

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the Federal Competitive ABE Grant Application

## General questions

### Question: Does the application need a signature? If so, how can it be submitted as a Word document via email?

###  Answer: We request that all applications be submitted as Word documents. The submission of the application via email serves as certification of having agreed to all relevant assurances, statutes, regulations and policies. No physical signature is necessary on this application document.

### I downloaded the application, but it looks like an outdated document that lists FY17 instead of FY18. Is this an error in the document?

## Answer: Incorrect, outdated application and instruction documents were briefly posted on the MDE grants website on Tuesday, Feb 7. They have since been taken down and replaced with correct documents. If you believe you downloaded documents on Tuesday, Feb 7, or if you suspect the application or instructions document you are working from is incorrect, please download the documents again at this link:

##  [Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Grants website](https://w1.education.state.mn.us/EGMS/searchAllActiveGrants.do) (<https://w1.education.state.mn.us/EGMS/searchAllActiveGrants.do>)

The grant opportunity is listed as “FORMULA 438 SFY 2018 FEDERAL ADULT BASIC EDUCATION (ABE) GRANT OPPORTUNITY”.

### Question: I don’t know where to find my local or regional WIOA plan. Can you point me in the right direction?

Answer: Plans are available online through DEED at this website: <http://www.gwdc.org/wioa/planning/index.html>

### Question: Does the application need to be submitted via email, or through SERVS?

Answer: Applications should be submitted via email to Laurie Rheault (laurie.rheault@state.mn.us). Once notification about awards have been made, funded applicants will be required to submit additional information through SERVS. Guidance will be given to programs at that time as to how to do that.

### Question: Our ABE consortium has multiple members with a school district fiscal agent and several school district and/or nonprofit member sub-recipients that receive downstream funding. One sub-recipient district has several other districts that it distributes downstream funding to. How should I list these entities on the “Provider Membership” section of the application?

Answer: The “Provider Membership” section should list all members of the applying entity (in this case, an existing ABE consortium). Any members that receive funding should be marked “Yes” in the sub-recipient column. This applies to both sub-recipients and any entities those sub-recipients provide downstream funding to. Please note that membership is listed on two pages of the application; one page of that application is specifically asking for school district members and another page is asking for nonprofit and any other non-school district members.

### Question: When we cite data and report outcomes in this application, should we use the federal reporting year or the state reporting year?

Answer: Either is acceptable. We recommend you use whatever makes the most sense for the data you have, and whatever will be the most straightforward for reviewers to read and understand.

### Question: Should the narrative section be a separate document, or should everything be submitted together in one document?

Answer: The submission should be one Word document, which includes the cover pages, the assurances, and the narrative component.

### Question: Is the 30-page maximum recommendation just for the narrative section, or does it include the other components of the application?

Answer: The 30-page maximum recommendation is just for the narrative component. The cover pages and assurances would not be included in those 30 pages.

### Question: Can we include links to other sites in our 30-page narrative?

Answer: Yes, links are allowed. However, please note that reviewers may not be able to read large amounts of information in a link. Be cautious with your use of links to not overwhelm reviewers with a lot of additional information that is essential for understanding your proposal. Links might best be used for providing supplementary information for reviewers that are interested in going more in-depth.

## Questions about specific narrative items

### Question: Can you clarify exactly what needs to be provided in item 3A "Evidence of organization's past effectiveness"?  Does this refer to primarily table 4 data?  We track some other numbers such as "entered employment" and "obtain citizenship information", but the numbers are very small because that data is so hard to track.

Answer: Item 3A is a key item on this application, because according to federal statute eligible applicants are defined as entities with “demonstrated effectiveness” in providing adult education and literacy services, so the answer to the question has to give evidence of demonstrated effectiveness in order for the application to even be considered. So, given that, you should look at any criteria listed in the question and offer as much related evidence as possible, even with small amounts of data. This would certainly include Table 4 data but wouldn’t be limited to that. Note that estimates are acceptable, as is providing evidence in a more qualitative way in cases where quantitative data is lacking, or to give more support to quantitative data.

### Question: In section 4, do we need to describe every class we offer (like we did for the 5-year narrative)?

Answer: No. For many programs it would take far too many pages to give a description of every class. Instead, focus on describing the general areas of ABE instruction/programming you offer (e.g. ESL, GED prep, adult diploma, career prep, etc.).

### Question: Are we required to show how we offer all of the types of programming listed in 4A (adult education, literacy, workplace adult education, etc.)?

Answer: No. This list simply identifies what activities are fundable using AEFLA funds. All activities you describe in your response must fall under one or more of these activities, but there is no requirement to provide all activities on the list.

### Question: Item 4C asks us to describe how our programming aligns to best practices “derived from the most rigorous research available”. Do we need to do research about best practices? Do we need to cite our sources?

Answer: You are not required to do extensive research. Instead, you can express how your programming aligns to best practices that have already been identified based on rigorous research. Examples of this include the instructional shifts expressed in the CCRS (for both math and ELA), the soft skills and professional skills identified in ACES/TIF, and the STAR reading instructional model. In general any professional development offered in the state of Minnesota by supplemental services providers (including ATLAS, the Distance Learning Task Force and PANDA) is based on rigorous research. So if your program has participated in PD initiatives and used that knowledge to adapt and improve programming, an explanation or description of that process would be an appropriate answer to this item.

### Question: We are submitting an application for statewide/special population. How do we answer item 5B that asks for alignment to “local one-stop partners”?

Answer: In this case it is acceptable to show alignment to A) statewide workforce partners (as expressed in the state-wide WIOA plan) and/or B) local and/or regional plan(s) for the location(s) in which your program offers services.

### Question: How do we respond to item 5B (“Evidence of alignment between activities and strategy/goals of local one-stop partners”) if we don’t have a particularly positive or robust working relationship with our local workforce center?

Answer: You can describe any ways in which you align to your local one-stop partner by making your participants aware of the services offered through the one-stop, or by referring them directly to the one-stop. You can also describe any attempts or offers you have made to partner with the workforce center, even if those didn’t result in partnership. Lastly you can point out how any choices you’ve made for particular programming, especially career-focused programming (e.g. Boiler’s license prep, CDL prep, etc.) aligns to initiatives or priorities expressed in the local plan or elsewhere.