Texas Education Agency

NOGA ID

Authorizing legislation	US Department of Ed Federal Grant P.L. 114–95 IV ESSA EDUCATION INNOVATION AND RESEARCH 84.411B

Application stamp-in date and time

This LOI application must be submitted via email to **loiapplications@tea.texas.gov.**

The LOI application may be signed with a digital ID or it may be signed by hand. Both forms of signature are acceptable.

TEA must receive the application by **5:00 p.m. CT, March 30, 2020**.

Grant period from	**May 1, 2020 - August 31, 2021**
Pre-award costs permitted from	**April 15, 2020**

Required Attachments

1. Excel workbook with the grant's budget schedules (linked along with this form on the TEA Grants Opportunities page)
2. Applicants must submit the additional attachments as detailed in the Required Attachment section on p. 6 on the Program Guidelines found on TEA's Grant Opportunities page.

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

Applicant Information

Organization	Evolution Academy Charter School	CDN	057-834	Campus	Houston	ESC	10	DUNS	107959814

Address	1101 S. Sherman Street	City	Richardson	ZIP	75081	Vendor ID	76-0622470

Primary Contact	Cynthia A, Trigg	Email	cynthia.trigg@evolutionacademy.org	Phone	(972) 907-3755

Secondary Contact	Maggie Rodriguez	Email	m_rodriguez23@live.com	Phone	(956) 970-2597

Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the LOI application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the LOI application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

☒ LOI application, guidelines, and instructions   ☒ Debarment and Suspension Certification

☒ General and application-specific Provisions and Assurances   ☒ Lobbying Certification

Authorized Official Name	Cynthia A. Trigg	Title	Superintendent

Email	cynthia.trigg@evolutionacademy.org	Phone	(972) 907-3755

Signature	*Cynthia A. Trigg*	Date	3/26/2020

Shared Services Arrangements

☐ Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are permitted for this grant. **Check the box below if applying as fiscal agent.**

☐ The LEA or ESC submitting this application is the fiscal agent of a planned SSA. All participating agencies will enter into a written SSA agreement describing the fiscal agent and SSA member responsibilities. All participants understand that the "Shared Services Arrangement Attachment" must be completed and signed by all SSA members, and submitted to TEA before the NOGA is issued.

Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this program. In order to meet the requirements of the program, the applicant must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

☒ 1. The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this LOI will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.

☒ 2. The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.

☒ 3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Statutory and TEA Program requirements as noted in the 2020-2021 Lone Star STEM Cycle 2 Year 1 Program Guidelines.

☒ 4. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all the Performance Measures, as noted in the 2020-2021 Lone Star STEM Cycle 2 Year 1 Program Guidelines, and shall provide to TEA, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the program.

☒ 5. The applicant provides assurance that they accept and will comply with Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances requirements.

☒ 6. The applicant assures they understand that 2020-2021 Lone Star STEM Cycle 2 Year 1 applicants cannot request to be placed in the treatment or control group and should apply with the intent to complete the treatment requirements outlined in the LOI.

☒ 7. The applicant assures that the district plans to develop or expand a computer science or cybersecurity Program of Study.

☒ 8. The applicant assures the T-STEM blueprint components and artifacts as described in the Program Guidelines will be followed.

Budget Narrative

Describe how the proposed budget will meet the needs and goals of the program, including for staffing, supplies and materials, contracts, travel, etc. If applicable, include a high-level snapshot of funds currently allocated to similar programs. Include a short narrative describing how adjustments will be made in the future to meet needs.

The proposed budget WILL MEET THE NEEDS AND GOALS of the program, because the charter is financially stable, as determined through fiscal review by the TEA's Division of Financial Audits. Because of this, the charter can ensure that they have the knowledge and capabilities to organize a successful budget that would account for staffing, supplies and materials, contracts, travel, etc. Therefore, the charter will be able to increase the amount of high-quality STEM education opportunities and outcomes for high-need students in the 9-12 grades. The charter will have a particular focus on implementing a program of study that will help students gain the skills, post-secondary credentials, and experience necessary to embark on well-paying careers in STEM fields under the Computer Science program of study.

NEEDS OF THE PROGRAM: According to the 2018-19 Texas Academic Performance Report (TAPR), the campus currently has a 55.6% Economically disadvantaged rate (1 priority point). Additionally, the expected increase of STEM jobs in Texas by 20%, as well as, the number of females (minorities) earning computer qualifications staying stagnant is a major need for the program. To address this need, the charter plans to create a "Computer Science Lab" with grant funds that includes specialized equipment to offer the computer science program of study. The charter ensures that the aforementioned needs would be addressed as both the treatment and control group in the grant.

