



**2023–2025 Charter School Program Grant (Subchapter C and D)**  
**COMPETITIVE GRANT Application Due 11:59 p.m. CT, January 13, 2023**

NOGA ID

Application stamp-in date and time

TEA will only accept grant application documents by email, including competitive grant applications and amendments. Submit grant applications and amendments as follows:

Competitive grant applications and amendments to [competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov](mailto:competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov)

**Authorizing legislation:**

**Grant period:**  **Pre-award costs:**

**Required attachments:**

**Amendment Number**

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

**1. Applicant Information**

Name of organization

Campus name  CDN  Vendor ID  ESC  UEI

Address  City  ZIP  Phone

Primary Contact  Email  Phone

Secondary Contact  Email  Phone

**2. 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 grant application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the grant application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- Grant application, guidelines, and instructions
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- General Provisions and Assurances
- Lobbying Certification
- Application-Specific Provisions and Assurances
- ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements

Authorized Official Name  Title  Email

Phone  Signature  Date

Grant Writer Name  Signature  Date

Grant writer is an employee of the applicant organization.  Grant writer is not an employee of the applicant organization.

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**3. Shared Services Arrangements**

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) **are/are not** 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 80% reserve on the NOGA is lifted.

**4. Identify/Address Needs**

List up to three quantifiable needs, as identified in your needs assessment, that these program funds will address. Describe your plan for addressing each need.

Quantifiable Need	Plan for Addressing Need
MWS has a waitlist exceeding 2500 students grades K-9, the largest ratio of waitlist to total seats of any charter in Texas. We outperform neighboring districts in student accountability evidenced by STAAR.	MWS will open two PreK-5 schools by August of 2027, eventually doubling our served population in Williamson County. Meridian's current location cannot provide space for a PreK and a high-quality partner has not been found. Opening in new locations will allow for a minimum of 44 PreK students in each new school.
Williamson County's population continues to climb, growing 50% from 2011 to 2022. Georgetown and Cedar Park have been identified as two of the fastest growing cities in the country.	MWS will almost double in size with this expansion, beginning with the opening of a new primary campus in August 2025. The population growth in the County provides additional school-age children who can benefit from our unique, high-quality, model of IB for everyone from PreK through 12th grade.
MWS serves special pops to better outcomes than area districts. Our SpED and EB pops similar to area districts have better outcomes. Our ED pops, though lower than area districts, perform better on STAAR.	By providing two additional campuses, doubling the student population, MWS will serve greater numbers of SpED and EB students. Through community outreach and with the intent to provide transportation, we seek to serve more economically disadvantaged students, with the intent to expand better outcomes.

**5. SMART Goal**

Describe the summative SMART goal you have identified for this program (a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely), either related to student outcome or consistent with the purpose of the grant.

PreK Students: We will serve 44 PreK students in our first year using the CIRCLE assessment tool. By the end of our first year, June 2026, 55% of students will meet benchmark in literacy and math. 60% will meet the following year.

3rd Grade Students: Using STAAR data, 67% of students will meet grade level expectations for literacy by June of 2026 and 69% will meet grade level expectations for math.

**6. Measurable Progress**

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

**First-Quarter Benchmark**

Meridian will hire a COO in the summer of 2023, anticipating that 50% of this position will have responsibilities dedicated to the expansion, working as the project manager alongside the CEO/Superintendent. It is our intention to pay for up to half of this position with these grant funds for up to 18 months prior to opening.

(Project benchmarks for this time period not paid by this grant will be acquisition of land, engagement of project team consultants including financier, architect, and construction manager.)

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**8. Measurable Progress (Cont.)****Second-Quarter Benchmark**

Expansion Budget projections will be finalized. We will identify all major grant purchases, specifying, bidding and/or securing contracts. This includes telephone and IT/network infrastructure, classroom and office furniture and technology equipment. A registrar will be hired.

**Third-Quarter Benchmark**

In the third quarter student applications will be completed and the lottery will be held, students registered and waitlisted.

We will hire the new campus principal, who will then hire support admin staff including a campus administrative coordinator, assistant principal, and IB curriculum coordinator. These positions will be in place a few months to prepare for school opening in August 2025.

**7. Project Evaluation and Modification**

Describe how you will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify your program. If your benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program for sustainability.

