clear	193 (59.2%)
○ Somewhat Clear	110 (33.7%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	13 (4.0%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (0.3%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	19 (2.8%)

15. Rate the overall clarity of Part VI of the RFA, Submitting Your Application (pp. 89-113).

N = 329
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

○ Very Clear	195 (59.3%)
○ Somewhat Clear	80 (24.3%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	19 (5.8%)
○ Very Unclear	2 (0.6%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	33 (10.0%)

16. Rate the level of difficulty of locating important material in the RFA.

N = 332
M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

○ Not at all Difficult	155 (46.7%)
○ Somewhat Difficult	157 (47.3%)
○ Difficult	12 (3.6%)
○ Very Difficult	8 (2.4%)

17. Having the RFA and the Application Submission Guide combined into a single document is _____ than having them be separate documents.

N = 330
M = 1.8; SD = 0.9

- o much better — 164 (49.7%)
- o somewhat better — 97 (29.4%)
- o no better or worse — 51 (15.5%)
- o somewhat worse — 13 (3.9%)
- o much worse — 5 (1.5%)

18. Rate the utility of the Glossary.

N = 328
M = 2.1; SD = 0.7

- o Highly Useful — 46 (14.0%)
- o Useful — 123 (37.5%)
- o Marginally Useful — 46 (14.0%)
- o Not Useful — 7 (2.1%)
- o I did not notice the Glossary — 106 (32.3%)

19. How many Topic sections did you read in the RFA?

N = 328

- ☐ 0 — 0 (0%)
- ☐ 1 — 78 (23.8%)
- ☐ 2-3 — 199 (60.7%)
- ☐ 4+ — 51 (15.6%)
- ➔ If #19 = 0, then go to #24
- ➔ If #19 = 1, then go to #21.
- ➔ If #19 > 1, then go to #20.

20. Which Topic sections did you read in the RFA? (Check all that you read.)

N = 337

- ☐ Cognition and Student Learning — 119 (35.3%)
- ☐ Early Learning Programs and Policies — 66 (19.6%)
- ☐ Education Technology — 74 (22.0%)
- ☐ Effective Teachers and Effective Teaching — 111 (32.9%)
- ☐ English Learners — 41 (12.2%)
- ☐ Improving Education Systems: Policies… — 59 (17.5%)
- ☐ Mathematics and Science Education — 95 (28.2%)
- ☐ Postsecondary and Adult Education — 61 (18.1%)
- ☐ Reading and Writing — 63 (18.7%)
- ☐ Social and Behavioral Context for Academic Learning — 102 (30.3%)

21. After reading the Topic section(s), was the Topic to which you should apply clear?

N = 332

- ☐ Yes — 279 (84.0%)
- ☐ No — 53 (16.0%)
- ➔ If #21 = No, then go to #22

13

➔ If #21 = Yes, then go to #23.

22. In what way(s) was the Topic to which you should apply not clear?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

23. Rate the clarity of the information in the Requirements section (i.e., Sample, Outcomes, and Setting) described under the Topic in the RFA.

N = 329
M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear — 173 (52.6%)
- Somewhat Clear — 140 (42.6%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 13 (4.0%)
- Very Unclear — 1 (0.3%)
- N/A – Did not read this section — 2 (0.6%)

24. How carefully did you read the Exploration Goal of the RFA?

N = 332

- Did not read it — 73 (22.0%)
- Casually — 91 (27.4%)
- Thoroughly — 168 (50.6%)

➔ If #24 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #26.
➔ If #24 = Thoroughly, then go to #25.

25. Rate the clarity of…

a. The purpose of the Exploration Goal.

N = 160
M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

- Very Clear — 90 (56.3%)
- Somewhat Clear — 59 (36.9%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 7 (5.4%)
- Very Unclear — 4 (2.5%)

b. The expected outcomes/products for Exploration projects.

N = 161
M = 1.7; SD = 0.7

- Very Clear — 73 (45.3%)
- Somewhat Clear — 73 (45.3%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 11 (6.8%)
- Very Unclear — 4 (2.5%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application.

N = 158
M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

- Very Clear — 92 (58.2%)
- Somewhat Clear — 53 (33.5%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 10 (6.3%)
- Very Unclear — 3 (1.9%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.

N = 158
M = 1.6; SD = 0.8

- Very Clear — 93 (58.9%)
- Somewhat Clear — 48 (30.4%)

- o Somewhat Unclear — 11 (7.0%)
- o Very Unclear — 6 (3.8%)
e. The description of the Personnel section of the application. — N = 160; M = 1.3; SD = 0.6
  - o Very Clear — 128 (80.0%)
  - o Somewhat Clear — 24 (15.0%)
  - o Somewhat Unclear — 6 (3.75%)
  - o Very Unclear — 2 (1.3%)
f. The description of the Resources section of the application. — N = 159; M = 1.4; SD = 0.7
  - o Very Clear — 109 (68.6%)
  - o Somewhat Clear — 39 (24.5%)
  - o Somewhat Unclear — 9 (5.7%)
  - o Very Unclear — 2 (1.3%)
g. The description of the types of research questions allowed for an Exploration project. — N = 161; M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
  - o Very Clear — 67 (41.6%)
  - o Somewhat Clear — 72 (44.7%)
  - o Somewhat Unclear — 19 (11.8%)
  - o Very Unclear — 3 (1.9%)
h. The description of laboratory research. — N = 153; M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
  - o Very Clear — 74 (48.4%)
  - o Somewhat Clear — 65 (42.5%)
  - o Somewhat Unclear — 12 (7.8%)
  - o Very Unclear — 2 (1.3%)
i. The definition of malleable factors. — N = 159; M = 1.8; SD = 0.8
  - o Very Clear — 66 (41.5%)
  - o Somewhat Clear — 67 (42.1%)
  - o Somewhat Unclear — 24 (15.1%)
  - o Very Unclear — 2 (1.3%)

26. How carefully did you read the Development & Innovation Goal of the RFA? — N = 321
  - o Did not read it — 72 (22.4%)
  - o Casually — 88 (27.4%)
  - o Thoroughly 1 — 161 (50.2%)
  - ➔ If #26 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #28.
  - ➔ If #26 = Thoroughly, then go to #27.

27. Rate the clarity of…
  a. The purpose of the Development & Innovation Goal. — N = 165; M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
    - o Very Clear — 108 (65.5%)

- Somewhat Clear — 49 (29.7%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 7 (4.24%)
- Very Unclear — 1 (0.6%)

b. The expected outcomes/products for Development & Innovation projects. N = 165
M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear — 94 (57.0%)
- Somewhat Clear — 60 (36.4%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 10 (6.1%)
- Very Unclear — 1 (0.6%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application. N = 164
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear — 98 (59.8%)
- Somewhat Clear — 61 (37.2%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 5 (3.1%)
- Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application. N = 164
M = 1.6; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear — 87 (53.1%)
- Somewhat Clear — 60 (36.6%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 15 (9.2%)
- Very Unclear — 2 (1.2%)

e. The description of the Personnel section of the application. N = 161
M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

- Very Clear — 122 (75.8%)
- Somewhat Clear — 36 (22.4%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 2 (1.2%)
- Very Unclear — 1 (0.6%)

f. The description of the Resources section of the application. N = 162
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear — 110 (67.9%)
- Somewhat Clear — 44 (27.2%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 8 (4.9%)
- Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

g. The description of the theory of change. N = 162
M = 1.9; SD = 0.8

- Very Clear — 54 (33.3%)
- Somewhat Clear — 75 (46.3%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 29 (17.9%)
- Very Unclear — 4 (2.5%)

h. The expectations for the iterative development. N = 164
M = 1.8; SD = 0.8

- Very Clear — 64 (39.0%)
- Somewhat Clear — 72 (43.9%)
- Somewhat Unclear — 24 (14.6%)

o Very Unclear	4 (2.4%)
i. The distinction between *feasibility* and *usability*.	N = 164
	M = 2.0; SD = 0.9
o Very Clear	53 (32.3%)
o Somewhat Clear	69 (42.1%)
o Somewhat Unclear	32 (19.5%)
o Very Unclear	10 (6.1%)
j. The requirement that measures of fidelity of implementation be developed/refined as part of a Development & Innovation project.	N = 161
	M = 1.9; SD = 0.9
o Very Clear	63 (39.1%)
o Somewhat Clear	66 (41.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	24 (14.9%)
o Very Unclear	8 (5.0%)
k. The description of laboratory research.	N = 158
	M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
o Very Clear	74 (46.8%)
o Somewhat Clear	67 (42.4%)
o Somewhat Unclear	15 (9.5%)
o Very Unclear	2 (1.3%)
l. The continuum of rigor for the pilot study.	N = 165
	M = 1.8; SD = 0.8
o Very Clear	62 (37.6%)
o Somewhat Clear	73 (44.2%)
o Somewhat Unclear	24 (14.6%)
o Very Unclear	6 (3.6%)

28. How carefully did you read the Efficacy & Replication Goal of the RFA?

		N = 323
	o Did not read it	148 (45.8%)
	o Casually	87 (26.9%)
	o Thoroughly	88 (27.2%)

➔ If #28 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #30.
➔ If #28 = Thoroughly, then go to #29.

29. Rate the clarity of…

a. The purpose of the Efficacy & Replication Goal.	N = 87
	M = 1.3; SD = 9.5
o Very Clear	67 (77.0%)
o Somewhat Clear	18 (20.7%)
o Somewhat Unclear	1 (1.2%)
o Very Unclear	1 (1.2%)
b. The expected outcomes/products for Efficacy & Replication projects.	N = 86
	M = 1.4; SD = 0.7
o Very Clear	60 (69.8%)
o Somewhat Clear	21 (24.4%)

○ Somewhat Unclear	3 (3.5%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (2.3%)
c. The description of the Significance section of the application.	N = 87 M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
○ Very Clear	59 (67.8%)
○ Somewhat Clear	23 (26.4%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	4 (4.6%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.2%)
d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.	N = 86 M = 1.3; SD = 0.6
○ Very Clear	61 (70.9%)
○ Somewhat Clear	21 (24.4%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	4 (4.7%)
○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
e. The description of the Personnel section of the application.	N = 85 M = 1.3; SD = 0.5
○ Very Clear	61 (71.8%)
○ Somewhat Clear	22 (25.9%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	2 (2.4%)
○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
f. The description of the Resources section of the application.	N = 86 M = 1.3; SD = 0.6
○ Very Clear	65 (75.6%)
○ Somewhat Clear	16 (18.6%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	4 (4.7%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.2%)
g. The description of the theory of change.	N = 84 M = 1.7; SD = 0.8
○ Very Clear	39 (46.4%)
○ Somewhat Clear	32 (38.1%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	12 (14.3%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.2%)
h. The differences among the forms of Efficacy & Replication studies (i.e., efficacy, replication, follow-up, and retrospective).	N = 86 M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
○ Very Clear	53 (61.6%)
○ Somewhat Clear	22 (25.6%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	11 (12.8%)
○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
i. The differences in the requirements between studying widely used interventions and studying not widely used interventions.	N = 85 M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
○ Very Clear	46 (54.1%)
○ Somewhat Clear	29 (34.1%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	9 (10.6%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.2%)

j. The requirements for the Cost Analysis.   N = 87
                                                                             M = 2.2; SD = 1.0
   ○ Very Clear   26 (29.9%)
   ○ Somewhat Clear   26 (29.9%)
   ○ Somewhat Unclear   25 (28.7%)
   ○ Very Unclear   10 (11.5%)

k. The requirements for the Data Management Plan.   N = 86
                                                                             M = 2.1; SD = 1.0
   ○ Very Clear   31 (36.1%)
   ○ Somewhat Clear   26 (30.2%)
   ○ Somewhat Unclear   19 (22.1%)
   ○ Very Unclear   10 (11.6%)

30. How carefully did you read the Effectiveness Goal of the RFA?   N = 321
  ○ Did not read it   182 (56.7%)
  ○ Casually   108 (33.6%)
  ○ Thoroughly   31 (9.7%)
  ➔ If #30 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #32.
  ➔ If #30 = Thoroughly, then go to #31.

