

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/15/2015 08:32 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	8
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	20
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	25	19
Quality of Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt Plan	20	18
Quality of Project Evaluation		
1. Quality of Project Eval	20	0
Total	100	65

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2015 Ready To Learn Review Panels - 2: 84.295A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

Superhero school creates STEM learning for girls underrepresented in the field of science, English language learners, and children with learning disabilities. Girls will improve STEM learning through the use of this product with female superhero characters that they can relate too. For instance, the female character Maxie has super-human strength and she uses her powers of observation and questions to lead other children to new ways of thinking and coming up with a solution. Good common core links and educational foundation ensure the product will have a curriculum that will be used in school because it will include quality content for teaching children the Next Generation Science standards.

This is a very worthy project that contains promising new strategies because it creates much needed digital resources and media that incorporate content from the Next Generation Science Standards. The fact that the project combines Common Core Language Arts non-fiction with science standards in the creation of Superhero School: Harnessing the Power of Science, Literacy, and Media is an approach that is needed and currently lacking in educational materials. What separates this application from others using science is the use of superhero characters that represent different genders, race/ethnicities, and disabilities. For instance, Harold is blind but he is often the first to figure out how to solve a problem. Each character uses superhero scientific abilities in the series to resolve problems. Maxie demolishes a wall using her superpower of strength but at the same time demonstrates an understanding of force and motion (pushes and pulls can have different strengths and directions), cause and effect, and scientific methods superpowers (inquiry, designing and testing solutions, data collection and analysis).

Weaknesses:

More detail is needed to describe other characters in the show and the content of what the narrative of an episode will be like to ensure that the show is targeting the racial and ethnic backgrounds of the populations most in need. Only Maxie is described in detail. One sentence is used to describe the Harold character. Knowing more details about the characters and settings of episodes would ensure that the product being developed contains characters and content that represent at risk populations.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, strong theory means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.)

(iii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

Note: In responding to the Quality of the Project Design selection criterion, an applicant should include a detailed description of its proposal to develop media and conduct outreach, as described in section 2431 of the ESEA.

Strengths:

The project will use technology apps, videos, ebooks, games, and websites to address gaps in reading achievement, align STEM with literacy instruction, and accelerate the use of technology for children to acquire reading proficiency. What makes the instructional approach strong is a project design that uses established curriculum frame works including the Next Generation Science standards. The suites of interactive games will have embedded assessments and analytics to measure learners knowledge. The production team is integrated so that experienced media producers, independent researchers, experts in early childhood, science education, videogame designers work simultaneously to create a product that is both commercially viable and educationally sound. The videogame design team on this project is dedicated to using best practices in game design and assessment for young children, ELL, and disabilities.

Next Generation Science Standards and Common Core Standards for English Language Arts will be used to teach key academic vocabulary related to science. A logic model is included with effective resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. The logic model had very detailed descriptions of each area. For instance, under resources the expertise of the project, partners, and contractors was listed which indicate that the model was not only well thought out but also that tasks have already been assigned to specific groups who have begun work on activities and outputs. An example is that for educational outreach SciGirls connect is using a successful outreach program model to create research-based practices for engaging Latino families. Outcomes such as children learn the scientific inquiry processes seem reasonable and a logical outcome of using the deliverables created for this project.

The outcomes for the project are listed as more children will participate in media-enhanced formal and informal science and literacy education opportunities; measurable increases in science knowledge, and literacy fluency; an increased number of parents/caregivers will value and support science learning and literacy; an increased number of children from minority and immigrant populations will engage in science and literacy; increased participation by educational organizations; and an increased number of formal and informal educators will be trained in best science, literacy, and cultural competency. These are broad curriculum goals for science and narrowing them to more specific goals will ensure that the project curriculum is manageable.

The project uses formative assessment throughout the project as well as embedded analytics and assessments for continuous review and improvement of projects. The formative assessment is conducted right from the beginning of the project so that the production and curriculum team can revise content as the product is developed which will lead to the best curricular content possible. Summative evaluation will also be conducted to ensure that the completed product is successful in teaching content to at risk children.