Re: SMART Goal - Should we not meet the goals for PreK and 3rd grades in 2026, we will use the data obtained through the assessment tools (CIRCLE for PreK, MCLASS, F&P, and Math in Focus growth measures, along with STAAR results for 3rd grade) to determine what areas lag in learning and consider how specific teaching and interventions should be put in place. Using that data, dedicated interventionists will work within a dedicated intervention schedule during the school day to focus on areas of needed growth.

Re: Benchmarks - The potential benchmark that may prove problematic relates to the acquisition of land for the new school. We are currently negotiating with and will engage a commercial real estate broker who specializes in charter schools by the end of January. Their efforts combined with those of the CEO should bring the land under contract by the end of July 2023.

First QTR - The hiring of the COO will help facilitate the regulatory process through the local governmental entity. If that does not show progress, we will use the services of a permit expediting service.

Second QTR - The determination of vendors for infrastructure and FFE should include multiple outlets to assure flexibility in choices as pricing and on-time deliverability will be high critical priorities.

Third QTR - Hiring - We will begin teacher recruitment in February to inform and engage potential hires. This will include the annual jobs fair at Meridian as well as outreach to college fairs.

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**8. Statutory/Program Assurances**

The following assurances apply to this grant program. In order to meet the requirements of the grant, the grantee 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 grant 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 Statutory Requirements, TEA Program Requirements, and Performance Measures, as noted in the 2023–2025 Charter School Program Grant (Subchapter C and D) Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education Agency, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the grant program.
- 4. The applicant provides assurance that they accept and will comply with [Every Student Succeeds Act Provisions and Assurances](#) requirements.
- 5. The applicant assures that any Electronic Information Resources (EIR) produced as part of this agreement will comply with the State of Texas Accessibility requirements as specified in 1 TAC 206, 1 TAC Chapter 213, Federal Section 508 standards, and the WCAG 2.0 AA Accessibility Guidelines.
- 6. The applicant provides assurance that their financial accounting system adheres to the following requirements:
  - a. accommodates the minimum 15-digit account code mandated by the FASRG;
  - b. generates information needed for PEIMS reporting; and
  - c. ensures adequate accountability of state and federal funds.

If the applicant’s financial accounting system is not approved by TEA, the applicant assures that it will budget and acquire an acceptable accounting system and training with these grant funds. Additionally, the applicant will be required to submit proof of an acceptable accounting system prior to receiving continued and/or additional funding.
- 7. The applicant provides assurance that it will maintain clear documentation and data for the school and students served by this grant program, will comply with any reporting and evaluation requirements that may be established by the TEA, and will submit the reports in the format and manner requested by TEA’s Division of Financial Compliance. Grantees will be required to cooperate with the team that has been contracted to evaluate the use of the grant funds.
- 8. The applicant provides assurance that it has on file a certificate of occupancy or the equivalent, for the instructional facility. At any time, should the TEA Charter School Administration Division request a copy, the applicant will provide such copy immediately.
- 9. According to Title IV, Part C of ESSA, to receive federal grant funds of any type, including U. S. Department of Education funds, the charter school must meet the following definition. By signing Attachment #1 and submitting the application, the authorized official of the public charter school certifies that each of the statements in the definition is true and that the school is in compliance with this definition. A charter school is not eligible to receive any federal funds at any time, formula or discretionary, from TEA if it does not comply with this definition.

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**8. Statutory/Program Assurances (Cont.)**