31. Rate the clarity of…
 a. The purpose of the Effectiveness Goal.   N = 29
                                                                            M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
   ○ Very Clear   18 (62.1%)
   ○ Somewhat Clear   9 (31.0%)
   ○ Somewhat Unclear   1 (3.5%)
   ○ Very Unclear   1 (3.5%)

 b. The expected outcomes/products for Effectiveness projects.   N = 30
                                                                            M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
   ○ Very Clear   19 (63.3%)
   ○ Somewhat Clear   9 (30.0%)
   ○ Somewhat Unclear   1 (3.3%)
   ○ Very Unclear   1 (3.3%)

 c. The description of the Significance section of the application.   N = 28
                                                                            M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
   ○ Very Clear   19 (67.9%)
   ○ Somewhat Clear   7 (25.0%)
   ○ Somewhat Unclear   2 (7.4%)
   ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

 d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.   N = 29
                                                                            M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
   ○ Very Clear   20 (69.0%)
   ○ Somewhat Clear   7 (24.1%)
   ○ Somewhat Unclear   2 (6.9%)

o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
e. The description of the Personnel section of the application.	N = 30
	M = 1.3; SD = 0.5
o Very Clear	23 (76.7%)
o Somewhat Clear	6 (20.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	1 (3.3%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
f. The description of the Resources section of the application.	N = 30
	M = 1.3; SD = 0.5
o Very Clear	21 (70.0%)
o Somewhat Clear	8 (26.7%)
o Somewhat Unclear	1 (3.3%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
g. The description of the theory of change.	N = 30
	M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
o Very Clear	16 (53.3%)
o Somewhat Clear	11 (36.7%)
o Somewhat Unclear	3 (10.0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
h. The distinction between the purposes of the Efficacy & Replication Goal and the Effectiveness Goal.	N = 31
	M = 1.6; SD = 0.6
o Very Clear	14 (45.2%)
o Somewhat Clear	12 (38.7%)
o Somewhat Unclear	2 (6.5%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
o N/A – Did not read the Efficacy & Replication Goal	3 (9.7%)
i. The requirements for the Data Management Plan.	N = 30
	M = 1.7; SD = 1.0
o Very Clear	18 (60.0%)
o Somewhat Clear	6 (20.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	4 (13.3%)
o Very Unclear	6 (6.7%)
32. How carefully did you read the Measurement Goal of the RFA?	N = 319
o Did not read it	184 (57.7%)
o Casually	81 (25.4%)
o Thoroughly	54 (16.9%)
➔ If #32 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #34.	
➔ If #32 = Thoroughly, then go to #33.	
33. Rate the clarity of…	
a. The purpose of the Measurement Goal.	N = 52
	M = 1.3; SD = 0.6
o Very Clear	38 (73.1%)

○ Somewhat Clear	13 (25.0%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.9%)

b. The expected outcomes/products for Measurement projects.

N = 48
M = 1.4; SD = 0.7

○ Very Clear	34 (70.8%)
○ Somewhat Clear	11 (22.9%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	2 (4.2%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (2.1%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application.

N = 51
M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

○ Very Clear	32 (62.8%)
○ Somewhat Clear	16 (31.4%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	2 (3.9%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (2.0%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.

N = 51
M = 1.7; SD = 0.8

○ Very Clear	25 (49.0%)
○ Somewhat Clear	18 (35.3%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	6 (11.8%)
○ Very Unclear	2 (3.9%)

e. The description of the Personnel section of the application.

N = 48
M = 1.2; SD = 0.5

○ Very Clear	40 (83.3%)
○ Somewhat Clear	7 (14.6%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (2.1%)

f. The description of the Resources section of the application.

N = 50
M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

○ Very Clear	29 (58.0%)
○ Somewhat Clear	18 (36.0%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	1 (2.0%)
○ Very Unclear	2 (4.0%)

g. The description of the assessment framework.

N = 50
M = 1.9; SD = 0.9

○ Very Clear	22 (44.0%)
○ Somewhat Clear	17 (34.0%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	7 (14.0%)
○ Very Unclear	4 (8.0%)

h. The differences among the types of Measurement studies (i.e., design a new assessment, refine an existing assessment, or collect validity evidence for an existing assessment).

N = 50
M = 1.7; SD = 0.9

○ Very Clear	26 (52.0%)
○ Somewhat Clear	17 (34.0%)

○ Somewhat Unclear	3 (6.0%)
○ Very Unclear	4 (8.0%)

i. The description of laboratory research.

N = 50
M = 1.8; SD = 0.8

○ Very Clear	22 (44.0%)
○ Somewhat Clear	20 (40.0%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	6 (12.0%)
○ Very Unclear	2 (4.0%)

34. After reading the Goal sections, was the goal to which you should apply clear?

N = 321

☐ Yes	296 (92.2%)
☐ No	25 (7.8%)

➔ If #34 = No, then go to #35
➔ If #34 = Yes, then go to #36

35. In what way(s) was the Goal to which you should apply not clear?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

36. Rate the clarity of the requirements for the dissemination plan.

N = 316
M = 1.9; SD = 0.7

○ Very Clear	103 (32.6%)
○ Somewhat Clear	163 (51.6%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	43 (13.4%)
○ Very Unclear	7 (2.2%)

37. Please comment on any language or instructions in the RFA that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

38. Please give us any additional feedback you may have about the RFA, including comments on the length, the level of detail, the organization, and comparisons to RFAs from previous years.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

Appendix B

FY 2015 NCSER Special Education Research Grants Program (CFDA# 84.324A) RFA Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your feedback is important to helping IES improve its grant programs.

If you need assistance completing this survey, please contact IES/NCSER by sending an email to NCSER.Commissioner@ed.gov

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1880-0542. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this survey, please contact Kristen Rhoads directly at, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, CP-606B, Washington, DC 20202. [Note: Please do not return the completed survey to this address.]

The password for this survey is **2015RFA**.

Please enter the password to access this survey:

| | START→

---

1.   Including the application(s) you submitted to the Special Education Research Grants (CFDA# 84.324A) FY 2015 Request for Applications (RFA), how many IES grant applications have you ever submitted as the Principal Investigator? (Count previous submissions of the same application as separate applications.)
N=126

- o   1 — 33 (26.19%)
- o   2-3 — 42 (33.33%)
- o   4+ — 51 (40.48%)
- ➔   If #1 = 1, then go to #3.
- ➔   If #1 = 2-3 or 4+, then go to #2.

2.   Compared to Special Education Research Grants Program (84.324A) RFAs from previous years, the clarity and organization of the FY 2015 RFA is _____
N = 89
M = 2.4; SD = 0.7

- o   much better — 11(12.36%)
- o   somewhat better. — 35 (39.33%)
- o   no better or worse. — 43 (48.31%)
- o   somewhat worse. — 0 (0%)
- o   much worse. — 0 (0%)

3.   To which Topic(s) did you apply in response to the FY15 RFA?
N = 126

☐ Autism Spectrum Disorders	12 (9.524%)
☐ Cognition and Student Learning in Special Education	11 (8.73%)
☐ Early Intervention and Early Learning in Special Education	24 (19.05%)
☐ Families of Children with Disabilities	2 (1.59%)
☐ Mathematics and Science Education	7 (5.56%)
☐ Professional Development for Teachers and Related Services Providers	18 (14.29%)
☐ Reading, Writing, and Language Development	14 (11.11%)
☐ Social and Behavioral Outcomes to Support Learning	18 (14.29%)
☐ Special Education Policy, Finance, and Systems	10 (7.94%)
☐ Technology for Special Education	14 (11.11%)
☐ Transition Outcomes for Secondary Students with Disabilities	15 (11.90%)

4.   The distinction in the RFA between application requirements and application recommendations was _____.

N = 126
M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- o   very clear — 69 (54.76%)
- o   somewhat clear — 48 (38.10%)
- o   somewhat unclear — 9 (7.14%)
- o   very unclear — 0 (0%)

5.   Each RFA Topic section includes a description of research considerations specific to that topic. Did you find these descriptions helpful?

N = 126

- ☐   Yes — 124 (98.41%)
- ☐   No — 2 (1.59%)

6.   Please comment on how the descriptions of research considerations were helpful to you or could
be improved.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

7.   Did you contact an IES program officer as you prepared your application(s) for the FY2015 competition?

N = 120

- ☐   Yes — 101 (84.17%)
- ☐   No — 19 (15.83%)
- ➔   If #7 = No, then go to #10
- ➔   If #7 = Yes, then go to #8

8.   For what reason(s) did you contact an IES program officer? (Please check all that apply.)

N = 112

- ☐   Question(s) about the suitability of the study for the Grants…program — 55 (53.92%)
- ☐   Question(s) about the Topics described in the RFA — 37 (36.27%)
- ☐   Question(s) about the Goals described in the RFA — 32 (31.37%)
- ☐   Question(s) about the budget for your proposed study — 7 (6.86%)
- ☐   Question(s) about your eligibility to apply — 6 (5.88)
- ☐   Question(s) about the application process — 20 (19.61)

☐ Question(s) about the review process   11 (10.78)

☐ Question(s) about resubmitting a previous application…   33 (32.35%)

☐ Other   12 (11.76%)

➔ If #8 = Other, then go to #9

➔ If #8 = all other responses, then go to #10

9.   If you indicated "Other" in the previous item, then please describe the other reason you contacted a program officer.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

10.   Rate the clarity of Part I, Student Education Outcomes section of the RFA (p. 2).

N = 112
M = 1.6; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear   52 (46.43%)
- Somewhat Clear   51 (45.54%)
- Somewhat Unclear   6 (5.36%)
- Very Unclear   0 (0%)
- N/A – Did not read this section   3 (2.68%)

11.   Rate the clarity of Part I, Authentic Education Settings section of the RFA (pp. 2-3).

N = 112
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear   73 (65.18%)
- Somewhat Clear   32 (28.57%)
- Somewhat Unclear   5 (4.46%)
- Very Unclear   1 (0.89%)
- N/A – Did not read this section   1 (0.89%)

12.   Rate the clarity of Part II of the RFA, Applying to a Topic, including Student Grade Level and Student Disability sections (pp. 8-9).

N = 113
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear   73 (64.60%)
- Somewhat Clear   33 (29.20%)
- Somewhat Unclear   5 (4.42%)
- Very Unclear   1 (0.88%)
- N/A – Did not read this section   1 (0.88%)

13.   Rate the overall clarity of Part IV of the RFA, Competition Regulations and Review Criteria (pp. 77-82).

N = 113
M = 1.6; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear   57 (50.44%)
- Somewhat Clear   47 (41.59%)
- Somewhat Unclear   7 (6.19%)
- Very Unclear   0 (0%)
- N/A – Did not read this section   2 (1.77%)

14.   Rate the overall clarity of Part V of the RFA, Preparing Your Application (pp. 83-90).

N = 112
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- Very Clear   66 (58.93%)
- Somewhat Clear   42 (37.5%)

o	Somewhat Unclear	3 (2.68%)
o	Very Unclear	0 (0%)
o	N/A – Did not read this section	1 (0.89%)

15. Rate the overall clarity of Part VI of the RFA, Submitting Your Application (pp. 91-115).

N = 113
M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear — 58 (51.33%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 44 (38.94%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 4 (3.54%)
- o Very Unclear — 0 (0%)
- o N/A – Did not read this section — 7 (6.19%)

16. Rate the level of difficulty of locating important material in the RFA.

N = 114
M = 1.6; SD = 0.6

- o Not at all Difficult — 54 (47.37%)
- o Somewhat Difficult — 54 (47.37%)
- o Difficult — 6 (5.26%)
- o Very Difficult — 0 (0%)

17. Having the RFA and the Application Submission Guide combined into a single document is _____ than having them as separate documents.

