**CALL FOR PEER REVIEWERS**

**Innovative Approaches to Literacy Program**

**FY 2021 U.S. Department of Education Discretionary Grant Competition**

Deadline: June 30, 2021

**CONTEXT:** The purpose of the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) program is to support high-quality programs designed to develop and improve literacy skills for children and students from birth through 12th grade in high-need LEAs and schools. The U.S. Department of Education (Department) intends to promote innovative literacy programs that support the development of literacy skills in low-income communities, including programs that: (1) develop and enhance effective school library programs, which may include providing professional development for school librarians, books, and up-to-date materials to high-need schools; (2) provide early literacy services, including pediatric literacy programs through which, during well-child visits, medical providers trained in research-based methods of early language and literacy promotion provide developmentally appropriate books and recommendations to parents to encourage them to read aloud to their children starting in infancy; and (3) provide high-quality books on a regular basis to children and adolescents from low-income communities to increase reading motivation, performance, and frequency.

**WHO:** The Department’s Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), and Office of Well Rounded Education (OWRE) seeks peer reviewers with demonstrated experience in the following professions: school and public library media specialists, reading and literacy specialists, Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade (PK-12) teachers and administrators, program evaluators, and PK-12 education consultants. The Department seeks reviewers with experience implementing high quality literacy activities. The Department is also seeking reviewers with knowledge of high needs communities and the challenges faced by students and their families. Additionally, the most qualified candidates may have expertise in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, staff development, strategic planning, evaluation and prior experience reviewing grant applications for other Federal programs.

**WHAT:** The Department will offer peer reviewers an honorarium. Peer reviewers will independently read, score, and provide written comments for grant applications submitted to the Department under the IAL program. These reviews will be used to recommend applications for funding.  Copies of the reviewer’s comments will be shared with respective applicants following the review; however, personally identifiable information will be redacted. Comments regarding winning applicants will also be made available to the general public following the completion of the application review process. Reviewers must adhere to the requirements listed in this Call for Peer Reviewers.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

* Availability: Each reviewer will need to dedicate approximately 60 hours of time for reading, scoring, developing comments, and discussing assigned applications over a two-week period, likely beginning the week of August 9, 2021. Reviewers must also participate in one of the Department’s webinar-based technical assistance sessions to prepare for the review. This webinar is tentatively scheduled for August 2, 2021.
* Tools: Each reviewer must have access to the Internet, a phone, a printer, and the ability to interact within the web environment. The review will be conducted totally online.
* Quality of review: Each reviewer must provide detailed, objective, constructive, and timely written reviews for each assigned application.

* Review Schedule: Once the review schedule is finalized, each reviewer must commit to the schedule in writing. Reviewers who are unable to commit to the agreed upon schedule during the competition will be dismissed.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST ISSUES:**

If you are affiliated with an organization that intends to apply for a grant under the IAL competition, you may not be eligible to serve as a reviewer. 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.

**TO APPLY:** Send an updated resume, in **Word or PDF** format, to InnovativeApproachestoLiteracy@ed.gov no later than June 30, 2021. Please include the following in the subject line of your e-mail: "2021 IAL Peer Review".

* You must register as a reviewer and submit your resume in G5 ([www.g5.gov](http://www.g5.gov/)). If you need help, you may contact the G5 helpdesk at edcaps.user@ed.gov or call 1-888-336-8930. The G5 system will require you to submit your resume in a PDF format only; please ensure your resume (maximum of 5 pages) includes a brief list of career highlights and/or outlines your specific expertise in one or more of the areas outlined in the above call for reviewers. Please do not exceed the five-page limit for resumes.
* When the G5 system prompts you for your areas of specialization, select all that are applicable to you, but please ensure you select at least one of the aforementioned IAL priority areas such as: school and public library media specialists, reading and literacy specialists, Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade (PK-12) teachers and administrators, program evaluators, PK-12 education consultants, and DEI. Please note that registering in G5 does not guarantee that you will be selected as a reviewer.
* To expedite consideration of your resume, be sure to send a copy (maximum of 5 pages) to InnovativeApproachestoLiteracy@ed.gov.

Note: If you are retired, please list all consulting positions or other relevant positions you have held since retirement. Please provide a full description of your professional work experience and substantive professional experience that are relevant to this type of work. We are interested in all work you have accomplished involving elementary and secondary education, literacy, library science/library-related, technology, DEI and performance-based measurements and outcomes, including any grant reviewing experience of other Federal programs.

Reasonable Accommodation Policy: The Department’s policy is to provide reasonable accommodation for volunteers, part-time employees, student interns, detailees, and temporary employees who are qualified individuals with disabilities, unless doing so poses an undue hardship. After a candidate is notified of his or her appointment as a reviewer, it is the reviewer’s responsibility to inform the Department in a timely manner of any disability that would require a need for reasonable accommodations in order to perform the duties of the position.

If you have any questions about any aspect of this document, please contact us at InnovativeApproachestoLiteracy@ed.gov.