10. **Open-enrollment charter holders applying on behalf of a high-quality campus approved by the commissioner of education must comply with the following:** The applicant provides assurance that the existing charter, as approved by the applicable state authorizer (the State Board of Education or the commissioner of education), and the Application for High-Quality Campus Designation, under which the new charter school campus was approved by the commissioner of education, are incorporated by reference into this grant application and address statutory requirements in compliance with PL 114-95, Title IV, Part C, ESSA.
11. Charters established under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C: The applicant provides assurance that the campus charter school will:
- Maintain documentation which clearly demonstrates the supplementary nature of these funds;
  - be established according to and in compliance with TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, Sections 12.051-12.065;
  - be designated as a campus charter in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) organizational database, AskTED, prior to operating as a campus charter, and
  - be permitted to govern autonomously, as evidenced by the day-to-day decision makers at the campus charter school and their input with regard to the school's curriculum, calendar, budget, and daily operations. This autonomy will be above and beyond the degree of flexibility and autonomy afforded to traditional campuses within the district.
12. Charters established under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C, must also comply with the following: As per Title V, Part B, Subpart 1, Section 5204(f)(4)(B), a LEA may not deduct funds for administrative fees or expenses from a subgrant awarded to an eligible applicant, unless the eligible applicant enters voluntarily into a mutually agreed upon arrangement for administrative services with the relevant LEA. Absent such approval, the LEA shall distribute all subgrant funds to the eligible applicant without delay.
13. Charters established under TEC Chapter 12, Subchapter C, for the purpose of replicating an existing high-quality charter school, must also comply with the following: The applicant provides assurance that the school district will:
- participate in the Texas Authorizer Leadership Academy (TALA) program;
  - review and adopt the Texas Education Agency's model Chapter 12, Subchapter C authorizer policies and charter application (Model District Authorizing Policy and Model Local Campus Partner Application can be found at <https://txpartnerships.org/tools/>);
  - annually publish its authorizer policies;
  - submit its updated authorizer policies and charter application to TEA, along with the exact web address where this information is posted on the district's website, by October 1, 2023;
  - work with a high-quality charter management organization (CMO) or create an innovation management organization (IMO) that will have its own independent board, separate and apart from the school district's board of trustees, to oversee management of the originating campus and its replication; and
  - work with a high-quality charter management organization (CMO) or create an innovation management organization (IMO) that will have an Executive Director/Chief Executive Officer (CMO) who is responsible for management of the originating campus and its replication.

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**9. Statutory Requirements**

1. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the eligible applicant, any partner organizations, and charter management organizations, as applicable, including the administrative and contractual roles and responsibilities of such partners.

Meridian School has operated for 11.5 years as authorized under TEC Code Chapter 12, Subchapter D as an Open-Enrollment Charter School. Meridian is self managed under the direction of the Superintendent (CEO) and Board of Directors, who are committed to expanding our program to improve academic outcomes of a greater number of students in Williamson County.

The CEO directs the planning and implementation of the project. In the initial planning phase as a participant in the Charter School Incubator Program we have worked with Bellwether Education Partners to develop our strategy and priorities. In the next school year we plan to hire a COO to assist the CEO as project manager. Planning for the new campus will continue to be a collaborative effort among Meridian leadership, current staff and parents. We will continue to utilize resources available to us through TEA and ESC Region 13 as we move toward opening the new campus. Meridian's CFO will be responsible for monitoring the financial data and ensuring that grant funds are utilized as best benefits the project and in compliance with all state and federal requirements. The Board of Directors will receive timely updates on progress.

2. Describe the quality controls agreed to between the eligible applicant and the authorized public chartering agency involved (TEA), such as a contract or performance agreement, how a school's performance in the state's accountability system and impact on student achievement (which may include student academic growth) will be one of the most important factors for renewal or revocation of the school's charter, and how the authorized public chartering agency involved (TEA) will reserve the right to revoke or not renew a school's charter based on financial, structural, or operational factors involving the management of the school.

As contracted with the Texas State Board of Education, Meridian World School LLC is subject to rules and regulations that apply to student performance and accountability, governance, and financial management. Charter renewal is based on compliance in these areas.

Our curriculum aligns to the TEKS; students test through the STAAR program to assess academic achievement. Data is submitted through the PEIMS system, including student demographics and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information. The school's success is evaluated through the Charter School Performance Framework. We maintain proper financial accounting and reporting systems, adhering to policies and principles to ensure uniformity in accounting. An annual financial audit, performed by an independent accounting firm conforming to generally accepted accounting principles, is submitted to the state to show fiscal compliance and is rated through the Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST).

3. Describe how the autonomy and flexibility granted to the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus is consistent with the definition of a charter school in Section 4310, including how the proposed charter school campus will have a high degree of autonomy over budget and operations and personnel decisions. Include a detailed description of the ways in which the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus will be permitted to govern autonomously, as evidenced by the day-to-day decision makers at the campus and their input with regard to the school's curriculum, calendar, budget, and daily operations. For a charter school campus authorized by the local board of trustees pursuant to TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, describe how this autonomy is above and beyond the degree of flexibility and autonomy afforded to traditional campuses within the school district.