N = 113
M = 1.6; SD = 0.9

- o much better — 68 (60.18%)
- o somewhat better — 29 (25.66%)
- o no better or worse — 10 (8.85%)
- o somewhat worse — 6 (5.31%)
- o much worse — 0 (0%)

18. Rate the utility of the Glossary.

N = 112
M = 2.1; SD = 0.7

- o Highly Useful — 15 (13.39%)
- o Useful — 52 (46.43%)
- o Marginally Useful — 19 (16.96%)
- o Not Useful — 2 (1.79%)
- o I did not notice the Glossary — 24 (21.43%)

19. How many Topic sections did you read in the RFA?

N = 115

- ☐ 0 — 1 (0.87%)
- ☐ 1 — 28 (24.35%)
- ☐ 2-3 — 68 (59.13%)
- ☐ 4+ — 18 (15.65%)
- ➔ If #19 = 0, then go to #24
- ➔ If #19 = 1, then go to #21.
- ➔ If #19 > 1, then go to #20.

20. Which Topic sections did you read in the RFA? (Check all that you read.)

N = 115

- ☐ Autism Spectrum Disorders — 27 (23.48%)
- ☐ Cognition and Student Learning in Special Education — 34 (29.57%)

☐ Early Intervention and Early Learning in Special Education	43 (37.39%)
☐ Families of Children with Disabilities	25 (21.74%)
☐ Mathematics and Science Education	21 (18.26%)
☐ Professional Development for Teachers and Related Services Providers	24 (20.87%)
☐ Reading, Writing, and Language Development	22 (19.13%)
☐ Social and Behavioral Outcomes to Support Learning	32 (27.83%)
☐ Special Education Policy, Finance, and Systems	23 (20.00%)
☐ Technology for Special Education	29 (25.22%)
☐ Transition Outcomes for Secondary Students with Disabilities	20 (17.39%)

21. After reading the Topic section(s), was it clear which Topic best fit your research?   N = 115

      ☐ Yes   103 (89.57%)

      ☐ No   12 (10.43%)

      ➔ If #21 = No, then go to #22

      ➔ If #21 = Yes, then go to #23.

22. In what way(s) was the Topic to which you should apply not clear?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

23. Rate the clarity of the information in the Requirements section (i.e., Sample, Outcomes, and Setting) described under the Topic in the RFA.   N = 115   M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

      o Very Clear   60 (52.17%)

      o Somewhat Clear   51 (44.35%)

      o Somewhat Unclear   4 (3.48%)

      o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

      o N/A – Did not read this section   0 (0%)

24. How carefully did you read the Exploration Goal of the RFA?   N = 114

      o Did not read it   32 (28.07%)

      o Casually   40 (35.09%)

      o Thoroughly   42 (36.84%)

      ➔ If #24 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #26.

      ➔ If #24 = Thoroughly, then go to #25.

25. Rate the clarity of…

    a. The purpose of the Exploration Goal.   N = 41   M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

      o Very Clear   26 (63.41%)

      o Somewhat Clear   10 (24.39%)

      o Somewhat Unclear   5 (12.20%)

      o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    b. The expected outcomes/products for Exploration projects.   N = 41   M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

      o Very Clear   24 (58.54%)

o Somewhat Clear	13 (31.71%)
o Somewhat Unclear	3 (7.32%)
o Very Unclear	1 (2.44%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application. N = 38
M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

o Very Clear	20 (52.63%)
o Somewhat Clear	17 (44.74%)
o Somewhat Unclear	1 (2.63%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application. N = 39
M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

o Very Clear	22 (56.41%)
o Somewhat Clear	16 (41.03%)
o Somewhat Unclear	1 (2.56%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

e. The description of the Personnel section of the application. N = 40
M = 1.3; SD = 0.4

o Very Clear	30 (75.00%)
o Somewhat Clear	10 (25.00%)
o Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

f. The description of the Resources section of the application. N = 39
M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

o Very Clear	28 (71.79%)
o Somewhat Clear	11 (28.21%)
o Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

g. The description of the types of research questions allowed for an N = 39
Exploration project. M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

o Very Clear	20 (51.28%)
o Somewhat Clear	15 (38.46%)
o Somewhat Unclear	4 (10.26%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

h. The description of laboratory research. N = 39
M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

o Very Clear	19 (48.72%)
o Somewhat Clear	16 (41.03%)
o Somewhat Unclear	4 (10.26%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

i. The definition of malleable factors. N = 41
M = 1.7; SD = 0.8

o Very Clear	20 (48.78%)
o Somewhat Clear	15 (36.58%)
o Somewhat Unclear	4 (9.76%)
o Very Unclear	2 (4.88%)

26. How carefully did you read the Development & Innovation Goal of the RFA? N = 112

o Did not read it	21 (18.75%)

- o Casually   18 (16.07%)
- o Thoroughly   73 (65.18%)
- ➔ If #26 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #28.
- ➔ If #26 = Thoroughly, then go to #27.

27.   Rate the clarity of…

a. The purpose of the Development & Innovation Goal.   N = 75

     M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

- o Very Clear   55 (73.33%)
- o Somewhat Clear   18 (24.00%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   2 (2.67%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

b. The expected outcomes/products for Development & Innovation   N = 75

projects.   M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear   41 (54.67%)
- o Somewhat Clear   29 (38.67%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   5 (6.67%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application.   N = 74

     M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear   50 (67.57%)
- o Somewhat Clear   21 (28.38%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   3 (4.05%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.   N = 71

     M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear   42 (59.15%)
- o Somewhat Clear   26 (36.62%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   3 (4.23%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

e. The description of the Personnel section of the application.   N = 73

     M = 1.2; SD = 0.4

- o Very Clear   57 (78.08%)
- o Somewhat Clear   16 (21.92%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

f. The description of the Resources section of the application.   N = 73

     M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

- o Very Clear   53 (72.60%)
- o Somewhat Clear   18 (24.66%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   2 (2.74%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

g. The description of the theory of change.   N = 74

     M = 1.9; SD = 0.7

- o Very Clear   21 (28.38%)
- o Somewhat Clear   41 (55.41%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   11 (14.86%)
- o Very Unclear   1 (1.35%)

h. The expectations for the iterative development.
      ○ Very Clear
      ○ Somewhat Clear
      ○ Somewhat Unclear
      ○ Very Unclear

N = 75
M = 1.7; SD = 0.6
25 (33.33%)
45 (60.00%)
5 (6.67%)
0 (0%)

i. The distinction between *feasibility* and *usability*.
      ○ Very Clear
      ○ Somewhat Clear
      ○ Somewhat Unclear
      ○ Very Unclear

N = 74
M = 1.9; SD = 0.8
27 (36.49%)
33 (44.59%)
12 (16.22%)
2 (2.70%)

j. The requirement that measures of fidelity of implementation be developed/refined as part of a Development & Innovation project.
      ○ Very Clear
      ○ Somewhat Clear
      ○ Somewhat Unclear
      ○ Very Unclear

N = 74
M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
39 (52.70%)
29 (39.19%)
5 (6.76%)
1 (1.35%)

k. The description of laboratory research.
      ○ Very Clear
      ○ Somewhat Clear
      ○ Somewhat Unclear
      ○ Very Unclear

N = 74
M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
31 (41.89%)
34 (45.95%)
7 (9.46%)
2 (2.70%)

l. The continuum of rigor for the pilot study.
      ○ Very Clear
      ○ Somewhat Clear
      ○ Somewhat Unclear
      ○ Very Unclear

N = 75
M = 1.8; SD = 0.7
30 (40.00%)
34 (45.33%)
10 (13.33%)
1 (1.33%)

28. How carefully did you read the Efficacy & Replication Goal of the RFA?
  ○ Did not read it
  ○ Casually
  ○ Thoroughly
  ➔ If #28 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #30.
  ➔ If #28 = Thoroughly, then go to #29.

N = 113
42 (37.17%)
39 (34.51%)
32 (28.32%)

29. Rate the clarity of…
a. The purpose of the Efficacy & Replication Goal.
      ○ Very Clear
      ○ Somewhat Clear
      ○ Somewhat Unclear
      ○ Very Unclear

N = 31
M = 1.3; SD = 0.6
23 (74.19%)
6 (19.35%)
2 (6.45%)
0 (0%)

b. The expected outcomes/products for Efficacy & Replication projects.
      ○ Very Clear

N = 32
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
20 (62.50%)

	○ Somewhat Clear	10 (31.25%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	2 (6.25%)
	○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
c. The description of the Significance section of the application.		N = 31
		M = 1.3; SD = 0.5
	○ Very Clear	23 (74.19%)
	○ Somewhat Clear	7 (22.58%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	1 (3.23%)
	○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.		N = 31
		M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
	○ Very Clear	21 (67.74%)
	○ Somewhat Clear	9 (29.03%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	1 (3.23%)
	○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
e. The description of the Personnel section of the application.		N = 32
		M = 1.2; SD = 0.5
	○ Very Clear	26 (81.25%)
	○ Somewhat Clear	5 (15.63%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	1 (3.13%)
	○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
f. The description of the Resources section of the application.		N = 31
		M = 1.2; SD = 0.4
	○ Very Clear	25 (80.65%)
	○ Somewhat Clear	6 (19.35%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
	○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
g. The description of the theory of change.		N = 32
		M = 2.0; SD = 0.7
	○ Very Clear	7 (21.88%)
	○ Somewhat Clear	18 (56.25%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	6 (18.75%)
	○ Very Unclear	1 (3.13%)
h. The differences among the forms of Efficacy & Replication studies (i.e., efficacy, replication, follow-up, and retrospective).		N = 31
		M = 1.8; SD = 0.8
	○ Very Clear	13 (41.94%)
	○ Somewhat Clear	12 (38.71%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	6 (19.35%)
	○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
i. The differences in the requirements between studying widely used interventions and studying not widely used interventions.		N = 31
		M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
	○ Very Clear	13 (41.94%)
	○ Somewhat Clear	15 (48.39%)
	○ Somewhat Unclear	3 (9.68%)
	○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
j. The recommendations for single-case designs proposed as the primary design for efficacy studies.		N = 29
		M = 2.0; SD = 0.8
	○ Very Clear	8 (27.59%)

o Somewhat Clear	15 (51.72%)
o Somewhat Unclear	5 (17.24%)
o Very Unclear	1 (3.45%)

k. The requirements for the Cost Analysis. N = 32

M = 2.3; SD = 0.9

o Very Clear	6 (18.75%)
o Somewhat Clear	12 (37.50%)
o Somewhat Unclear	11 (34.38%)
o Very Unclear	3 (9.38%)

l. The requirements for the Data Management Plan. N = 32

M = 2.2; SD = 0.9

o Very Clear	8 (25.00%)
o Somewhat Clear	11 (34.38%)
o Somewhat Unclear	11 (34.38%)
o Very Unclear	2 (6.25%)

30. How carefully did you read the Effectiveness Goal of the RFA? N = 113

o Did not read it	68 (60.18%)
o Casually	36 (31.86%)
o Thoroughly	9 (7.96%)

➔ If #30 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #32.
➔ If #30 = Thoroughly, then go to #31.