Weaknesses:

Having many curricular objectives is good, but having too may deter from the success of the project. The show might want to pick one or two specific strands of the standards to address initially and add on to the standards each year rather than

try to accomplish everything at once. Although the project does a good job of listing specific science standards the proposal did not specifically list curriculum standards that will be used for the literacy and social emotional language and skills. It also seems that the only adaption for children with disabilities is adjustment of text size.

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(ii) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

TPT is one of the highest rated PBS stations in the nation and has created Emmy and award winning shows. The station has experience creating high profile science shows including Newton's Apple, Dragonfly TV, and SciGirls. They will be able to establish partnerships and deliver video and interactive content in English and Spanish at free or low cost. TPT has 30 years of experience creating TV and media. Hulu and Netflix will be used to distribute the product nationwide. American Public Television will be distributing the product nationwide with a campaign that begins six to eight months before the series begins and APT has confirmed its interest and support of the series. The company Portfolio Entertainment will deploy international sales staff to distribute the product to worldwide markets. Revenue from international sales will be used to extend the series beyond the Ready to Learn grant period. TPT will also develop a superhero fundraising campaign asking for smaller gifts of \$5,000 to \$25,000 from corporate and foundation donors. The project platform for GlassLab games will charge a graduated licensing fee for the Superhero school platform based on the number of users accessing the server. TPT will hire a marketing and promotions firm to assist with planning and strategies for attracting broad audiences.

The large number of episodes and interactive games, 40 episodes of educational television along with a suite of 24 interactive games, half of which will be developed as apps, will ensure that there is a large amount of product to market to sponsors.

Weaknesses:

A specific plan is not included for how the products will be promoted and shared nationwide. The proposal lists what will be used such as Netflix but not how the product will be distributed to companies like Amazon. TPT has the ability to market nationwide but a lack of a detailed plan of how this will happen weakens the proposal. The fact that the marketing and promotions firm has not been chosen and is primarily responsible for creating the marketing plan is a weakness in this current proposal.

This criterion was thoroughly discussed and my score reflects my professional assessment of this section.

Reader's Score: 19

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(iii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

TPT has received and managed educational grants in the past successfully. TPT has over two decades of experience managing, large, federally funded grant projects. A detailed timeline identifying key deliverables for each year of the project, and assigning responsibilities for specific staff is included in the proposal. The timelines and milestones for the project are listed by year so the reader knows what content is created each year. For instance, in year two of the project season 1 animations will be created and development of the games and website will begin. The project chart details when outreach, production, and planning/design/development will do their jobs.

Qualified personnel are listed in the project with resumes. The plan for creating the content is aligned with experts who will manage that area of the plan. The roles and responsibilities of each core team member are included in a chart. For instance, [REDACTED] is the STEM Content and outreach manager. She will be responsible for creating the content framework and overseeing science educational content development in the shows. The qualifications for each of these key personnel are included in the management plan. The personnel are experienced and are qualified to do their role in the project. An example is [REDACTED], the managing producer, who has worked on series including SciGirls, Hoop Dreams, Alive From Off Center, and Transplant: A Gift for Life. She is qualified to produce the project.

Commitment letters are included from each partner. The letters indicate that there is support for the project. Portfolio Entertainment has already committed \$2 million toward the development of the TV series for Superhero school. GlassLab games will partner with Superhero School as indicated by their commitment letter. WestEd has committed to being the evaluator for the project. Capstone Publishing has signed as a partner for the publishing.

Weaknesses:

It would be stronger if they could secure PBS. Although commitment letters show support they do not indicate how this support will be given to the project particularly from APT, which the project relies heavily on for marketing the show.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and

qualitative data to the extent possible.

