

FY2020 EDUCATION STABILIZATION FUND –  
RETHINK K-12 EDUCATION MODELS (ESF-REM) GRANT COMPETITION

## CALL FOR PEER REVIEWERS

### CONTEXT

The Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K-12 Education Models (ESF-REM) discretionary grant program is a new funding opportunity designed to help States address the impact of the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on educational services across the Nation. The ESF-REM grant program provides funds to SEAs in States with the highest coronavirus burden to ensure that all public and non-public school students in the State have equitable access to, and the ability to choose, high-quality educational opportunities and services for remote learning that meet their individual needs and promote the continuity of learning to improve student outcomes. The U.S. Department of Education’s (the Department) Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) is seeking peer reviewers for the ESF-REM grant competition.

### WHAT?

The Department’s discretionary grants peer review process utilizes non-federal, independent, qualified individuals to serve as peer reviewers. The Department’s peer review process is designed to identify and fund the highest-quality applications and create opportunities for the general public to participate in government and gain insight into the federal funding process. The Department relies on its peer reviewers to use their professional experience, content knowledge, expertise, and judgement to evaluate and score submitted applications against the selection criteria published in the program’s [Federal Register](#) notice inviting applications. Scores from the peer reviewers are then rank ordered to inform the Department’s funding decisions. For increased transparency, the Department also shares the peer reviewer’s scores and comments with each applicant and the general public.

### WHO?

The Department is seeking peer reviewers from various educational backgrounds and professions, including State or district education officials, PK-12 teachers and principals, college or university educators, researchers, evaluators, and service providers (including providers of on-line instruction and virtual schools) with experience in one or more of the following areas:

#### ***Remote Learning***

- Experience developing or expanding a high-quality course-access program or statewide virtual school.
- Knowledge of various educational models for remote learning, including planning and implementation.
- Understanding and knowledge of the development of curricula and courses for remote access.
- Understanding of the successes and challenges of remote learning for diverse groups of students.

- Understanding of remote learning innovative practices and models and implementation of such practices and models.
- Knowledge of, and experience with, studies of school reforms focused on remote learning.

***State Education Administration and Curriculum for Remote Learning***

- Knowledge of elementary and secondary curricula and courses for remote learning opportunities.
- Experience administering and managing a course-assess program or statewide virtual school to include knowledge of fiscal management and implementation strategies.

***Parent Involvement to Support Remote Learning***

- Knowledge of promising practices associated with conducting outreach to diverse groups of students and parents to assist them with identifying educational services, service providers, specific courses or programming not already offered through a State’s microgrant, course-assess program, or statewide virtual school.
- Experience administering a microgrant program for educational services to students and parents.
- Experience with parent and student support systems including collaborations with nonprofits, local businesses, local educational agencies, institutions of higher education, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Understanding barriers and solutions for parents and students in accessing high-quality remote learning opportunities.

***Grant Peer Review***

- Experience reviewing discretionary grant applications for the Department

In addition to the specialized areas described above, potential peer reviewers should also possess high standards of analysis and evaluative writing, as well as be able to assess grant applications with a high degree of objectivity.

**REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the skills, attributes, and expertise highlighted above, peer reviewers must also meet the following requirements:

***Availability:*** Reviewers for the competition will need to dedicate approximately 80 hours for the review process. Forty hours are needed to review all assigned applications during the weeks of June 30 - July 6<sup>h</sup>, 2020, and another 3 - 6 hours are needed to participate in the teleconference with a panel of fellow peer reviewers during the week of July 6<sup>th</sup>. This time estimate includes participation in an orientation session by conference call/webinar prior to evaluating the applications, time for reading, scoring, developing comments, and discussing assigned applications.

***Location:*** Reviewers will read, score, develop, and revise comments remotely. Reviewers will participate in panel discussions via teleconference and then revise/finalize their written comments.

**Tools:** Each reviewer must have access to the Internet, a phone, a computer, a printer, and have the ability to interact within the web environment.

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No individual with a conflict of interest will be permitted to serve as a peer reviewer for the ESF-REM grant competition. If you are affiliated with an organization that intends to apply for a grant under the ESF-REM competition, depending on the nature of your affiliation, you may not be eligible to serve as a reviewer.

Prior to the start of all peer reviews in the Department, program staff are required to screen all potential peer reviewers for conflicts of interest. As a reviewer, you will have a conflict of interest if: you helped prepare an application, regardless of financial interest in the success or failure of that application; you have agreed to serve, or you have been offered a position, as an employee, advisor, or consultant on the project; and/or your personal financial interest will be affected by the outcome of the competition, which would include any family members, employees, or associates of the project applying for funding. These and other potential conflicts of interest will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis once identified/disclosed.

### **INTERESTED?**

If you would like to be considered for this role, please (1) register as a peer reviewer in the Department's grants management system, G5 at [www.g5.gov](http://www.g5.gov); and (2) submit an updated resume or curriculum vitae to [ESF-REM@ed.gov](mailto:ESF-REM@ed.gov) by **June 12, 2020**. Peer reviewers will receive an honorarium for their service.

The Department solicits reviewers without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. The Department will provide reasonable accommodations for a qualified individual with a disability so that individual might participate in the peer reviewer application process. If you require a reasonable accommodation to apply to participate in this review, please contact the EBP-REM staff by phone, 202-453-6984, or email at [ESF-REM@ed.gov](mailto:ESF-REM@ed.gov) no later than June 12, 2020 to ensure we can properly facilitate the application process.