31. Rate the clarity of…

a. The purpose of the Effectiveness Goal. N = 9

M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

o Very Clear	6 (66.67%)
o Somewhat Clear	3 (33.33%)
o Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

b. The expected outcomes/products for Effectiveness projects. N = 9

M = 1.4; SD = 0.5

o Very Clear	5 (55.56%)
o Somewhat Clear	4 (44.44%)
o Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application. N = 9

M = 1.4; SD = 0.5

o Very Clear	5 (55.56%)
o Somewhat Clear	4 (44.44%)
o Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application. N = 9

M = 1.6; SD = 0.5

o Very Clear	4 (44.44%)
o Somewhat Clear	5 (55.56%)
o Somewhat Unclear	0 (0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

e. The description of the Personnel section of the application.   N = 9

   M = 1.1; SD = 0.3
   - o Very Clear   8 (88.89%)
   - o Somewhat Clear   1 (11.11%)
   - o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
   - o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

f. The description of the Resources section of the application.   N = 9

   M = 1.2; SD = 0.4
   - o Very Clear   7 (77.78%)
   - o Somewhat Clear   2 (22.22%)
   - o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
   - o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

g. The description of the theory of change.   N = 9

   M = 1.6; SD = 0.5
   - o Very Clear   4 (44.44%)
   - o Somewhat Clear   5 (55.56%)
   - o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
   - o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

h. The distinction between the purposes of the Efficacy & Replication   N = 9
   Goal and the Effectiveness Goal.   M = 1.7; SD = 1.0
   - o Very Clear   5 (55.56%)
   - o Somewhat Clear   3 (33.33%)
   - o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
   - o Very Unclear   1 (11.11%)
   - o N/A – Did not read the Efficacy & Replication Goal   0 (0%)

i. The requirements for the Data Management Plan.   N = 9

   M = 1.9; SD = 0.8
   - o Very Clear   3 (33.33%)
   - o Somewhat Clear   4 (44.44%)
   - o Somewhat Unclear   2 (22.22%)
   - o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

32. How carefully did you read the Measurement Goal of the RFA?   N = 112
   - o Did not read it   65 (58.04%)
   - o Casually   24 (21.43%)
   - o Thoroughly   23 (20.54%)
   - ➔ If #32 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #34.
   - ➔ If #32 = Thoroughly, then go to #33.

33. Rate the clarity of…
   a. The purpose of the Measurement Goal.   N = 22

   M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
   - o Very Clear   15 (68.18%)
   - o Somewhat Clear   6 (27.27%)
   - o Somewhat Unclear   1 (4.55%)
   - o Very Unclear   0 (0%)
   b. The expected outcomes/products for Measurement projects.   N = 22

   M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear   11 (50.00%)
- o Somewhat Clear   10 (45.45%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   1 (4.55%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application.   N = 22
     M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear   13 (59.09%)
- o Somewhat Clear   8 (36.36%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   1 (4.55%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.   N = 20
     M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear   14 (70.00%)
- o Somewhat Clear   5 (25.00%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   1 (5.00%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

e. The description of the Personnel section of the application.   N = 22
     M = 1.2; SD = 0.5

- o Very Clear   19 (86.36%)
- o Somewhat Clear   2 (9.09%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   1 (4.55%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

f. The description of the Resources section of the application.   N = 22
     M = 1.2; SD = 0.5

- o Very Clear   18 (81.82%)
- o Somewhat Clear   3 (13.64%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   1 (4.55%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

g. The description of the assessment framework.   N = 22
     M = 1.7; SD = 0.6

- o Very Clear   8 (36.36%)
- o Somewhat Clear   12 (54.55%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   2 (9.09%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

h. The differences among the types of Measurement studies (i.e., design a new assessment, refine an existing assessment, or collect validity evidence for an existing assessment).   N = 22
     M = 1.7; SD = 0.7

- o Very Clear   9 (40.91%)
- o Somewhat Clear   10 (45.45%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   3 (13.64%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

i. The description of laboratory research.   N = 22
     M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

- o Very Clear   11 (50.00%)
- o Somewhat Clear   9 (40.91%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   2 (9.09%)
- o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

34. After reading the Goal sections, was it clear which goal best fit your research? N = 112
    ☐ Yes   106 (94.64%)
    ☐ No   6 (5.36%)
    ➔ If #34 = No, then go to #35
    ➔ If #34 = Yes, then go to #36

35. In what way(s) was the Goal to which you should apply not clear?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

36. Rate the clarity of the requirements for the dissemination plan.   N = 113
                                        M = 1.9; SD = 0.7

    o Very Clear   33 (29.20%)
    o Somewhat Clear   57 (50.44%)
    o Somewhat Unclear   22 (19.47%)
    o Very Unclear   1 (0.88%)

37. Please comment on any language or instructions in the RFA that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

38. Please give us any additional feedback you may have about the RFA, including comments on the length, the level of detail, the organization, and comparisons to RFAs from previous years.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

Thank you for contributing your time and thoughtful responses to this important survey. If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact IES/NCSER by e-mail at NCSER.Commissioner@ed.gov.

Appendix C

FY 2015 NCER Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy (CFDA #84.305H)
RFA Survey

1. How did you first learn about the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on   N = 77
Problems of Practice or Policy (84.305H) grant opportunity at IES?

      ○ Read about it on the IES website   25 (32.5%)
      ○ Read about it on another website   1 (1.3%)
      ○ Read about it in a newsletter or journal   3 (3.9%)
      ○ Read about it in the IES newsflash   9 (11.7%)
      ○ Heard about it from an IES staff member   5 (6.5%)
      ○ Heard about it from a co-worker, friend, or colleague   30 (39.0%)
      ○ Other   4 (5.2%)
      ➔ If #1 = Other, then go to #2
      ➔ If #1 = all other responses, then go to #3

2. Provide the mechanism indicated as "Other" in the previous item that you learned about this grant opportunity.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

3. Including the application(s) you submitted for the FY2015 RFA, how many IES grant   N = 76
applications have you submitted as the Principal Investigator? (Count previous
submissions of the same application as separate applications.)

      ○ 1   49 (64.5%)
      ○ 2-3   26 (34.2%)
      ○ 4,   1 (1.3%)
      ➔ If #3 = 1, then go to #5.
      ➔ If #3 = 2-3 or 4,, then go to #4.

4. Compared to the RFAs for the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on   N = 27
Problems of Practice or Policy grant program from previous years, the clarity and   M = 1.9; SD = 0.7
organization of the FY 2015 RFA is _____

      ○ much better.   8 (29.6%)
      ○ somewhat better.   14 (51.9%)
      ○ no better or worse.   5 (18.5%)
      ○ somewhat worse.   0 (0%)
      ○ much worse.   0 (0%)

5. Did you submit a letter of intent for the FY 2015 RFA?   N = 77
    ☐   Yes   59 (76.6%)
    ☐   No   18 (23.4%)

6. Rate the clarity of the distinction in the RFA between application requirements and   N = 77
    application recommendations.   M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
    ○ Very Clear   41 (53.3%)
    ○ Somewhat Clear   29 (37.7%)
    ○ Somewhat Unclear   7 (9.1%)
    ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

7. Rate the level of difficulty of locating important material in the RFA.   N = 77
                                                                                              M = 1.7; SD = 0.6
    ○ Not at all Difficult   44 (57.1%)
    ○ Somewhat Difficult   30 (39.0%)
    ○ Difficult   3 (3.9%)
    ○ Very Difficult   0 (0%)

8. Did you contact an IES program officer as you prepared your application(s) for the   N = 77
    FY 2015 competition?
    ☐   Yes   61 (79.2%)
    ☐   No   16 (20.8%)
    ➔ If #8 = No, then go to #11
    ➔ If #8 = Yes, then go to #9

9. For what reason(s) did you contact an IES program officer? (Please check all that   N = 77
    apply.)
    ☐   Question(s) about the suitability of the study for the Partnerships and   40 (52.0%)
        Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program
    ☐   Question(s) about the Topics described in the RFA   9 (11.7%)
    ☐   Questions about partnerships for your proposed study   36 (46.8%)
    ☐   Question(s) about the budget for your proposed study   15 (19.5%)
    ☐   Question(s) about your eligibility to apply   11 (14.3%)
    ☐   Question(s) about the application process   15 (19.5%)
    ☐   Question(s) about the review process   7 (9.1%)
    ☐   Question(s) about resubmitting a previous application that was not   12 (15.6%)
        funded
    ☐   Other   3 (3.9%)
    ➔ If #9 = Other, then go to #10
    ➔ If #9 = all other responses, then go to #11

10. Provide the reason indicated as "Other" in the previous item that you contacted an IES program officer.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

11. Have you participated in an IES webinar since the RFA was released? N = 77

 ☐ Yes 30 (39.0%)

 ☐ No 47 (61.0%)

 ➔ If #11 = No, then go to #15.
 ➔ If #11 = Yes, then go to #12.

12. Rate the utility of the webinar(s) in which you participated. N = 30

M = 2.0; SD = 0.6

 o Highly Useful 6 (20.0%)

 o Useful 19 (63.3%)

 o Marginally Useful 5 (16.7%)

 o Not Useful 0 (0%)

 ➔ If #12 = Highly Useful, then go to #14.
 ➔ If #12 = Useful, Marginally Useful, or Not Useful, then go to #13.

13. Comment on how the webinar could be more useful.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

14. Did you view/download the transcript and/or the slides from a webinar on the IES website? N = 75

 ☐ Yes 37 (49.3%)

 ☐ No 38 (50.7%)

15. Rate the clarity of the Student Education Outcomes section of the RFA (pp. 2-3). N = 75

M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

 o Very Clear 39 (52.0%)

 o Somewhat Clear 27 (36%)

 o Somewhat Unclear 3 (4%)

 o Very Unclear 1 (1.3%)

 o N/A – Did not read this section 5 (6.7%)

16. Rate the clarity of the Authentic Education Settings section of the RFA (pp. 2-3). N = 75

M – 1.4; SD = 0.6

 o Very Clear 50 (66.7%)

 o Somewhat Clear 19 (25.3%)

 o Somewhat Unclear 4 (5.3%)

 o Very Unclear 0 (0%)

o N/A – Did not read this section   2 (2.7%)

17. Rate the clarity of the eligibility requirements for the partners (discussed on pp. 5-6), regarding:

a. the education agency   N = 75
      M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

    o Very Clear   48 (64.0%)
    o Somewhat Clear   20 (26.7%)
    o Somewhat Unclear   7 (9.3%)
    o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

b. the research institution.   N = 75
      M = 1.2; SD = 0.5

    o Very Clear   62 (82.7%)
    o Somewhat Clear   11 (14.7%)
    o Somewhat Unclear   2 (2.7%)
    o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

c. the inclusion of other partners.   N = 75
      M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

    o Very Clear   51 (68%)
    o Somewhat Clear   19 (25.3%)
    o Somewhat Unclear   5 (6.7%)
    o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

18. Please comment on any language about the eligibility requirements that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible .

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

19. Rate the clarity of the Changes in the FY 2015 Request for Applications section of the RFA (pp. 8-9).   N = 72
      M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

    o Very Clear   43 (59.7%)
    o Somewhat Clear   25 (34.7%)
    o Somewhat Unclear   4 (5.6%)
    o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

20. A major change was the addition of a Partnership section in the Project Narrative that would be scored separately. In terms of the organization and clarity of your application, what was the effect of having a distinct Partnership section of the Project Narrative?   N = 74
      M = 1.9; SD = 0.8

    o Much Better   29 (39.2%)
    o Somewhat Better   25 (33.8%)

○ Neither Better nor Worse	19 (25.7%)
○ Somewhat Worse	1 (1.4%)
○ Much Worse	0 (0%)

21. Rate the overall clarity of Part III of the RFA, Competition Regulations and Review Criteria (pp. 43-48).

N = 74
M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

○ Very Clear	40 (54.1%)
○ Somewhat Clear	25 (33.8%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	6 (8.1%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.4%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	2 (2.7%)

22. Rate the overall clarity of Part IV of the RFA, Preparing Your Application (pp. 49-56).

N = 73
M = 1.3; SD = 0.6

○ Very Clear	51 (69.9%)
○ Somewhat Clear	17 (23.3%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	4 (5.5%)
○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	1 (1.4%)

23. Rate the overall clarity of Part V of the RFA, Submitting Your Application (pp. 57-79).

N = 79
M = 1.3; SD = 0.6

○ Very Clear	48 (65.8%)
○ Somewhat Clear	18 (24.7%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	3 (4.1%)
○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)
○ N/A – Did not read this section	4 (5.5%)

24. Having the RFA and the Application Submission Guide combined into a single document is _____ than having them be separate documents.

N = 74
M = 1.7; SD = 0.9

○ much better	42 (56.8%)
○ somewhat better	16 (21.6%)
○ no better or worse	13 (17.6%)
○ somewhat worse	3 (4.1%)
○ much worse	0 (0%)

25. Rate the utility of the Glossary.

N = 74
M = 2.0; SD = 0.7

○ Highly Useful	14 (18.9%)
○ Useful	31 (41.9%)
○ Marginally Useful	10 (13.5%)
○ Not Useful	1 (1.4%)
○ I did not notice the Glossary	18 (24.3%)

26. Did you submit an application as the PI to the Research-Practitioner Partnerships in   N = 75
Education Research topic?

      □   Yes   55 (73.3%)

      □   No   20 (26.7%)

    ➜ If #26 = No, then go to #32.

    ➜ If #26 = Yes, then go to #27.

27. Rate the clarity of…

    a.   The Purpose section (p. 12).   N = 54
                                        M = 1.3; SD = 0.6

         ○ Very Clear   40 (74.1%)

         ○ Somewhat Clear   11 (20.4%)

         ○ Somewhat Unclear   3 (5.6%)

         ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    b.   The Significance section (p. 13).   N = 54
                                        M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

         ○ Very Clear   39 (70.9%)

         ○ Somewhat Clear   14 (25.5%)

         ○ Somewhat Unclear   2 (3.6%)

         ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    c.   The Partnership section (pp. 13-15).   N = 55
                                        M = 1.6; SD = 0.8

         ○ Very Clear   33 (60.0%)

         ○ Somewhat Clear   13 (23.6%)

         ○ Somewhat Unclear   9 (16.4%)

         ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    d.   The requirements and recommendations for improving the capacity of   N = 55
    the education agency to participate in and/or use research.   M = 2.0; SD = 0.7

         ○ Very Clear   20 (36.4%)

         ○ Somewhat Clear   25 (45.5%)

         ○ Somewhat Unclear   10 (18.2%)

         ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    e.   The requirements and recommendations for tracking the success of   N = 55
    your partnership.   M = 2.0; SD = 0.7

         ○ Very Clear   12 (21.8%)

         ○ Somewhat Clear   29 (52.7%)

         ○ Somewhat Unclear   14 (25.5%)

         ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    f.   The Research Plan section (pp. 15-16)   N = 55
                                        M = 1.7; SD = 0.8

         ○ Very Clear   27 (49.1%)

         ○ Somewhat Clear   20 (36.4%)

○ Somewhat Unclear	7 (12.7%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.8%)
g. The types of research that can be done.	N = 55
	M = 1.7; SD = 0.8
○ Very Clear	24 (43.6%)
○ Somewhat Clear	22 (40.0%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	8 (14.6%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.8%)
h. The plan for future research.	N = 54
	M = 1.8; SD = 0.8
○ Very Clear	21 (38.9%)
○ Somewhat Clear	24 (44.4%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	8 (14.8%)
○ Very Unclear	1 (1.9%)

28. Please comment on any language or concepts that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

29. As you interpreted the RFA, what do you think was the right balance between partnership activities and research activities?   N = 57

- ○ 25% partnership and 75% research   9 (15.8%)
- ○ 40% partnership and 60% research   19 (33.3%)
- ○ 50% partnership and 50% research   16 (28.1%)
- ○ 60% partnership and 40% research   7 (12.3%)
- ○ 75% partnership and 25% research   0 (0%)

30. Was your partnership newly formed in response to this RFA?   N = 57
- ☐ Yes   17 (29.8%)
- ☐ No   40 (70.2%)
- ➔ If #30 = No, then go to #31.
- ➔ If #30 = Yes, then, go to #32.

31. How long has your partnership been in place?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

32. Did you submit an application as the PI to the Continuous Improvement Research in Education topic?   N = 70
- ☐ Yes   18 (25.7%)
- ☐ No   52 (74.3%)
- ➔ If #32 = No, then go to #36.

➔ If #32 = Yes, then go to #33.

33. Rate the clarity of...

    a. The Purpose section (pp. 19-20).   N = 18

                                                     M = 1.4; SD = 0.5

- Very Clear   11 (61.1%)
- Somewhat Clear   7 (38.9%)
- Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
- Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    b. The Significance section (pp. 21-23).   N = 18

                                                     M = 1.4; SD = 0.5

- Very Clear   11 (61.1%)
- Somewhat Clear   7 (38.9%)
- Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
- Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    c. The description of the theory of change.   N = 18

                                                     M =1.8; SD – 0.8

- Very Clear   8 (44.4%)
- Somewhat Clear   6 (33.3%)
- Somewhat Unclear   4 (22.2%)
- Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    d. The requirement that the partnership has worked together for at least   N = 18
1 year.   M = 1.3; SD = 0.8

- Very Clear   15 (83.3%)
- Somewhat Clear   1 (5.6%)
- Somewhat Unclear   1 (5.6%)
- Very Unclear   1 (5.6%)

    e. The Partnership section (pp. 23-24).   N = 18

                                                     M = 1.4; SD = 0.8

- Very Clear   13 (72.2%)
- Somewhat Clear   2 (11.1%)
- Somewhat Unclear   3 (16.7%)
- Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    f. The requirements and recommendations for improving the education   N = 17
agency's capacity to carry out research, development, and implementation.   M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

- Very Clear   8 (47.1%)
- Somewhat Clear   7 (41.2%)
- Somewhat Unclear   2 (11.8%)
- Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    g. The requirements and recommendations for tracking the success of   N = 18
your partnership.   M = 1.9; SD = 0.7

- Very Clear   5 (27.8%)
- Somewhat Clear   9 (50.0%)
- Somewhat Unclear   4 (22.2%)

o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
h. The Research Plan section (pp. 24-27).	N = 18
	M = 1.9; SD = 0.9
o Very Clear	8 (44.4%)
o Somewhat Clear	4 (22.2%)
o Somewhat Unclear	6 (33.3%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
i. The role of the education agency partner in carrying out the research.	N = 18
	M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
o Very Clear	8 (44.4%)
o Somewhat Clear	8 (44.4%)
o Somewhat Unclear	2 (11.1%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
j. The types of research that can be done.	N = 16
	M = 1.9; SD = 0.7
o Very Clear	5 (31.3%)
o Somewhat Clear	8 (50.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	3 (18.8%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)
k. The continuous improvement process (pp. 25-26).	N = 18
	M = 1.9; SD = 0.9
o Very Clear	6 (33.3%)
o Somewhat Clear	8 (44.4%)
o Somewhat Unclear	3 (16.7%)
o Very Unclear	1 (5.6%)
l. The ongoing comparison study (p. 26-27).	N = 18
	M = 2.2; SD = 0.9
o Very Clear	5 (27.8%)
o Somewhat Clear	6 (33.3%)
o Somewhat Unclear	6 (33.3%)
o Very Unclear	1 (5.6%)

34. Please comment on any language or concepts that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

35. How long has your partnership been in place?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

36. Did you submit an application as the PI to the Evaluation of State and Local Education Programs and Policies topic?	N = 69
☐ Yes	10 (14.5%)

<table>
<tr><td>☐   No</td><td>59 (85.5%)</td></tr>
</table>

➔ If #36 = No, then go to #39.
➔ If #36 = Yes, then go to #37.

37. Rate the clarity of…

    a.   The Purpose section (pp. 30-31).   N = 10
                                          M = 1.2; SD = 0.4

        ○ Very Clear   8 (80.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Clear   2 (20.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
        ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    b.   The Significance section (pp. 31-33).   N = 10
                                            M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

        ○ Very Clear   6 (60.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Clear   3 (30.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Unclear   1 (10.0%)
        ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    c.   The instructions for an acceptable program or policy for evaluation.   N = 10
                                            M = 1.5; SD = 0.5

        ○ Very Clear   5 (50.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Clear   5 (50.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
        ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    d.   The Partnership section (pp. 33-34).   N = 10
                                           M = 1.7; SD = 0.7

        ○ Very Clear   4 (40.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Clear   5 (50.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Unclear   1 (10.0%)
        ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    e.   The requirements and recommendations for improving the capacity of the education agency to participate in and use research.   N = 10
                                           M = 1.8; SD = 0.9

        ○ Very Clear   5 (50.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Clear   2 (20.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Unclear   3 (30.0%)
        ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    f.   The Research Plan section (pp. 34-40).   N = 10
                                           M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

        ○ Very Clear   6 (60.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Clear   3 (30.0%)
        ○ Somewhat Unclear   1 (10.0%)
        ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

    g.   The instructions for an acceptable research design.   N = 10
                                           M = 1.5; SD = 0.5

        ○ Very Clear   5 (50.0%)

    o Somewhat Clear   5 (50.0%)

    o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)

    o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

h.   The instructions for the cost analysis plan (p. 39).   N = 10

                                                                                       M = 2.1; SD = 0.6

    o Very Clear   1 (10.0%)

    o Somewhat Clear   6 (60.0%)

    o Somewhat Unclear   2 (20.0%)

    o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

i.   The instructions for the dissemination plan (p.39).   N = 10

                                                                                       M = 1.9; SD = 0.7

    o Very Clear   3 (30.0%)

    o Somewhat Clear   5 (50.0%)

    o Somewhat Unclear   2 (20.0%)

    o Very Unclear   0 (0%)

38. Please comment on any language or concepts that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

39. Rate the clarity of the RFA on:

    a.   The content to include in the Personnel section of the application.   N = 65

                                                                                      M = 1.5; sd = 0.7

    o Very Unclear   41 (63.1%)

    o Somewhat Unclear   19 (29.2%)

    o Somewhat Clear   3 (4.6%)

    o Very Clear   2 (3.1%)

    b.   The content to include in the Resources section of the application.   N = 66

                                                                                      M = 1.5; sd = 0.6

    o Very Unclear   38 (57.6%)

    o Somewhat Unclear   25 (37.9%)

    o Somewhat Clear   2 (3.0%)

    o Very Clear   1 (1.5%)

    c.   The importance of the education agency setting the main objective(s) for the research project.   N = 66; M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

    o Very Unclear   39 (59.1%)

    o Somewhat Unclear   20 (30.3%)

    o Somewhat Clear   6 (9.1%)

    o Very Clear   1 (1.5%)

    d.   The purpose of the Joint Letter of Agreement between the primary partners.   N = 66; M = 1.5; SD = 0.8

    o Very Unclear   41 (62.1%)

- o Somewhat Unclear   17 (25.8%)
- o Somewhat Clear   5 (7.6%)
- o Very Clear   3 (4.6%)

40. Please give us any additional feedback you may have about the RFA, including comments on the length, the level of detail, the organization, and comparisons to RFAs from previous years.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