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards means the standards set forth in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0, March 2014), which can be found at the following link: [http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19.](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19))

Strengths:

Not applicable

Weaknesses:

Not applicable

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/15/2015 08:32 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/15/2015 12:20 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	8
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	18
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	25	20
Quality of Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt Plan	20	20
Quality of Project Evaluation		
1. Quality of Project Eval	20	0
Total	100	66

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2015 Ready To Learn Review Panels - 2: 84.295A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant describes how they will provide services for students (5-8) at risk through 40 ½ hour tv shows, interactive games, ebooks, and children website. They presented some recent literature that demonstrate the statistics on how black, Hispanics, FARM, and students with disabilities performed below basic proficiency. Based on the narrative I think is fair to say that they have the evidence that sustain the idea of creating the product. And also, using technology will facilitate the access to students at risk in be better in literacy and science. Starting early in life it is beneficial. I like also when they align problems characters face with science concepts-for example, Maxie accidentally demolishes a wall while testing her super strength and through that understands forces and motion.

(ii) I like how the program focuses on, and also has experts in, the areas of English language learning and children with disabilities. Creating the products in both languages and incorporating ways to help children with disabilities to obtain the information, are promising, innovative, and important strategies.

Weaknesses:

(i) Although they understand the importance of impacting Black, Hispanic, FARM, and children with disabilities, the narrative doesn't tell me how the target population will identify with the characters of these particular Superhero media products. Based on what I know about the books they are using as a principal idea, there is no diversity in the characters. I think that is a problem if you are making a case of the importance of impacting Black, Hispanic, FARM, and children with disabilities. It is not clear if they will add characters that will be similar to the target population. In the complete proposal there is not a section that describes the program, storyline, or character descriptions (how are they, etc).

(iii) In terms of impacting Spanish speaking families, they are developing culturally relevant approaches with five research based strategies and all of them are not current, some more than 10 years old. That takes out credibility of this expert in diversity. If you want to talk about "Build relationships and establish trust" from 2004 you can find something related to that called "Learning to Develop a Culturally Relevant Approach to 21st Century" from 2014. Also, if you want to talk about "Integrate experiences that are culturally relevant and personally meaningful" from 1999 you can easily find "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy" from 2013. It is just making an effort. When I read something with literature that is not up to date, it gives me the impression that they are copy and paste from older proposals.

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, strong theory means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.)

(iii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

Note: In responding to the Quality of the Project Design selection criterion, an applicant should include a detailed description of its proposal to develop media and conduct outreach, as described in section 2431 of the ESEA.

Strengths:

i) Reading the application it is easy to see that the applicant is making an effort to fulfill the statutory requirements. The narrative mentions their interest in working with low income children and families (including ELL and with disabilities), also, how they plan to distribute the program, and finally, their interest in school readiness focusing on science. There are a lot of materials supporting the main product. There are the learning pods for teachers. And also, they will Nationwide distribute and disseminate through public tv, apps, and internet. To my understanding the basic information is there to comply with RTL. They are taking into consideration safety with COPPA requirements.

(ii) In terms of a strong theory, they mention how their project will be shaped by establish curriculum frameworks, like Common Core and Next Generation Standards. Page e34 presents their Logic Model. It describes very well and in many details the resources/inputs, the activities/strategies, outputs/deliverable, outcomes/aims, and impacts. I like it because it gives you a lot of information, it is not only one word or phrase.

Weaknesses:

(i) Even though the information pertinent to the statutory requirements is there, there are a few aspects that concern me: they are creating materials for children and families for low income/at risk students, but the main product, the tv show, has characters that do not represent diversity. In page 22 they say that characters represent diversity but I didn't see it. However their partner Portfolio, owns the television and interactive media rights for the Superhero School book and has an in-house animation department (E55) so I guess they can add diverse characters if they want. Also, there are moments in which the literature they are reviewing it is not so current even though in one section they mentioned that the project is built on a current research in science and literacy – but which one?

(ii) If they want to include children with disabilities, they should have a theory about that (not just an integrated team). The only mention is a person that is an expert and will help with the development.

(iii) I found the goals but couldn't find specific objectives.

(iv) The narrative mentions that they will shape their work with a process of continuous review and improvement through formative research as well as embedded assessment. Also with extensive input from advisors. But how they will do that?

(v) There is a lot of "will do, will develop, will conduct". For example, the applicant wrote in the Best Practice Resources section: To create resources for educators, staff will conduct literature reviews and develop best practice recommendations for educators on several topics. I would expect that at this point that review would be done.

“This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.”