Meridian School has a high level of self determination in making decisions regarding budgeting, operations, curriculum, staffing structure, personnel and training, and expectations of students and families.

We educate our students within the International Baccalaureate framework, our chosen academic and character education curriculum.

Budgeting and expenditures are under local control, in compliance with all state and federal requirements.

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**9. Statutory Requirements (Cont.)**

4. Describe how the eligible applicant will solicit and consider input from parents and other members of the community on the implementation and operation of the proposed charter school campus.

Meridian began gathering input from stakeholders in the fall of 2022, through meetings, focus groups and surveys. There will be ongoing outreach and collaboration with our leadership, staff and families on the planned expansion, as well as eventual public meetings to inform the community at large of the new campus and other expansion plans. Our current waitlisted families will be informed of the expansion and invited to learn and about the school and provide input. Our Board of Directors will receive timely updates and have opportunities for input as plans and implementation proceed. In the period leading up to the lottery in the spring before the campus opens, several information sessions about the school and our mission and curriculum will be open to the community.

5. Describe the eligible applicant's planned activities and expenditures of grant funds to open and prepare for the operation of the proposed charter school or high-quality charter school campus, and how the eligible applicant will maintain financial sustainability after the end of the grant period.

Grant funds will be used to support the expansion project by:

Partially funding a COO who will have half time duties as Project Manager, assisting the Superintendent and Expansion team and monitor progress for the expansion project.

Providing resources for community outreach and engagement.

Employing a registrar to oversee the lottery process.

Employing a new campus principal, assistant principal and administrative coordinator for 2-3 months before opening.

Partially funding classroom furniture and instructional technology needs at the new campus.

Providing communications systems - telephone and IT - for the new campus.

Providing furniture and technology for administrative personnel at the new campus.

Once open, the school will rely on state education funds based on enrollment to meet general operational needs. Other federal funding will be available based on special student populations, and the school will have an annual fund campaign to supplement for special projects.

6. Describe how the eligible applicant will support the use of effective parent, family, and community engagement strategies to operate the proposed charter school campus.

As a parent-founded school, Meridian has a comprehensive and highly successful stakeholder engagement strategy to ensure that community voice is incorporated into our culture and operations. We engage parents through a strong parent volunteer organization that provides a variety of opportunities for family involvement, as well as through weekly school newsletters, multiple family information sessions, and committees that parents can participate in along with staff and school leadership. New staff often comment that our parents are more engaged and invested in their childrens' education than at their previous schools. That support is one of the five core elements that inform our strategy for expansion. We fully intend to replicate that culture of community engagement in our new schools.

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**9. Statutory Requirements (Cont.)**

7. Describe the eligible applicant’s plan for meeting the transportation needs of the students at the proposed charter school campus.

We are exploring community stops in various locations within the County and outside a 5 mile radius. We are also planning transportation between campuses for family convenience.

8. Describe and justify any requests for waivers of any Federal statutory or regulatory provisions that the eligible applicant believes are necessary for the successful operation of the charter school, and a description of any state or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that the applicant proposes to be waived or otherwise not apply to the school.

None

**9. Statutory Requirements, Subchapter C Applicants ONLY**

In addition to the eight requirements listed above, campus charters established under TEC, Subchapter C, Campus Charter Schools, must also address each of the following requirements (numbers 9-13):

9. Describe the educational program\* at the proposed charter school campus, including: a. how the program will enable all students to meet challenging state student academic achievement standards; b. the grade levels or ages of children to be served; and c. the curriculum and instructional practices to be used. \*If the district has partnered with an entity to replicate a high-quality charter school model, the description of the educational program should include the name of the high-quality charter school that is being replicated, along with additional pertinent information to demonstrate that the charter school meets the definition of a high-quality charter school.

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**9. Statutory Requirements Subchapter C Applicants ONLY (Cont.)**

10. Describe how the district authorizer will monitor the proposed charter school campus in recruiting, enrolling, retaining, and meeting the needs of all students, including children with disabilities and English learners.

11. Describe the manner in which an annual independent financial audit of the campus is to be conducted. The campus charter must have a plan for an audit that is separate and apart from the district's annual financial audit.