Appendix D

FY 2014 NCER Education Research Grants Program (CFDA# 84.305A) RFA Survey

1. Including the application(s) you submitted to the Education Research Grants (CFDA#   N = 370
    84.305A) FY 2014 Request for Applications (RFA), how many IES grant applications
    have you submitted as the Principal Investigator? (Count previous submissions of
    the same application as separate distinct applications.)
    - o 1   128 (34.6%)
    - o 2-3   127 (34.3%)
    - o 4+   115 (31.1%)

2. Did you submit a letter of intent for the FY14 RFA?   N = 369
    - ☐ Yes   250 (67.8%)
    - ☐ No   119 (32.2%)

3. To which Topic(s) did you apply in response to the FY14 RFA?   N = 370
    - ☐ Cognition and Student Learning   53 (14.3%)
    - ☐ Early Learning Programs and Policies   55 (14.9%)
    - ☐ Education Technology   27 (7.3%)
    - ☐ Effective Teachers and Effective Teaching   52 (14.1%)
    - ☐ English Learners   21 (5.7%)
    - ☐ Improving Education Systems…   26 (7.0%)
    - ☐ Mathematics and Science Education   40 (10.8%)
    - ☐ Postsecondary and Adult Education   39 (10.5%)
    - ☐ Reading and Writing   33 (8.9%)
    - ☐ Social and Behavioral…   85 (23.0%)

4. Rate the level of difficulty of keeping track of the requirements set forth in the RFA.   N = 370
                                                                                 M = 1.9; SD = 0.7
    - o Not at all Difficult   101 (27.3%)
    - o Somewhat Difficult   225 (60.1%)
    - o Difficult   34 (9.2%)
    - o Very Difficult   10 (2.7%)

5. Rate the level of difficulty of locating important material in the RFA.   N = 369;
                                                                                 M = 1.7; SD = .7
    - o Not at all Difficult   151 (40.9%)
    - o Somewhat Difficult   182 (49.3%)
    - o Difficult   32 (8.7%)
    - o Very Difficult   4 (1.1%)

6. The RFA uses prior research and other descriptions of research as examples of   N = 367

potential areas of inquiry for applicants. Do you find these examples helpful?

- ☐ Yes   326 (88.8%)
- ☐ No   41 (11.2%)
- ➔ If #6 = No, then go to #7.
- ➔ If #6 = Yes, then go to #8.

7. Please comment on how the examples could be improved.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

8. Did you interpret these examples as indicative of IES research priorities?   N = 364
   - ☐ Yes   220 (60.4%)
   - ☐ No   144 (39.6%)

9. Did you contact an IES program officer as you prepared your application(s) for the FY2014 competition?   N = 366
   - ☐ Yes   303 (82.8%)
   - ☐ No   63 (17.2%)
   - ➔ If #9 = No, then go to #12
   - ➔ If #9 = Yes, then go to #10

10. For what reason(s) did you contact an IES program officer? (Please check all that apply.)   N = 367
    - ☐ Question(s) about the suitability of the study…   217 (59.1%)
    - ☐ Question(s) about the Topics described in the RFA   74 (20.2%)
    - ☐ Question(s) about the Goals described in the RFA   88 (24.0%)
    - ☐ Question(s) about the budget for your proposed study   52 (14.2%)
    - ☐ Question(s) about your eligibility to apply   30 (8.2%)
    - ☐ Question(s) about the application process   54 (14.7%)
    - ☐ Question(s) about the review process   74 (20.2%)
    - ☐ Question(s) about resubmitting a previous application…   121 (33.0%)
    - ☐ Other   40 (10.9%)
    - ➔ If #10 = Other, then go to #11
    - ➔ If #10 = all other responses, then go to #12

11. Provide the reason indicated as "Other" in the previous item that you contacted an IES program officer.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

12. Have you participated in an IES webinar since the RFA was released?   N = 365
    - ☐ Yes   90 (24.7%)

☐ No   275 (75.3%)
➔ If # 12 = No, then go to 14
➔ If #12 = Yes, then go to 13

13. Rate the utility of the webinar(s) in which you participated for preparing your   N = 89
application.   M = 2.1; SD = 0.9
    o   Highly Useful   25 (28.1%)
    o   Useful   34 (28.2%)
    o   Marginally Useful   25 (28.1%)
    o   Not Useful   5 (5.6%)

14. Did you view/download the transcript and/or the slides from a webinar on the IES   N = 357
website?
    ☐   Yes   161 (45.1%)
    ☐   No   196 (54.9%)

15. Did you read the information in Part I: Overview and General Requirements Section   N = 359
of the RFA (pp. 6-13)?
    ☐   Yes   352 (98.1%)
    ☐   No   7 (2.0%)
➔ If #15 = No, then go to #18.
➔ If #15 = Yes, then go to #16-17.

16. Rate the clarity of the Focus on Student Outcomes section of the RFA (pp. 6-7).   N = 341
    M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
    o   Very Clear   163 (47.8%)
    o   Somewhat Clear   151 (44.3%)
    o   Somewhat Unclear   22 (6.5%)
    o   Very Unclear   5 (1.5%)

17. Rate the clarity of the Changes in the FY 2014 Request for Applications section of   N = 341
the RFA (pp. 11-13).   M = 1.6; SD = 0.6
    o   Very Clear   164 (48.1%)
    o   Somewhat Clear   158 (46.3%)
    o   Somewhat Unclear   17 (5.0%)
    o   Very Unclear   2 (0.6%)

18. Rate the overall clarity of Part IV of the RFA, General Submission and Review   N = 343
Information (pp. 84-100).   M = 1.7; SD = 0.8
    o   Very Clear   156 (45.5%)
    o   Somewhat Clear   163 (47.5%)
    o   Somewhat Unclear   15 (4.4%)
    o   Very Unclear   4 (1.2%)
    o   N/A – Did not read this section   5 (1.5%)

19. How many Topic sections did you read in the RFA?   N = 349
    ☐   0   1 (0.3%)

☐ 1	107 (30.7%)
☐ 2-3	189 (54.2%)
☐ 4+	52 (14.9%)

➔ If #19 = 0, then go to #26
➔ If #19 = 1, then go to #22-25.
➔ If #19 > 1, then go to #20-25.

20. Which Topic section(s) did you read in the RFA? (Check all that you read.)   N = 252

☐ Cognition and Student Learning	118 (46.8%)
☐ Early Learning Programs and Policies	38 (27.0%)
☐ Education Technology	87 (34.5%)
☐ Effective Teachers and Effective Teaching	113 (44.8%)
☐ English Learners	38 (15.1%)
☐ Improving Education Systems…	57 (22.6%)
☐ Mathematics and Science Education	83 (32.9%)
☐ Postsecondary and Adult Education	44 (17.5%)
☐ Reading and Writing	50 (19.8%)
☐ Social and Behavioral…	88 (34.9%)

21. Comment on the clarity of the differences among the Topics.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

22. After reading the topic sections was the topic to which you should apply clear?   N = 357

☐ Yes	308 (86.3%)
☐ No	49 (13.7%)

➔ If #22 = No, then go to #23
➔ If #22 = Yes, then go to #24

23. In what way(s) was the topic to which you should apply not clear?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

24. Rate the utility of the Background and Current Portfolio section described under the Topic in the RFA.   N = 46   M = 2.4; SD = 0.7

o Highly Useful	4 (8.7%)
o Useful	15 (32.6%)
o Marginally Useful	16 (34.8%)
o Not Useful	1 (2.2%)
o N/A – Did not read this section	10 (21.7%)

25. Rate the clarity of the information in the Application Requirements section described under the Topic in the RFA.   N = 47   M = 2.0; SD = 0.9

o Very Clear	14 (29.8%)

- o Somewhat Clear 24 (51.1%)
- o Somewhat Unclear 7 (14.9%)
- o Very Unclear 1 (2.1%)
- o N/A – Did not read this section 1 (2.1%)

26. How carefully did you read the Exploration Goal of the RFA? N = 355
    - o Did not read it 74 (20.8%)
    - o Casually 110 (31.0%)
    - o Thoroughly 171 (48.2%)
    - ➔ If #26 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to # 28.
    - ➔ If #26 = Thoroughly, then go to #27.

27. Rate the clarity of…
    - a. The purpose of the Exploration Goal. N = 169
       M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
        - o Very Clear 94 (55.6%)
        - o Somewhat Clear 63 (37.3%)
        - o Somewhat Unclear 10 (5.9%)
        - o Very Unclear 2 (1.2%)
    - b. The expected outcomes/products for Exploration projects. N = 167
       M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
        - o Very Clear 78 (46.7%)
        - o Somewhat Clear 75 (44.9%)
        - o Somewhat Unclear 8 (4.8%)
        - o Very Unclear 6 (3.6%)
    - c. The description of the Significance section of the application. N = 166
       M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
        - o Very Clear 105 (63.3%)
        - o Somewhat Clear 48 (28.9%)
        - o Somewhat Unclear 9 (5.4%)
        - o Very Unclear 4 (2.4%)
    - d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application. N = 158
       M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
        - o Very Clear 96 (57.1%)
        - o Somewhat Clear 57 (33.9%)
        - o Somewhat Unclear 11 (6.5%)
        - o Very Unclear 4 (2.4%)
    - e. The conditions under which it is acceptable to do small-scale N = 165
      experiments. M = 1.9; SD = 0.9
        - o Very Clear 62 (37.6%)
        - o Somewhat Clear 65 (39.4%)
        - o Somewhat Unclear 30 (18.2%)
        - o Very Unclear 8 (4.8%)
    - f. The description of the types of research questions allowed for an N = 164
      Exploration project. M = 1.7; SD = 0.8
        - o Very Clear 75 (45.7%)

o Somewhat Clear	68 (41.5%)
o Somewhat Unclear	14 (8.5%)
o Very Unclear	7 (4.3%)
g. The definition of *malleable factors*.	N = 167
	M = 1.9; SD = 0.9
o Very Clear	69 (41.3%)
o Somewhat Clear	67 (40.1%)
o Somewhat Unclear	17 (10.2%)
o Very Unclear	14 (8.4%)

28. How carefully did you read the Development & Innovation Goal of the RFA? — N = 350
   o Did not read it — 73 (20.9%)
   o Casually — 75 (21.4%)
   o Thoroughly — 202 (57.7%)
   ➔ If #28 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #31.
   ➔ If #28 = Thoroughly, then go to #29-30.

29. Rate the clarity of…

a. The purpose of the Development & Innovation Goal.	N = 197
	M = 1.3; SD = 0.6
o Very Clear	140 (71.1%)
o Somewhat Clear	53 (26.9%)
o Somewhat Unclear	2 (1.0%)
o Very Unclear	2 (1.0%)
b. The expected outcomes/products for Development & Innovation projects.	N = 197
	M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
o Very Clear	117 (59.4%)
o Somewhat Clear	64 (32.5%)
o Somewhat Unclear	12 (6.1%)
o Very Unclear	4 (2.0%)
c. The description of the Significance section of the application.	N = 195
	M = 1.5; SD = 0.6
o Very Clear	121 (62.1%)
o Somewhat Clear	63 (32.3%)
o Somewhat Unclear	9 (4.6%)
o Very Unclear	2 (1.0%)
d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.	N = 196
	M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
o Very Clear	101 (51.5%)
o Somewhat Clear	75 (38.3%)
o Somewhat Unclear	16 (8.2%)
o Very Unclear	4 (2.0%)
e. The expectations for the iterative development.	N = 197
	M = 1.7; SD = 0.8
o Very Clear	94 (47.7%)

	o Somewhat Clear	71 (36.0%)
	o Somewhat Unclear	71 (13.7%)
	o Very Unclear	5 (2.5%)
f.	The distinction between *feasibility* and *usability*.	N = 195
		M = 2.0; SD = 0.9
	o Very Clear	58 (29.7%)
	o Somewhat Clear	84 (43.1%)
	o Somewhat Unclear	42 (21.5%)
	o Very Unclear	11 (5.6%)
g.	The requirement that measures of fidelity of implementation be developed/refined as part of a Development & Innovation project.	N = 196
		M = 1.8; SD = 0.8
	o Very Clear	87 (44.4%)
	o Somewhat Clear	76 (38.8%)
	o Somewhat Unclear	24 (12.2%)
	o Very Unclear	9 (4.6%)
h.	The continuum of rigor for the pilot study.	N = 195
		M = 1.9; SD = 0.9
	o Very Clear	74 (37.9%)
	o Somewhat Clear	80 (41.0%)
	o Somewhat Unclear	30 (15.4%)
	o Very Unclear	11 (5.6%)

30. Comment on the adequacy of the maximum of 35% of the budget being used to conduct the pilot study.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

31. How carefully did you read the Efficacy & Replication Goal of the RFA?   N = 346
    - o Did not read it   147 (42.5%)
    - o Casually   110 (31.8%)
    - o Thoroughly   89 (25.7%)
    - ➔ If #31 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to # 33.
    - ➔ If #31 = Thoroughly, then go to #32.