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(ii) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant shows in the narrative evidence of and extensive track record producing high quality television. They have also experience with science projects. I think they can manage this kind of project. They will mount an aggressive station relations campaign and in page e42-43 they explain it.

(ii) They describe how they will use it in STEM Festival, overnights, screenings, museums, and libraries. Plus teachers can use it in class. They will encourage families to go to the park, coffee shops, or other gathering places. I think that is good.

Weaknesses:

In term of the tv series they are committed to working with PBS but PBS hasn't secured a commitment with them. As an alternative they CAN commit, not sure yet, with APT. I didn't see a commitment from APT. They have them as an alternative if PBS says no. My concern is, what happen if both, PBS and APT said no? What would happens?

“This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.”

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(iii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

(i) Page e23 describe 7 goals that will guide their work. Page e48 shows 2 tables with the project timeline and deliverable. Then, in page e49, there is a table with team members' roles and responsibilities. Pages e48-49 show three tables with project timeline, project deliverables, and members' roles and responsibilities. The project management procedures and mechanisms were clearly outlined in a chart. The charts are divided in 4 sections: plan, design, and development; tv, digital, comic production; outreach and marketing; and evaluation. I really like that specificity.

(ii) The proposal has identified the key personnel for the project. It is clearly demonstrated that the PD has experience working with this type of project and has been working with the Institution a long time so he knows the population and is committed to it. Other key personnel, described on the proposal, also have a lot of experiences related to the project such as extensive career in network and local television, bilingual researching, and experience in film and multimedia. Also, the consultants of this project are all nationally recognized in their fields (see resumes) For example, one of them being an expert on the use of digital media by children with disabilities And another one having experience producing children's educational media.

(iii) The applicant includes in the proposal 20 letters certifying the commitment from companies or individuals expressing their genuine interest in being part of the project. The letters states the reasons (strong ones) why they believe in the project.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses in this area.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards means the standards set forth in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0, March 2014), which can be found at the following link: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19>.)

Strengths:

"not applicable"

Weaknesses:

“not applicable”

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/15/2015 12:20 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/15/2015 09:12 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	25
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	25	25
Quality of Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt Plan	20	20
Quality of Project Evaluation		
1. Quality of Project Eval	20	0
Total	100	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2015 Ready To Learn Review Panels - 2: 84.295A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

TPT cites several reports (Annie E. Casey, NAEP, USDOE) that highlight the need for addressing the lack of science education - especially among minority, ELL, and low-income students. The detail provided demonstrates an awareness and concerted effort to concentrate on these students and families while creating media products. This proposal also focuses on the need to attract girls to STEM subject areas, which shows an acute understanding of current educational issues in the field. TPT is attempting to specifically interest girls through the media they produce. Superhero School is a recognized brand that has the potential to appeal to wide and diverse audiences. The concept, itself, is innovative in that it builds on the popularity of "superhero" yet expands the idea to make it more inclusive and more educative while capitalizing on the appeal of media and games.

In addition, an integrated science curriculum model (addressing the NGSS) is innovative, as this has not yet been done through public media. Most programs to date focus on specific content areas and develop programs that are limited by those same content areas. Integrating science across the curriculum reflects how students learn in the "real world" – particularly in informal environments – and will benefit the both the range of domains covered resulting in more natural narratives.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, strong theory means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.)

(iii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

Note: In responding to the Quality of the Project Design selection criterion, an applicant should include a detailed description of its proposal to develop media and conduct outreach, as described in section 2431 of the ESEA.

Strengths:

TPT's proposal includes a very strong project design. "Superhero School" (SS) is a proven brand that has wide appeal and a range of media possibilities and potential. Therefore, the property has a strong probability to attract students and families of diverse background and socioeconomic status. Further, TPT has named girls as a specific audience for STEM interest development. SS has the potential to appeal to young girls through characters and narratives. The project's leadership and management found similar appeal and success with the previous program, Scigirls.

