February 2017

SOLICITING PEER REVIEWERS AND PANEL MODERATORS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2017 TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER GRANT COMPETITION

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) is seeking expert peer reviewers and panel moderators for the Fiscal Year 2017 competition for the Teacher and School Leader (TSL) program. The TSL program builds on the former Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program and promotes performance-based compensation and comprehensive human capital management systems for teachers, principals, and other school leaders. Support of these systems is intended to catalyze improvements in a district's human capital management system to drive increased student outcomes. In recognition of the importance that effective school leadership has on student achievement, TSL also promotes comprehensive Evaluation and Support Systems for all Educators within an LEA, especially those serving in high-need schools. By providing educators with performance-based compensation, including robust career ladder opportunities and a range of related educator supports–such as peer-to-peer coaching and job-embedded professional development–the TSL program aims to improve student outcomes by increasing educators' effectiveness. More information about TSL is available at
http://innovation.ed.gov/what-we-do/teacher-quality/teacher-and-school-leader-incentive-program/

The Invitation

ED seeks qualified individuals with the willingness and availability to serve as expert peer reviewers or panel moderators for the Teacher and School Leader grant competition.
Peer reviewers will work independently and as part of a panel with other expert reviewers to read, evaluate, and score TSL applications based on the criteria established by ED.

Panel moderators will provide support and oversight of the technical review process for assigned panels and ensure that all Reviewers read, provide appropriate comments, and score assigned applications in a timely manner. Panel moderators will also be responsible for assuring the quality of peer reviewers' comments.

The review process will include an onsite panel discussion tentatively scheduled to take place in mid-late June, 2017 in Washington, DC. The purpose of the onsite panel discussion is to: (1) ensure that all members of the panel share a common understanding of the content of the applications and selection criteria; (2) discuss areas in which reviewers differ in their scoring; and (3) allow reviewers to finalize their scores based upon these discussions. The purpose of the discussion is not for panel members to reach consensus, but rather for each reviewer to use the conversation to inform their independent

expert judgment in scoring applications. Prior to the onsite panel discussion, each peer reviewer will independently read, score, and comment on applications, and participate in a brief conference call with their panel to discuss preliminary scores and comments with their panel members. Both panel reviewers and panel moderators will receive an honorarium of $1,500 for participating in the TSL application review process.

Required Expertise

In order to serve as an expert peer reviewer or panel moderator for the FY 2017 TSL competition, individuals must be able to demonstrate that they possess professional and educational backgrounds and experiences that are appropriate for reviewing applications of the type and nature as those designed for the TSL grant. Specifically, reviewers and moderators must have expertise in effective high-quality evaluation systems for educators (either teacher and/or principal). Additionally, reviewers and moderators must also have specific expertise in one or more of the following areas:

- Human capital decision making;
- Teacher quality;
- Data management and analysis;
- Performance-based compensation;
- Educational policy;
- Working with students from low-income families;
- Teaching/school leadership; and/or
- Program evaluation
- Professional leadership or management (for individuals seeking to be assigned as panel moderators)

Peer reviewers and panel moderators must also possess internet access and strong computer skills.

Reviewer and Moderator Commitments

If you are interested in being considered as a reviewer or moderator, please determine if you are able to commit to these important requirements:

- **Availability** – Although the dates have not been finalized, panel moderators and peer reviewers must be available to travel to Washington, DC during the mid-late June, 2017 timeframe, to take part in onsite panel discussions that will last approximately 4 days. Reviewers and Moderators must also be available to participate in webinar training in early-mid June, 2017. Final dates for the onsite panel discussion and webinar training will be confirmed by Friday, March 17, 2017

- **Quality of Review** – Each reviewer **must** commit to providing detailed, objective, constructive, and timely written reviews for each assigned application. These reviews will be used to recommend applications for funding. They will also be shared with each applicant following the reviews.

- **Computer Literacy** – The reviews will be completed electronically; therefore, reviewers and moderators must be proficient with computer use and word processing software in order to facilitate the timely completion of assigned applications.

- **Absence of Conflict of Interest** – Reviewers and Moderators may not have any actual or apparent conflicts of interest. To determine whether a conflict of interest may exist, ask yourself:
    - o Do you plan to assist in the preparation of a Teacher and School Leader grant application, or provide consultations services to an applicant?
    - o Do you or your spouse have a personal financial interest in any of the proposed projects – e.g.; will you serve as project director, principal investigator, or consultant in a proposed project that is in review for possible TSL funding?

    Reviewers and Moderators will receive a $1,500 honorarium for their time and effort, contingent upon completion of the above requirements and consistent with the required schedule.

Apply for Consideration as a FY 2017 TSL Competition Peer Reviewer or Panel Moderator

If you are (1) interested in serving as a Peer Reviewer or Panel Moderator during the FY 2017 TSL competition, (2) believe you will be available during the timeframes identified above, and (3) can meet the above-outlined commitments for serving as an expert reviewer or moderator, please e-mail a copy of your current résumé (no more than 5 pages) and the TSL Peer Reviewer/Panel Moderator Information Form to the TSL Program at TSL@ed.gov with "Peer Reviewer Application" or " Panel Moderator Application" in the subject line, depending on your first preference for how you would like to participate during the review. Please note that while your stated preference to serve as a peer reviewer or panel moderator will certainly be considered when making panel assignments, final assignment decisions will ultimately depend on the number of grant applications received.

The deadline to submit your resume to the TSL program for consideration as a peer reviewer or panel moderator for this competition is March 31, 2017. Please include in your resume a brief list of career highlights or bullet points outlining your specific expertise as it relates to the "Required Expertise" detailed above. **Please do not exceed the five-page limit for resumes.**

Note: When you submit the TSL Peer Reviewer/Panel Moderator Information Form, be sure it is saved in **MS Word format** and ensure that the file is named using the following naming convention: lastnamefirstname_TSLreviewer Information Form.

Program Information: For more information about the TSL Program, please visit: http://innovation.ed.gov/what-we-do/teacher-quality/teacher-and-school-leader-incentive-program/

Next, Important Steps

Once you submit your résumé and TSL Peer Reviewer/Panel Moderator Information Form, your name will be added to the TSL Program office's list of experts available and interested in reviewing applications and/or moderating panels in the TSL 2017 grant competition.

Program staff will analyze the list to ensure the cadre of reviewers and moderators selected represents an appropriate mix of perspectives and expertise and will contribute accordingly to the highly rigorous, TSL review process.

You will be notified by email no later than April 30, 2017 to confirm your participation, if ED selects you as a reviewer or moderator for this competition. If for some reason, after you submit your application, you are **not** interested or available to serve as a reviewer or moderator, or you have a conflict of interest that prevents you from helping in this competition, please advise us so we can remove you from the list of possible reviewers and moderators.

This invitation will be placed on several of the Department's LISTSERVS. We ask that you please recommend other experts in the above fields that may be interested in participating in this peer review.

If you have any questions please contact Mr. Orman Feres at Orman.Feres@ed.gov or Ms. Patricia Searles at Patricia.Searles@ed.gov.

Thank you for your consideration!

TSL program staff