32. Rate the clarity of…
    - a. The purpose of the Efficacy & Replication Goal.   N = 89
      M = 1.3; SD = 0.5
      - o Very Clear   68 (76.4%)
      - o Somewhat Clear   30 (22.5%)
      - o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
      - o Very Unclear   1 (1.1%)

    - b. The expected outcomes/products for Efficacy & Replication projects.   N = 87
      M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
      - o Very Clear   58 (66.7%)
      - o Somewhat Clear   27 (31.0%)

- o Somewhat Unclear — 1 (1.1%)
- o Very Unclear — 1 (1.1%)

c. The description of the Significance section of the application.   N = 88

M = 1.5; SD = 0.6
- o Very Clear — 50 (56.8%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 36 (40.9%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 1 (1.1%)
- o Very Unclear — 1 (1.1%)

d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.   N = 85

M = 1.5; SD = 0.6
- o Very Clear — 49 (57.6%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 32 (37.6%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 3 (3.5%)
- o Very Unclear — 1 (1.2%)

e. The differences among the forms of Efficacy & Replication studies (i.e., efficacy, replication, follow-up, and retrospective).   N = 88   M = 1.5; SD = 0.6
- o Very Clear — 47 (53.4%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 37 (42.0%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 4 (4.5%)
- o Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

f. The differences in the requirements between studying widely used interventions and studying not widely used interventions.   N = 88   M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
- o Very Clear — 42 (47.7%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 39 (44.3%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 4 (4.5%)
- o Very Unclear — 3 (3.4%)

g. The requirement that fidelity of implementation be measured during the first year of implementation of the intervention.   N = 87   M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
- o Very Clear — 52 (59.8%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 27 (31.0%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 6 (6.9%)
- o Very Unclear — 2 (2.3%)

h. The recommendation that there be a plan for altering the research prior to the second year of intervention, if it is found that fidelity of implementation is low.   N = 87   M = 1.8; SD = 0.9
- o Very Clear — 37 (42.5%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 32 (36.8%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 14 (16.1%)
- o Very Unclear — 4 (4.6%)

33. How carefully did you read the Effectiveness Goal of the RFA?   N = 339
- o Did not read it — 191 (56.3%)
- o Casually — 125 (36.9%)
- o Thoroughly — 23 (6.8%)

55

➔ If #33 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to #36.
➔ If #33 = Thoroughly, then go to #34-35.

34. Rate the clarity of…
   a. The purpose of the Effectiveness Goal. N = 28
      M = 1.3; SD = 0.5
      o Very Clear 19 (67.9%)
      o Somewhat Clear 9 (32.1%)
      o Somewhat Unclear 0 (0%)
      o Very Unclear 0 (0%)
   b. The expected outcomes/products for Effectiveness projects. N = 27
      M = 1.4; SD = 0.5
      o Very Clear 17 (63.0%)
      o Somewhat Clear 10 (37.0%)
      o Somewhat Unclear 0 (0%)
      o Very Unclear 0 (0%)
   c. The description of the Significance section of the application. N = 27
      M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
      o Very Clear 16 (59.3%)
      o Somewhat Clear 10 (37.0%)
      o Somewhat Unclear 1 (3.7%)
      o Very Unclear 0 (0%)
   d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application. N = 28
      M = 1.5; SD = 0.6
      o Very Clear 16 (57.1%)
      o Somewhat Clear 11 (39.3%)
      o Somewhat Unclear 1 (3.6%)
      o Very Unclear 0 (0%)
   e. The requirement that fidelity of implementation be measured during N = 28
      the first year of implementation of the intervention. M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
      o Very Clear 15 (53.6%)
      o Somewhat Clear 10 (35.7%)
      o Somewhat Unclear 3 (10.7%)
      o Very Unclear 0 (0%)
   f. The distinction between the purposes of the Efficacy & Replication Goal N = 27
      and the Effectiveness Goal. M = 1.6; SD = 0.8
      o Very Clear 15 (55.6%)
      o Somewhat Clear 6 (22.2%)
      o Somewhat Unclear 4 (14.8%)
      o Very Unclear 0 (0%)
      o N/A – Did not read the Efficacy & Replication Goal 2 (7.4%)

35. If you had been considering doing an Effectiveness study but then decided against
   it, what motivated that decision?

   ┌──┐
   │ Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer │
   │ responses may be truncated. │
   └──┘

36. How carefully did you read the Measurement Goal of the RFA?   N = 338
    o Did not read it   189 (55.9%)
    o Casually   98 (29.0%)
    o Thoroughly   51 (15.1%)
    ➔ If #36 = Did not read it or Casually, then go to # 38.
    ➔ If #36 = Thoroughly, then go to #37.

37. Rate the clarity of…
    a. The purpose of the Measurement Goal.   N = 54
                                                                                   M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
       o Very Clear   37 (68.5%)
       o Somewhat Clear   14 (25.9%)
       o Somewhat Unclear   3 (5.6%)
       o Very Unclear   0 (0%)
    b. The expected outcomes/products for Measurement projects.   N = 54
                                                                                   M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
       o Very Clear   30 (55.6%)
       o Somewhat Clear   19 (35.2%)
       o Somewhat Unclear   5 (9.3%)
       o Very Unclear   0 (0%)
    c. The description of the Significance section of the application.   N = 54
                                                                                   M = 2.0; SD = 1.0
       o Very Clear   22 (40.7%)
       o Somewhat Clear   17 (31.5%)
       o Somewhat Unclear   11 (20.4%)
       o Very Unclear   4 (7.4%)
    d. The description of the Research Plan section of the application.   N = 54
                                                                                   M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
       o Very Clear   27 (50.0%)
       o Somewhat Clear   22 (40.7%)
       o Somewhat Unclear   4 (7.4%)
       o Very Unclear   1 (1.9%)
    e. The differences among the types of Measurement studies (i.e., design a   N = 54
       new assessment, refine an existing assessment, or collect validity   M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
       evidence for an existing assessment).
       o Very Clear   24 (44.4%)
       o Somewhat Clear   24 (44.4%)
       o Somewhat Unclear   5 (9.3%)
       o Very Unclear   1 (1.9%)

38. After reading the goal sections, was the goal to which you should apply clear? N = 333
    ☐ Yes   306 (91.9%)
    ☐ No   27 (8.1%)
    ➔ If #38 = No, then go to #39

➔ If #38 = Yes, then go to #40

39. In what way(s) was the topic to which you should apply not clear?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

40. Rate the clarity of the recommendations for the dissemination plan.   N = 338

M = 1.9; SD = 0.8
- o   Very Clear   111 (32.8%)
- o   Somewhat Clear   166 (49.1%)
- o   Somewhat Unclear   51 (15.1%)
- o   Very Unclear   10 (3.0%)

41. In what way(s), did the dissemination plan recommendations factor into the choices you made for the personnel to include on your application?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

42. Rate the clarity of the description of the Personnel section of the application.   N = 336

M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
- o   Very Clear   215 (64.0%)
- o   Somewhat Clear   105 (31.3%)
- o   Somewhat Unclear   14 (4.2%)
- o   Very Unclear   2 (0.6%)

43. Rate the clarity of the description of the Resources section of the application.   N = 333

M = 1.5; SD = 0.6
- o   Very Clear   193 (58.0%)
- o   Somewhat Clear   119 (35.7%)
- o   Somewhat Unclear   18 (5.4%)
- o   Very Unclear   3 (0.9%)

44. Please comment on any language or instructions in the RFA that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

45.   Please give us any additional feedback you may have about the RFA including comments on the length, the level of detail, and the organization.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

FY 2014 NCER Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy (CFDA #84.305H) RFA Survey

1. How did you first learn about this grant opportunity at IES?   N = 78
   - Read about it on the IES website   29 (37.2%)
   - Read about it on another website   2 (2.6%)
   - Read about it in a newsletter or journal   4 (5.1%)
   - Read about it in the IES newsflash   6 (7.7%)
   - Heard about it from an IES staff member   5 (6.4%)
   - Heard about it from a co-worker, friend, or colleague   25 (32.1%)
   - Other   7 (9.0%)
   ➔ If #1 = Other, then go to #2
   ➔ If #1 = all other responses, then go to #3

2. If you answered "Other" to the question above, please provide the way you learned about this grant opportunity.

   > Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

3. Including the application(s) you submitted for the FY14 RFA, how many IES grant   N = 69
   applications have you submitted as the Principal Investigator? (Count previous
   submissions of the same application as distinct applications.)
   - 1   33 (41.8%)
   - 2-3   28 (35.4%)
   - 4+   18 (22.8%)

4. Did you submit a letter of intent for the FY14 RFA?   N = 78
   - ☐ Yes   52 (55.7%)
   - ☐ No   26 (33.3%)

5. Rate the level of difficulty of keeping track of the requirements set forth in the RFA.   N = 79
                                                                                             M = 2.1; SD = 0.8
   - Not at all Difficult   21 (26.6%)
   - Somewhat Difficult   37 (46.8%)
   - Difficult   17 (21.5%)
   - Very Difficult   4 (5.1%)

6. Rate the level of difficulty of locating important material in the RFA.   N = 79
                                                                                             M = 1.8; SD = 0.8
   - Not at all Difficult   32 (40.5%)
   - Somewhat Difficult   38 (48.1%)
   - Difficult   6 (7.6%)
   - Very Difficult   3 (3.8%)

7. Did you contact an IES program officer as you prepared your application(s) for the FY2014 competition?

N = 79

☐ Yes   61 (77.2%)
☐ No   18 (22.8%)
➔ If #7 = No, then go to #10
➔ If #7 = Yes, then go to #8

8. For what reason(s) did you contact an IES program officer? (Please check all that apply.)

N = 61

☐ Question(s) about the suitability of the study for the Partnerships and Collaborations Focused on Problems of Practice or Policy program   41 (67.2%)
☐ Question(s) about the topics described in the RFA   17 (27.9%)
☐ Questions about partnerships for your proposed study   29 (47.5%)
☐ Question(s) about the budget for your proposed study   13 (21.3%)
☐ Question(s) about your eligibility to apply   7 (11.5%)
☐ Question(s) about the application process   14 (23.0%)
☐ Question(s) about the review process   6 (9.8%)
☐ Question(s) about resubmitting a previous application that was not funded   8 (13.1%)
☐ Other   4 (6.6%)
➔ If #8 = Other, then go to #9
➔ If #8 = all other responses, then go to #10

9. If you answered "Other" to the question above, please provide the reason why you contacted the IES program officer.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

10. Have you participated in an IES webinar since the RFA was released?

N = 79

☐ Yes   22 (27.8%)
☐ No   57 (72.2%)
➔ If #10 = No, then go to #13
➔ If #10 = Yes, then go to #11

11. Rate the utility of the webinar(s) in which you participated.

N = 23

o Highly Useful   5 (21.7%)
o Useful   12 (52.2%)
o Marginally Useful   6 (26.1%)
o Not Useful   0 (0%)
➔ If #11 = Highly Useful, then go to #13
➔ If #11 = Useful, Marginally Useful, or Not Useful, then go to #12

12. Comment on how the webinar could be more useful.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

13. Did you view/download the transcript and/or the slides from a webinar on the IES website?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

N = 78

41 (52.6%)

37 (47.4%)

14. Did you read the information in Part I: General Overview of the RFA?

    ☐ Yes

    ☐ No

➔ If #14 = No, then go to #17.