The detailed deliverables and products are especially strong in this proposal. The SS concept provides an exceptional platform for digital games, traditional games, books, comic books, apps, etc. and the proposal describes how these games (specifically, digital) will include assessments and respond to user learning styles. The wide array of games and activities will also be accessible for players with disabilities, with creation guided by national experts in the field (pe27). Securing a firm to design these games is also unique in this proposal as the leadership team will write an RFP, allowing for selection among top companies and proposals.

The proposal is supported by strong theory detailed in the logic model. The resources and inputs outline TPT's plan to partner with experts in the field as they develop products and plan outreach. The explanation of the deliverables is clear, as are the outcomes and measurable goals. The use of best practices, informed by current literature, will compliment the formative research as they continually review their process and outcomes (pe20).

The proposal explains the intent to model outreach based on previously successful endeavors (SciGirls) and therefore, has both the proven track record and a template to implement quality products and outreach. Scigirls outreach has established an extensive network of partner organizations that adapt individual programs to the needs of the community served. This network will be a valuable resource for the current project.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(ii) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

Based on previous successful projects, TPT has the capacity to bring this project to scale. Recent similar successful projects include Newton's Apple, Dragonfly TV, and SciGirls. For the current project, TPT's has established a partnership with Portfolio. Portfolio produces a program currently airing on PBS, thereby also demonstrating capacity to bring SS to scale.

The proposal outlines the utility of the resulting products. The proposal describes strong partnerships and an understanding of the series and interactive media distribution, including alternative platforms such as OTT and YouTube that will reach wide audiences. Hiring an outside marketing and promotions firm and offering station stipends in years 4 and 5 will ensure further dissemination through social media and local events.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(iii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

The current leadership is well qualified and the management/explanation charts show a core team (pe49) that will guide the project as curriculum and content are developed; media is created; and evaluation occurs.

The proposal's tables on pages pe48 and 49 that include the timeline, deliverables and core team members are clear and outline specific the specific goals and responsibilities of the project members. The staff of TPT is very qualified (including a co-executive producer that has an M.Ed.) as are the support and advisory members they have brought on as partners. It

is apparent from current and past projects (most recently SciGirls) that the partners will work well together to create quality media resources and outreach programs.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards means the standards set forth in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0, March 2014), which can be found at the following link: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19>.)

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/15/2015 09:12 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/11/2015 10:35 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	25	0
Quality of Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt Plan	20	0
Quality of Project Evaluation		
1. Quality of Project Eval	20	20
Total	100	20

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2015 Ready To Learn Review Panels - 2: 84.295A

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, strong theory means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.)

(iii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

Note: In responding to the Quality of the Project Design selection criterion, an applicant should include a detailed description of its proposal to develop media and conduct outreach, as described in section 2431 of the ESEA.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(ii) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(iii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards means the standards set forth in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0, March 2014), which can be found at the following link: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19>.)

Strengths:

The applicant presents a strong evaluation plan. The independent evaluator is experienced in designing and conducting national project evaluations, including Ready-to-Learn programs; such expertise will have a positive impact on assessing the project and contributing to the education field. The needs assessment (p. 45-46) is a thoughtful and thorough approach to not only determine the product market, but also to learn about the needs of their target audience (children with disabilities and Spanish-speaking children).

To continuously review and improve the products, the evaluator will use embedded analytics and assessments to access real-time data (p. 6-7), which should result in high quality information. These usability studies will capture user actions, reactions, and feedback and will appropriately inform product development (p. e72). The use of these formative methods, to collect and analyze such timely data, will effectively support quality control during product development. Another valuable component of the formative evaluation is the focus on how best to display assessment data for caregivers and educators (p. e72), which relates to the outreach and family engagement outcomes (p. 20). This piece is important because adults will need to be able to understand and use the information in order to effectively support their children; it is evident that the project team recognizes and values the adults' role in their children's education.

The intended activities in the summative evaluation should produce high quality data to determine literacy and science outcomes. This study is designed to meet What Works Clearinghouse Group standards without reservations which will provide evidence about project effectiveness. Two randomized controlled trials (RCT) are described: one in afterschool programs in year 4 and a second in classrooms in year 5 (p. 44), and participants will be recruited from at-risk populations who are similar to the target audience (p. 48). Various standardized and researcher-developed measures, which are appropriate and relevant to literacy and science skills, will be administered to examine the impact of the learning resources. Researchers will monitor treatment implementation and will be responsible for administering pre- and post-test assessments. This hands-on approach for outcome data collection strengthens the evaluation by maintaining fidelity and consistency in operation.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses seen.

