FAQs for the Institutional Service Annual Performance Report 2022

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q: Are we able to copy and paste into these fields from a word or google doc?
A: Yes. You can copy and paste into the field for your longer questions. For numerical fields, you should enter those data directly into the field. Those fields can often pick up errant items and can cause issues when trying to view the responses.

Q: Can some of the boxes in section 1 be expanded with a bit more space?
A: As you enter your text a scroll bar will appear on the side of the text boxes allowing you to navigate.

Q: Is information from an Interim Performance Report prepopulated in these sections?
A: No. Information from the IPR was not pre-populated. The fields are slightly different from the IPR to the APR.

Q: What does "PR" stand for in "PR/Award Number"?
A: It is a legacy term that is used for describing the number associated with identifying the grant.

Q: When is the academic year, 2020-2021, report due?
A: The APR is due March 18, 2022.

Q: Are there any restrictions in Title III on awarding contracts to international vendors?
A: Yes, you will want to work with your Program Officer for all questions about restrictions on the use of grant funds.

Q: Can we access last year's report? I know some fields are coming over, but not all. I contacted my FPO but no response yet.
A: Yes, your report is available for download within the HEPIS system. Also, you will want to maintain appropriate records for your grant for several years beyond the end date of your grant. This includes maintaining a copy of your performance reports.

Q: Will only the PI have access to the APR or can the university grants personnel access it as well in order to assist the PI on the report?
A: No, we can grant access to specific people. If you know others who require access, please email the Help Desk at HEPIS.HelpDesk@thetactilegroup.com and copy your Program Officer at the Department of Education.

Q: Is there a template available online that we can use to draft our responses prior to submitting them in the report?
A: Yes, you can find a blank form at https://hepis.ed.gov/main/help.

Q: One of the main difficulties every year is that the academic year runs in a different calendar than the fiscal year that is being reported and usually part of the fiscal year funding covers the first two months of the Fall semester and the findings and activities, and programs will be completed during the whole semester. Making that artificial division for reporting is sometimes complicated in terms of budget as well as performance measures. What is your suggestion?
A: You should work with your Program Officer at the Department of Education for the reporting period. You would consider your first year based on the start of that academic year.

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Q: Would the department consider extending Title III grants past 5 years in the future with the influx of federal funds?
A: You should work with your Program Officer at the Department of Education for requesting a No Cost Extension (NCE).

PRE-POPULATED DATA
Q: What if the questions 1 and 2 aren't populated? We did submit last year.
A: If you submitted the IPR, your data were not carried over as the measures are slightly different.

SECTION 2 / GPRA MEASURES:
Q: Enrollment is unduplicated headcount, right?
A: Yes, you are reporting on the unduplicated headcount.

Q: If our project is addressing a specific subset of our student body (Native American students, for instance), should we be reporting on our total student body in Section 2, or should we just be reporting on the subset being impacted by the grant?
A: You would be reporting on the total undergraduate population. If your grant is focused on graduate students, PPOHA for example, you would look at the graduate population.

Q: What if our institution does not have a 6-year graduation rate
A: You may want to use your 150% graduation rate. Otherwise, you can leave it blank.

Q: What if the structure of your institution has changed since the grant was approved?
A: Work with your Program Officer at the Department of Education to make any changes that would be required.

Q: On the GPRA measures, we will not have 4-year graduation rates if we are in project year 1.   Which cohort are we supposed to use for that?
A: You are basing it on that year, not necessarily the cohort. We are looking at this as a longitudinal view and snapshot at the time of the grant.

Q: If our grant serves undergrad and graduate students, how do we report rates for both?
A: You would use the overall totals. I would recommend the graduation rates be focused on your target population of the grant.

Q: How do you indicate that you're using 3-year instead of 4-year graduation rates?
A: Think of these as either a 100% or 150% graduation rate for your institution type.

Q: When reporting for the 2020-2021 year, do we look for fall to fall retention within that year or would be for the year prior?
A: You would use the most readily available data. Just keep in mind that you want to maintain the same calculation every year.

Q: Is using IPEDS data ideal?
A: It is always the closest to accurate.

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Q: My grant Section 2A looks different from what you displayed. For my grant it shows: 4-Year Graduation Rate (2- & 4-Year) and 6-Year Graduation Rate (4-Year). Can you review what we should be reporting, based on the type of institution we are?
A: This section will be based on the institutional type that we have on record.

Q: The GPRA Data was referenced as "CAMPUS" based data. We generally use DISTRICT wide data for the grants. Does this mean my Yr. 1 data [2019=20[needs to be changed, and only my Campus Data will be OK?
A: You need to use data for the grantee and not the district (unless the district is the grant recipient).

ENDOWMENTS
Q: What is the definition of "not matured"?
A: This means the endowment has not reach 20 years and been released by the Department of Education.

Q: What is the difference between an Endowment Challenge Grant and an endowment activity as part of a regular Title III grant? Thank you.
A: The Endowment Challenge Grant is a standalone program. The Endowment Activity would be part of one of the Titles III, V, or VII grant programs.

Q: For new program directors, in addition to the Program Officer, is there another contact at the Department for historical information on Endowments?
A: You need to work with your Program Officer at the Department of Education on all endowment activities.

Q: Will there be a webinar on completing the Endowment report?
A: We will work with the Program Officer at the Department of Education to offer a technical assistance webinar on the endowment activities.

