

application to determine the quality of key personnel for the project, including:

- (i) The qualifications of the project director for each project activity;
- (ii) The qualifications of key personnel in each consortium member state for each project activity;
- (iii) The extent to which key personnel have experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project; and
- (iv) The applicant's policy, as part of its nondiscriminatory employment practices, to ensure that its personnel are selected for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, or disability.

### Application Requirements

#### Project Narrative

The project narrative is critical and must thoroughly reflect the capabilities of the applicant, as well as the degree and level of cooperation with other SLRCs in the region, related to implementing this technology project.

The narrative should not exceed twenty (20) single-spaced pages, or forty (40) double-spaced pages. The narrative may be amplified by material in attachments and appendices, but the body should stand alone to give a complete picture of the project. Proposals which exceed 20 single-spaced pages or 40 double-spaced pages will not be reviewed.

The narrative must encompass the full two years of project activities and must cover the following areas:

#### 1. Mission and Strategy

a. State the goals and objectives of the two-year project. Explain how they relate to overall NIFL goals and contribute to the development of LINCS.

b. Describe how the project will build regional technological capacity.

c. Describe the services that will be provided to other SLRCs in the region.

d. Explain how the project will serve the broader literacy community.

e. State the overall expected project achievements for the end of the two-year grant period.

#### 2. Institutional Capabilities

a. State the applicant's qualifications to act as lead site of a regional consortium of all other SLRCs in the region. Describe the applicant's ability to carry out the proposed project and to deliver the proposed services.

b. Describe the applicant's staff and organizational capacity to play a leadership role in mobilizing a consortium of the region's SLRCs to carry out the work of this grant, including the applicant's willingness and ability to—

(1) Serve as the lead resource for sharing literacy data collections among states and for developing its own and other states' collections on a local, statewide and regional basis. The applicant should have its own sizeable literacy collection (or a clear plan for acquiring such a collection), especially unpublished material, and the capacity to make it electronically available to other SLRCs and state agencies.

(2) Organize its information holdings and those of other SLRCs by applying NIFL standards and guidelines as presented in the "Starting Point" manual, as well as the literacy thesaurus being developed by the NIFL work group.

(3) Provide the necessary technical support and expertise, especially in telecommunications, to less technologically advanced SLRCs. This includes: ensuring continuing on-line access among members, coordinating the installation of equipment and software, and providing technical assistance and training as appropriate.

(4) Provide the necessary support and expertise, as described in b(3) above, to other state agencies and selected local literacy service providers.

(5) Develop a plan for continuing the project after the end of the two-year project period, including prospective sources of support.

(6) Collaborate with NIFL throughout the process of creating the regional hub in order to assure the uniform presentation of information across the LINCS.

(7) Share project experience with other regions' SLRCs and the NIFL through quarterly performance reports.

c. Describe the applicant's ability to secure support from other agencies and groups in sustaining the project at the end of the two-year grant.

#### 3. Plan of Operation

The applicant must develop a two-year plan that is both ambitious and realistic. While aiming high, the applicant must demonstrate an awareness of the constraints inherent in each particular situation. The plan must address both the immediate needs and the future vision and direction of the regional technology project.

The Director is particularly interested in applicants whose plans include provisions for—

- Forming a consortium with all other SLRCs in the region and securing the explicit commitment of each to participate in the project through the development of formal agreements delineating the roles and responsibilities of all members and a regional plan of action with timelines of

tasks achieved, including input from interested public and private organizations;

- Increasing adult literacy holdings and access of the literacy community to these holdings as LINCS expands;
- Developing partnerships with other state agencies and public and private entities, including business and industry, that can further project objectives and provide ongoing support to the project after the grant has ended;
- Collaborating with other related electronic information exchange efforts, such as those run through libraries and universities, to widen usage of LINCS in the field; and
- Expanding LINCS more broadly at the state agency and local service provider level.

Accordingly, the applicant's plan must address the following:

a. Regional Hub: Describe how the applicant will establish a regional hub on the Internet that will provide a seamless interface between SLRCs in the region and LINCS, including:

(1) How the applicant will establish and maintain a regional hub that mirrors the LINCS's information structure and the system architecture, as described in Technical Soundness, sections a and b.

(2) What hardware, software, and networking system will be used to develop the hub and why they were chosen.

(3) How the equipment meets NIFL requirements.

(4) How the applicant will develop a collection of unpublished literacy materials.

(5) How the applicant will collect and organize program data.

(6) How the applicant will ensure adoption of "Starting Point" standards and work with other SLRCs in the areas of collection of data, organization and information dissemination.

(7) How and to what extent the applicant will involve other agencies and organizations, especially state departments of education, human services, and labor, in the design and implementation of the regional hub.

(8) How the applicant will achieve, at a minimum, the following outcomes in year 1:

- (a) The establishment of a regional hub for LINCS on the Internet
- (b) An on-line database of unpublished materials using "Starting Point" standards
- (c) An on-line directory of the regional consortium's literacy programs using "Starting Point" standards
- (d) A bulletin board function
- (e) Link-up with at least to major educational/workforce or legislative databases in the region