Reader's Score: 20

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 07/11/2015 10:35 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/11/2015 08:00 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Quality of Project Design	25	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	25	0
Quality of Management Plan		
1. Quality of Mgmt Plan	20	0
Quality of Project Evaluation		
1. Quality of Project Eval	20	18
Total	100	18

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - 2015 Ready To Learn Review Panels - 2: 84.295A

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: Twin Cities Public Television, Inc. (U295A150012)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. The Secretary considers the significance of the proposed project. In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project will provide services or otherwise address the needs of students at risk of educational failure.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the design of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the design of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach for meeting statutory purposes and requirements.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is supported by strong theory. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, strong theory means a rationale for the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice that includes a logic model.)

(iii) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed development efforts include adequate quality controls and, as appropriate, repeated testing of products.

Note: In responding to the Quality of the Project Design selection criterion, an applicant should include a detailed description of its proposal to develop media and conduct outreach, as described in section 2431 of the ESEA.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. The Secretary considers the applicant's strategy to scale the proposed project. In determining the applicant's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice, or to work with others to ensure that the proposed process, product, strategy, or practice can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.

(ii) The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used effectively in a variety of other settings.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

(iii) The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Strengths:

Not applicable.

Weaknesses:

Not applicable.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(i) The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.

(ii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide timely guidance for quality assurance.

(iii) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. (As defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards means the standards set forth in the What Works Clearinghouse Procedures and Standards Handbook (Version 3.0, March 2014), which can be found at the following link: <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/DocumentSum.aspx?sid=19>.)

Strengths:

The methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project. For example, the applicant describes a set of student outcome measures, along with their levels of internal consistency and domains tested, to demonstrate the alignment of these measures to the intended outcomes of the project (page 49). The five evaluation research questions are closely aligned with the outcomes and impacts summarized in the logic model (page 45), increasing the likelihood that performance measures are aligned with project outcomes.

The needs assessments, iterative test results, formative reviews, implementation studies, and summative studies conducted Years 1-5 have the potential to produce quantitative and qualitative data that can be used to provide timely guidance for quality assurance (page 34, 44). The evaluation plan includes many opportunities for providing timely guidance for quality assurance. For example, formative support during resource development will evaluate the extent to which project-developed resources are educationally sound and aligned with the intents and purposes of the overall project (page 44). Implementation data will be gathered in a variety of settings to ensure intended target audiences are well-served (page 45). Needs assessments will provide timely guidance for quality assurance that project-developed materials meet the needs of targeted audiences (page 46). The applicant lists four activities including usability testing, reviews of digital assets and video episodes by subject matter experts and teachers, and feasibility testing of digital assets in classrooms and informal educational settings that are specifically designed to provide developers with timely feedback during development process (page 46-47).

The methods of evaluation include two randomized controlled studies (RCTs) that have the potential to produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) Evidence Standards with reservations (page 47-48). The applicant includes power analyses to demonstrate that sample sizes of 60 each will be sufficient to detect effect sizes of .25, which meets WWC Standards (page 49). The applicant includes effective strategies for monitoring fidelity of implementation for both treatment and control sites, which will strengthen the confidence of study findings (page 50). The applicant includes a well-thought-out analysis plan that checks for outliers, attrition, and other factors that could affect the generalizability of the results (page 51).

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not clearly describe the population of afterschool programs and grade 2 classrooms from which the samples will be selected for the RCTs beyond a requirement that afterschool programs have appropriate technology available (page 48) and that students are deemed at risk of educational failure. Although the applicant states that materials will be provided in English and Spanish (page 5, 7), there are no assurances that targeted populations of English language learners will be included in the studies.

This application was thoroughly discussed with respect to each selection criterion. My scores reflect my professional assessment of the application with respect to those criteria.

Reader's Score: 18

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/11/2015 08:00 PM