Q: Will the drop box for Endowments appear automatically when as "Yes" response is given, or do we contact the HEP IS desk to ask them to activate that function.
A: You can request access by emailing HEPIS.HelpDesk@thetactilegroup.com and copying your Program Officer at the Department of Education.

Q: Do we need permission to change our performance measures? (Not the activity or objective.)
A: You will want to work directly with your Program Officer at the Department of Education.

Q: Do we include the objectives and performance indicators from a previous grant year or only update to current year?
A: You will include all necessary objectives and performance measures. You should work in consultation with your Program Officer at the Department of Education.

Q: So, don't each activity need to be associated/aligned with a LAA/cost? This is how it was conveyed a few years ago.
A: Yes, each activity will be associated with an LAA in Section 4.

Q: If an objective does not have a target until year 2 and we are reporting on year 1, does that mean we do not need to include it when reporting on year 1 in section 3?

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A: You would only include the work that has occurred until the end of this performance period.

Q: Can you use the same objective for several of the activities?
A: Yes, however, you should have multiple objectives for each activity if you do so. Work in consultation with your Program Officer at the Department of Education.

Q: If objectives were completed in last year's report, do they still have to be reported with performance this year?
A: Yes, you should include them through the duration of the grant.

Q: If adjustments to items stated in past year needs to be clarified or adjusted, do we edit the existing field or is there a space held to highlight 'changes'?
A: You would edit the existing field.

SECTION 3 / BUDGET:
Q: Are expenses for personnel included in the budget section questions?
A: There is a line item for personnel in the budget.

Q: Our university was advised by a consultant that speaker contracts and contracts that were not for outsourcing services were to be categorized as "other". This would cause us to have a substantial number of expenditures in the "other" category. Can we get a definition of the expenses that belong in the categories for financial reporting?
A: I think this is referring to the LAA's. I would recommend you work with your Program Officer at the Department of Education for the specifics here.

SECTION 5 / INSTITUTIONALIZATION:
Q: As far as I'm aware, the statute does not require institutionalization plans for HBCU activities in Part B or Part F. Please advise what statute section is referenced.
A: Section 608.21(b)(4) requires institutions to provide a description of methods, processes, and procedures that will be used by the college or university to institutionalize financial management and academic program practices and improvements developed under the proposed funded activities. In essence, we want to capture the long-lasting impact of the federal investment.

Q: For the institutionalization, it has been challenging to know what things will look like post-Covid and fluctuating enrollment. Any tips?
A: Institutionalization does not mean that every activity funded with grant funds will continue after the grant ends. Institutionalization is about the plan to continue with the impact on student success that began with grant funds.

Q: What does the "approved" line item mean in Section 5
A: Those are the approved line items that your campus is working towards institutionalizing. These should be from the CDP or application and reviewed in consultation with the Program Officer at the Department of Education.

Q: Is there a format for the institutionalization plan? What are the required elements?
A: These should be developed during the CDP and application period for each grant. However, Program Officers at the Department of Education can assist in reviewing them. Your formative evaluation should

serve as information that informs the institutionalization plan. Also, the plan can change depending on other factors. The logic model is a good place to start.

Q: Will 2020 grantees report on institutionalization? I saw that the section was grayed out when I logged into the APR website.
A: You have to enter at least one Activity (and corresponding objectives and performance measures) to complete the institutionalization section.

Q: Under institutionalization, it is not clear on how do we determine the financial cost for each project objective and what information should go under approved line items? Any guidance or example would be helpful.
A: You will work in consultation with your Program Officer at the Department of Education.

FIRST YEAR:
Q: Is an APR due for projects that started or were funded Oct 2021? (i.e., only four months into project implementation)
A: No, grants that started in October 2021 will complete an Interim Performance Report (IPR) in April and an APR for their first year after October 2022.

Q: If this is your 1st annual report, do you need to have a defined institutionalization plan or you can you indicate that the plan to absorb costs from the different activities is in development.
A: You should have an institutionalization plan from the start. If you don't, work with your Program Officer at the Department of Education.

FINAL YEAR / NCE:
Q: For those of us in the final year of the grant with a No Cost Extension, when will we be able to submit the final report on how those funds were spent? What will this report look like? Will it include a narrative as well as breakdown of funds spent?
A: You will complete an APR after the No Cost Extension (NCE) period ends and during the following APR cycle. The report will be identical to this one, but the reporting should be a collective of the overall grant.

Q: GY 2020-2021 was the last year of our SAFRA grant. When filling out Section 3B and 3C, do we record the total grant amount (based on the award amount) or just the no cost extension funds?
A: 3B will be all of the activities that have occurred during the grant period. It is a collective of everything. 3C is the budget for the final performance period (the NCE).

Q: If we are in a no cost extension year, do we need to submit an APR?
A: Yes, you have to submit an APR for each performance period. Last year was year 5 and must be submitted. If this is year 6 and an NCE, you will complete a final APR next year.

Q: Do we include information regarding the Cares Funding received?
A: No. Funding from any of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding will have a separate performance report that is managed by the Department's Emergency Response Unit.

Q: Due to the pandemic there have been changes to some grant activities and as a result to performance measures. Can I change those on the APR to reflect the changes?

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A: Yes, however, you will want your Program Officer at the Department of Education to review and approve those changes. Please contact them.