SNAPSHOT OF FUNDS CURRENTLY ALLOCATED TO SIMILAR PROGRAMS: Currently funds are allocated from Instructional Materials Allotment (IMA), Title I, and CTE. Funding from these programs, have been utilized to purchase varied software programs, computer equipment, electronic flat panels, and headphones. HOW ADJUSTMENTS WILL BE MADE IN THE FUTURE: In order to make adjustments in the future, the charter will utilize local funds if needed to continue staff development in the future, as well as, to pay for any material fees that are needed in Computer Science. The Leadership Team that was developed for this grant will also be tasked with working on sustainability and the continuous monitoring and improvement of the Lone Star STEM Academy. Therefore, they will be responsible for ensuring that the correct adjustments are made in the future.

Statutory/Program Requirements

1. What type of College Career Readiness School Model (CCRSM) is the campus currently? (T-STEM, P-TECH, ICIA, or ECHS) If not a CCRSM, what model do you plan to operate during the Implementation Year?

Evolution Academy's Houston Campus does not currently operate their campus under a College Career Readiness School Model (CCRSM). However, the Charter does have experience in applying for and receiving designation as a P-TECH campus. In fact, Evolution Academy currently has a campus that is undergoing P-TECH designation at their main campus in Richardson, Texas.

Therefore, Evolution Academy's Houston Campus will apply for this same P-TECH CCRSM designation during the grant program (1 Point). Additionally, the charter plans to follow T-STEM blueprint artifacts. By doing so the charter would be able to align with the grant goals and objectives, as well as, follow all T-STEM Benchmarks 1 through 6 (School Design, Target Population, Strategic Alliances, etc.).

Statutory/Program Requirements, (cont.)

2. What CCRSM designation does your district plan to pursue through the Lone Star STEM grant?

During the grant program, Evolution Academy's Houston Campus plans to operate a P-TECH College Career Readiness School Model. By doing so, the charter will be aligned with the grant goals and objectives.

3. What process and information was used to determine which pathway was selected for the 2020-2021 Lone Star STEM Cycle 2 Year 1 grant? Please include any relevant labor market data or documentation.

Evolution Academy is determined to develop a STEM pathway in Computer Science (1 point) during the 2020-2021 Lone Star STEM Cycle 2 Year 1 grant. The charter reviewed statewide market data (TexasWages.com). Based on the review, many of the high demand occupations are in the Information Technology Career Cluster, which involves Computer Science and Cybersecurity. Some of the occupations with their average pay and projected growth rate between now and 2026 include: Information Security Analysts ($100,485/33% growth), Network and Computer Systems Administrators ($84,638/13% growth), Computer Network Support Specialist ($69,189/14% growth), Web Developers ($70,629/19% growth), and Computer User Support Specialist ($$47,964/18% growth). This data helped the charter staff determine the correct STEM pathways to select. (1 Point)

Statutory/Program Requirements, (cont.)

4. Describe plans for creating strategic alliances with industry partners and IHEs. What is the anticipated role for each IHE, business, and/or community partnership?

The charter plans to expand STRATEGIC ALLIANCES with an industry partner, an IHE, an Informal STEM provider, and its local workforce board. The charter will be partnering with a total of four (4) organizations. The four organizations would include: Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast, Richland College, an Informal STEM Provider (Potential Providers include: Texas Southern University, Johnson Space Center, and Prairie View A&M University), and Frisco Computer Solutions. Each of the organizations would sign and submit a letter of commitment, as well as, a Memorandum of Understand (MOU) that are reviewed annually and clearly articulate the requirements outlined in this LOI.
Below is a list of the partnering organizations and their ANTICIPATED ROLES for the grant program (1 Point):
• Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast- The development board will identify, create, and maintain a list of in-demand STEM occupations and programs of study that lead to these occupations to be used as a resource in creating structured pathways for students and updated as local needs change;
• Johnson Space Center - Provider will support and guidance to the charter in resource acquisition, curriculum development, work-based learning, and student/community outreach to ensure a successful academic and career pipeline;
• Richland College – Will allow a student to combine high school courses and college-level courses towards credentials and certifications including associate and/or bachelor's degree, as well as, having the opportunity to earn an industry certification or credential in a STEM focused field. The IHE will also give the charter a four-year crosswalk detailing how students will progress towards this goal including alignment of high school and college-level courses.; and
• Frisco Computer Solutions – Business (es) will provide real-world experiences to students through Project or Problem Based Learning (PBL) challenges. Teachers will also visit with employers to gain insight on teaching strategies to be implemented in the classroom.
Moreover, the charter will work with each of the aforementioned organizations and include a list of each member's title and role on the charter's website.

5. Identify the type of advanced courses (dual credit/AP/IB) currently implemented on the campus. Has the district identified what postsecondary credit will be available to students through the computer science, cybersecurity, and engineering programs?

The following advanced dual credit courses are currently offered on the campus (1 Point):

• Introduction to Keyboarding,
• Computer Application I,
• Computer Application II, and
• Business English.