12. Describe the manner in which the campus will provide information necessary for the school district in which it is located to participate, as required by TEC, Chapter 12, Subchapter C, or by SBOE rule, in public education information systems (PEIMS).

13. Describe the manner in which the district will flow other federal and state funds to the proposed charter school campus. Describe the timelines for flowing the federal and state funds to the campus that will ensure students are promptly receiving the benefit of services that appropriate federal and state funds can provide.

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**TEA Program Requirements**

1. Provide the number of students in each grade, by type of school, projected to be served under the grant program in 2023–2024.

Charter School Type	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Replicating State-Authorize <input type="text"/>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

**Not Applicable - No students will be served during the 2023–2024 school year.**

**Total Staff**  **Total Parents**  **Total Families**  **Total Campuses**

2. Provide the number of students in each grade, by type of school, projected to be served under the grant program in 2024–2025.

Charter School Type	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Replicating State-Authorize <input type="text"/>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

**Total Staff**  **Total Parents**  **Total Families**  **Total Campuses**

3. Provide the number of students to be served in 2023 -2024 who would otherwise attend an F-rated campus (from the most recent accountability ratings) that serves the same grade levels as the proposed charter school. Please click on the [All Campuses by Rating](#) for more information.

Charter School Type	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
<input type="text"/>															

**Not Applicable - No students will be served during the 2023–2024 school year.**

**Total Staff**  **Total Parents**  **Total Families**  **Total Campuses**

4. Provide the names and nine-digit county/district/campus numbers of the F-rated campuses (from the most recent accountability ratings) that serve the same grade levels as the proposed charter school that you will be impacting as described above. Please click on the [All Campuses by Rating](#) link for more information.

#	District Name	Campus Name	9 Digit CDC Number
1.	Leander ISD	Camacho Elementary	246913
2.	Leander ISD	Knowles Elementary	246913
3.	Georgetown ISD	Cooper Elementary	246904
4.	Taylor ISD	Main Street 45	246911
5.	Taylor ISD	Pasemann 1-3	246911
6.	Taylor ISD	T H Johnson PreK-K	216911

**Not Applicable - No students will be served during the 2023–2024 school year.**

5. Qualified Opportunity Zone: Provide the census tract number if the proposed campus will be located in a [Qualified Opportunity Zone](#).

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**10. 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 grant.

- The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant.
- Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>
Group	<input type="text"/>	Barrier	<input type="text"/>

**11. PNP Equitable Services**

PNP Equitable Services **does not apply** to this grant.

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**12. Request for Grant Funds**

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

**Payroll Costs**

1.	COO/Project Manager half-time	75000
2.	Registrar 8 months	40000
3.	Principal 3 months / Assistant Principal 2 months	37000
4.	IB Curriculum coordinator 2 months / Campus admin coordinator 3 months	25000
<b>Payroll Subtotal:</b>		172000

**Professional and Contracted Services**

6.	Installation of telephone and IT/network infrastructure	100000
7.		
8.		
9.		
<b>Professional and Contracted Services Subtotal:</b>		100000

**Supplies and Materials**

11.	Communications system components phone and IT	120000
12.	Furniture	340000
13.	Instructional and admin computer equipment	168000
<b>Supplies and Materials Subtotal:</b>		628000

**Other Operating Costs**

15.		
16.		
<b>Other Operating Costs Subtotal:</b>		

**Capital Outlay**

18.		
19.		
<b>Capital Outlay Subtotal:</b>		

Direct and indirect administrative costs:

**TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:**

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**Appendix I: Negotiation and Amendments**

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 of the TEA website and may be emailed to [competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov](mailto:competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov). Include all sections pertinent to the amendment (including budget attachments), along with a completed and signed copy of page 1 of the application. More detailed amendment instructions can be found on the last page of the budget template.

*You may duplicate this page.*

For amendments, choose the section you wish to amend from the drop down menu on the left. In the text box on the right, describe the changes you are making and the reason for them.

Always work with the most recent negotiated or amended application. If you are requesting a revised budget, please include the budget attachments with your amendment.

Section Being Negotiated or Amended	Negotiated Change or Amendment
<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	
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<input type="text"/>	

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