➔ If #14 = Yes, then go to #15-16.

N = 78

76 (97.4%)

2 (2.6%)

15. Rate the clarity of the Changes in the FY 2014 Request for Applications section of the RFA (p. 6).

    o Very Clear

    o Somewhat Clear

    o Somewhat Unclear

    o Very Unclear

N = 75

M = 1.5; SD = 0.6

44 (58.7%)

29 (38.7%)

0 (0%)

2 (2.7%)

16. Rate the clarity of the Focus on Student Outcomes section of the RFA (pp. 6-7).

    o Very Clear

    o Somewhat Clear

    o Somewhat Unclear

    o Very Unclear

N = 75

M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

45 (60.0%)

28 (37.3%)

2 (2.7%)

0 (0%)

17. Rate the clarity of the eligibility requirements for the partners (discussed on pp. 7-8), regarding:

    a. the education agency

        o Very Clear

        o Somewhat Clear

        o Somewhat Unclear

        o Very Unclear

N = 75

M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

54 (72.0%)

15 (20.0%)

6 (8.0%)

0 (0%)

    b. the research institution.

        o Very Clear

        o Somewhat Clear

        o Somewhat Unclear

        o Very Unclear

N = 75

M = 1.2; SD = 0.5

61 (81.3%)

11 (14.7%)

3 (4.0%)

0 (0%)

    c. the inclusion of other partners.

        o Very Clear

        o Somewhat Clear

        o Somewhat Unclear

        o Very Unclear

N = 74

M = 1.6; SD = 0.7

39 (52.7%)

26 (35.1%)

8 (10.8%)

1 (1.4%)

18. Rate the clarity of the information provided under Part V: General Submission and

N = 75

Review Information (pp. 40-52).   M = 1.5; SD = 0.7
- o Very Clear   41 (54.7%)
- o Somewhat Clear   27 (36.0%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   4 (4.0%)
- o Very Unclear   2 (2.7%)

19. Please comment on any language about the eligibility requirements that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

20. Did you submit an application as the PI to the Research-Practitioner Partnerships in   N = 76
Education Research topic?
- ☐ Yes   59 (77.6%)
- ☐ No   17 (22.4%)
- ➔ If #20 = No, then go to #26.
- ➔ If #20 = Yes, then go to #21-25.

21. Rate the clarity of…
- a. The Purpose section (p. 10).   N = 61
                                                         M = 1.4; SD = 0.6
    - o Very Clear   38 (62.3%)
    - o Somewhat Clear   22 (36.1%)
    - o Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)
    - o Very Unclear   1 (1.6%)
- b. The section on the Significance of the Researcher-Practitioner Partnership   N = 61
(pp. 11-13).   M = 1.5; SD = 0.6
    - o Very Clear   34 (55.7%)
    - o Somewhat Clear   23 (37.7%)
    - o Somewhat Unclear   4 (6.6%)
    - o Very Unclear   0 (0%)
- c. The section on the Partnership and Research Plan (pp. 13-15).   N = 62
                                                         M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
    - o Very Clear   26 (41.9%)
    - o Somewhat Clear   28 (45.2%)
    - o Somewhat Unclear   7 (11.3%)
    - o Very Unclear   1 (1.6%)
- d. The types of research that can be done.   N = 61
                                                         M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
    - o Very Clear   25 (41.0%)
    - o Somewhat Clear   28 (45.9%)
    - o Somewhat Unclear   7 (11.5%)
    - o Very Unclear   1 (1.6%)
- e. The requirements for your plans for future research (p. 15).   N = 62
                                                         M = 1.7; SD = 0.7
    - o Very Clear   24 (38.7%)
    - o Somewhat Clear   30 (48.4%)

○ Somewhat Unclear	8 (12.9%)
○ Very Unclear	0 (0%)

f.   The requirements for tracking the progress and success of your partnership (p. 15).

N = 60
M = 2.0; SD = 0.8

○ Very Clear	19 (31.7%)
○ Somewhat Clear	27 (45.0%)
○ Somewhat Unclear	11 (18.3%)
○ Very Unclear	3 (5.0%)

22. Please comment on any language or concepts that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

23. As you interpreted the RFA, what do you think was the right balance between partnership activities and research activities?

N = 61

○ 25% partnership and 75% research	10 (15.9%)
○ 40% partnership and 60% research	14 (22.2%)
○ 50% partnership and 50% research	18 (28.6%)
○ 60% partnership and 40% research	14 (22.2%)
○ 75% partnership and 25% research	7 (11.1%)

24. Was your partnership newly formed in response to this RFA?

N = 62

☐ Yes	28 (45.2%)
☐ No	34 (54.8%)

➔ If #24 = No, then go to #25
➔ If #24 = Yes, then, go to #26

25. How long has your partnership been in place?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

26. Did you submit an application as the PI to the Continuous Improvement Research in Education topic?

N = 74

☐ Yes	16 (21.6%)
☐ No	58 (78.4%)

➔ If #26 = No, then go to #30
➔ If #26 = Yes, then go to #27-29

27. Rate the clarity of…

a.   The Purpose section (pp. 18-19).

N = 15
M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

○ Very Clear	11 (73.3%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   4 (26.7%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)

   ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

b. The Significance section (pp. 20-21).   N = 14

                      M = 1.2; SD = 0.4

   ○ Very Clear   11 (78.6%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   3 (21.4%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)

   ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

c. The requirement that the partnership has worked together for at least 1 N = 15

year.   M = 1.6; SD = 1.1

   ○ Very Clear   10 (66.7%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   3 (20.0%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)

   ○ Very Unclear   2 (13.3%)

d. The Research Plan section (pp. 21-23).   N = 12

                      M = 1.3; SD = 0.5

   ○ Very Clear   8 (66.7%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   4 (33.3%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   0 (0%)

   ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

e. The types of research that can be done.   N = 15

                      M = 1.7; SD = 0.8

   ○ Very Clear   7 (46.7%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   5 (33.3%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   3 (20.0%)

   ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

f. The short cycle method.   N = 15

                      M = 2.0; SD = 1.1

   ○ Very Clear   7 (46.7%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   3 (20.0%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   3 (20.0%)

   ○ Very Unclear   2 (13.3%)

g. The continuous improvement process (pp. 21-22).   N = 14

                      M = 1.7; SD = 0.8

   ○ Very Clear   7 (50.0%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   4 (28.6%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   3 (21.4%)

   ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

h. The requirements for the pilot study (p. 23).   N = 15

                      M = 1.9; SD = 0.9

   ○ Very Clear   7 (46.7%)

   ○ Somewhat Clear   3 (20.0%)

   ○ Somewhat Unclear   5 (33.3%)

   ○ Very Unclear   0 (0%)

i. The requirements for tracking the progress and success of your partnership N = 15

(p. 23).   M = 1.7; SD = 0.7

   ○ Very Clear   7 (46.7%)

o Somewhat Clear	6 (40.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	2 (13.3%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

28. Please comment on any language or concepts that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

29. How long has your partnership been in place?

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

30. Did you submit an application as the PI to the Evaluation of State and Local Education Programs and Policies topic?   N = 73

     ☐ Yes   10 (13.7%)

     ☐ No   63 (86.3%)

     ➔ If #30 = No, then go to #33

     ➔ If #30 =Yes, then go to #31-32

31. Rate the clarity of…

     a. The Purpose section (pp. 27-28).   N = 10

          M = 1.4; SD = 0.7

o Very Clear	7 (70.0%)
o Somewhat Clear	2 (20.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	1 (10.0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

     b. The Significance section (pp. 28-31).   N = 10

          M = 1.8; SD = 0.7

o Very Clear	6 (60.0%)
o Somewhat Clear	3 (30.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	1 (10.0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

     c. The Research Plan section (pp. 31-37).   N = 10

          M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

o Very Clear	5 (50.0%)
o Somewhat Clear	3 (30.0%)
o Somewhat Unclear	2 (20.0%)
o Very Unclear	0 (0%)

     d. The instructions for an acceptable program or policy for evaluation.   N = 10

          M = 1.8; SD = 0.8

o Very Clear	4 (40.0%)

- o Somewhat Clear — 4 (40.0%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 2 (20.0%)
- o Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

e. The instructions for describing the program or policy.   N = 9
   M = 1.4; SD = 0.7
- o Very Clear — 6 (66.7%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 2 (22.2%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 1 (11.1%)
- o Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

f. The instructions for an acceptable research design.   N = 9
   M = 1.6; SD = 0.9
- o Very Clear — 6 (66.7%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 1 (11.1%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 2 (22.2%)
- o Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

g. The instructions for the cost analysis plan (p. 37).   N = 10
   M = 2.1; SD = 0.9
- o Very Clear — 3 (30.0%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 3 (30.0%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 4 (40.0%)
- o Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

h. The instructions for the dissemination plan.   N = 10
   M = 1.8; SD = 0.6
- o Very Clear — 3 (30.0%)
- o Somewhat Clear — 6 (60.0%)
- o Somewhat Unclear — 1 (10.0%)
- o Very Unclear — 0 (0%)

32. Please comment on any language or concepts that were unclear to you. Provide specific examples if possible.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.

33. Rate the clarity of the RFA on:
   a. The content to include in the Personnel section of the application.   N = 67
      M = 1.6; SD = 0.7
   - o Very Unclear — 35 (52.2%)
   - o Somewhat Unclear — 25 (10.4%)
   - o Somewhat Clear — 7 (10.4%)
   - o Very Clear — 0 (0%)

   b. The content to include in the Resources section of the application.   N = 67
      M = 1.8; SD = 0.7
   - o Very Unclear — 25 (37.3%)

	o Somewhat Unclear	33 (49.3%)
	o Somewhat Clear	8 (11.9%)
	o Very Clear	1 (1.5%)

c. Ensuring the responsiveness of your project narrative (Section E). N = 68
M = 1.4; SD = 0.6

- o Very Unclear   42 (61.8%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   23 (33.8%)
- o Somewhat Clear   2 (2.9%)
- o Very Clear   1 (1.5%)

d. The importance of developing new capabilities within the agency during the research project. N = 68
M = 1.8; SD = 0.8

- o Very Unclear   30 (44.1%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   26 (38.2%)
- o Somewhat Clear   11 (16.2%)
- o Very Clear   1 (1.5%)

e. The importance of the education agency setting the main objective(s) for the research project. N = 68
M = 1.5; SD = 0.7

- o Very Unclear   43 (63.2%)
- o Somewhat Unclear   17 (25.0%)
- o Somewhat Clear   7 (10.2%)
- o Very Clear   1 (1.5%)

34. Please give us any additional feedback you may have about the RFA, including comments on the length, the level of detail, and the organization.

> Text Box – Maximum 4,000 characters (about 500 words). Longer responses may be truncated.