In addition to these classes, Evolution Academy plans to partner with Richland College (1 point) to offer post-secondary credit to students. Some of the courses that will be offered under Evolution Academy's Computer Science Program, will fall under Richland College's Cyber Security Degree pathway. Courses that could be taken include but are not limited to: Linux Installation and Configuration, Introduction to PC Operating Systems, Computer Fundamentals, Fundamentals of Information Security, Designing and Implementing a Server Infrastructure, CCNA 2: Routing and Switching Essentials, Introduction to Digital Forensics, Personal Computer Hardware, and Business and Professional Communication. This pathway will assist students in obtaining their students to receive their Associate of Applied Science Degree in Cyber Security.

Statutory/Program Requirements, (cont.)

6. Describe any planned STEM-focused informal activities (field experiences, clubs, competitions, summer STEM camp, etc.) that will be offered to students, whether they are offered by the school or by a community partner.

The charter will provide the following STEM-focused informal activities: Field experiences, summer STEAM campus, STEAM Job Shadowing, and a summer STEM camp. (1 Point) These planned STEM-focused informal activities will ensure that student understands the connection with their work-based learning and academics. Furthermore, to ensure that students have a personalized learning environment, the charter will provide layered academic support, as well as, layered social and emotional support. To provide layered academic support, the charter will provide tutoring and/or Saturday school, college readiness and support time built into the program of study for all students, and dedicated student college application assistance. To provide social and emotional support, the charter will provide parent outreach and involvement opportunities, a program of community service to promote community involvement, and skill building instruction for students (i.e. time management, study skills, etc.).

Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

7. Describe the Academy's plans for implementing an interdisciplinary approach to learning where academic concepts are coupled with real-world experiences through Project or Problem Based Learning (PBL) and/or Engineering Design Challenges that are offered regularly throughout the school year. Please include how the Academy will support and develop teachers in offering this, including considerations for scheduling, professional development, and structures for cross-disciplinary collaboration.

Evolution Academy will implement an interdisciplinary approach to learning by utilizing Frisco Computer Solutions to provide real-world experiences to students through Project or Problem Based Learning (PBL) challenges. (1 Point) This is a student-centered approach in which students learn about a subject by working in groups to solve an open-ended problem. This problem is what drives the motivation and the learning and may include: Working in teams; Managing projects and holding leadership roles; Oral and written communication; Self-awareness and evaluation of group processes; Working independently; Critical thinking and analysis; Applying course content to real-world examples; Researching and information literacy; and Problem-solving across disciplines.

Furthermore, to ensure that each individual student is ready to take on more rigorous classes, the charter will biannually implement a structured data review process designed to identify student strengths and weaknesses and develop instructional support plans. By strengthening each student's academics weaknesses, this would ensure that the students are ready to succeed in tests such as TSI, TSIA, SAT, and ACT. These tests would be included on a calendar posted on the charter's website and the students will be notified of when the test is schedule.

The charter will also implement an annual professional development plan for teachers and staff that focuses on research-based instructional strategies that teach about rigor, building college and career readiness, and STEM skills that are based on needs assessment of student data. These strategies can come up in some of the following activities: an externship program, summer research experiences, regularly scheduled peer observations/collaborations with focus groups, industry partners, and IHE partners, etc. Teachers will also visit with employers to gain insight on teaching strategies to be implemented in the classroom.

8. Describe how the district plans to recruit, retain, and support historically underrepresented populations in STEM (e.g, females, economically disadvantaged, at-risk, etc…).

5/2020-12/2021 - Online advertising through the charter's website, Region ESC website, and newspapers in English/ Spanish. 12/2020–August 2021–Upon receiving Lone Star Academy Designation, marketing materials will be distributed to all stakeholders. The Counselor will meet with the 8th grade students to discuss the grant program. Any student interested will be provided an application & encouraged to apply. Campus administration will meet with each student's guardian, so they can be made aware of weighted lottery that will favor students who are females/minorities/AA/Hispanic.

9. Does the applicant plan to develop or extend an engineering program as well as a computer science or cybersecurity program?

The Charter (1 point), and its campus (1 point), do not plan to develop or extend an engineering program. The Charter only plans to develop the Computer Science Program.

10. Does the applicant have at least one teacher certified to teach computer science?

Evolution Academy currently has no teachers certified to teach computer science (1 point).

11. Does the applicant have at least one teacher certified to teach cybersecurity?

Evolution Academy currently has no teachers certified to teach cybersecurity (1 point).

Equitable Access and Participation

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this program.

○ The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this program.

◉ Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group	Barrier
Female	Equal Representation in STEM Fields

Appendix I: Amendment Description and Purpose (leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding)

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the Administering a Grant page. The following are required to be submitted for an amendment: (1) Page 1 of the application with updated contact information and current authorized official's signature and date, (2) Appendix I with changes identified and described, (3) all updated sections of the application or budget affected by the changes identified below, and, if applicable, (4) Amended Budget Request. Amendment Instructions with more details can be found on the last tab of the budget template.

You may duplicate this page

Amended Section

Reason for Amendment