

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/18/2022 04:44 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	12
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	9
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	57
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. COVID-19	3	3
Sub Total	6	6
Total	106	63

Technical Review Form

Panel #16 - EIR Early Phase - 16: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

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:

Reader's Score: 12

Sub

1. 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. (20 points)

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates the use of some promising new strategies that are a combination of several existing strategies. The On-Ramp Postsecondary Transitions (OPT) project will build on several evidence-based strategies, including interventions such as Dual Enrollment, Work Based Learning, college and career navigation supports, and a Comprehensive Continuum of Services (CCS). These planned interventions may increase the number of high-need students who are able to access and succeed in higher-quality Dual Education programming.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not make it clear how this program is unique and more promising than the individual components. The proposed project is a combination of several already tried and tested programming. The applicant makes some generalizations regarding the level of need for new programming. For example, the applicant states schools and colleges often offer Dual Enrollment courses based solely on factors such as instructor availability or student interest rather than planning sequenced offerings. The applicant also states that educators often lack clear information about how to structure high-quality Work-Based Learning. However, the applicant does not support these judgments with established data from the target population. Without the data to support the claims, it is difficult to determine the level of needs for additional programming.

Reader's Score: 12

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:

Reader's Score: 26

Sub

- 1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates clearly that solid conceptual frameworks have been established to support the quality of the project design. The frameworks include Dual Education, Work Based Learning, Career Navigation, and CCS strategies. These frameworks are supported by research that indicates that each framework has several interventions that have been successful. The proposed project will be expanding and combining elements from each of the supporting frameworks.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

- 2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly identified four clear and measurable goals. Those goals include expanding the number of schools creating OPI opportunities and expanding career navigation coursework. Each of the four goals is clearly aligned to several objectives and outcomes. The outcomes for the project are clearly outlined in the logic model. These efforts will produce a pathway for the success of the project design.

Weaknesses:

Some of the objectives are not stated in a clearly measurable manner. For example, one objective is to increase the number of DE courses offered. The applicant does not provide adequate baseline data for this objective.

Reader's Score: 4

- 3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (15 points)**

Strengths:

The applicant clearly defines the declines and gaps for students in postsecondary attainment and participation in Dual Enrollment programming in Colorado, the target population. The interventions planned within the proposed project will address these gaps and declines. The applicant will be selecting 40 schools in Colorado that are currently participating in the Path4Ward initiative through a competitive selection process with a preference for high schools serving a large proportion of high-needs students. These efforts will provide a pathway for meeting the needs of the target population.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide clear details as to the competitive and random selection process for the schools. The details would ensure that the students with the highest needs are included in the study. The details of the criteria for the competitive application would provide more clarity.

Sub

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant clearly demonstrates that the partners are committed to equitable and inclusive recruitment practices to seek and encourage applications from members of groups traditionally underrepresented. This includes appropriate actions to encourage diversity.

The key project personnel have appropriate education and training that will ensure that the proposed project will be completed. Several of the key personnel have training and experience in OPT activities as well as leadership skills. Some of the key personnel have experience in evaluation processes and grant management.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. 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. (10 points)

Strengths:

The management plan clearly demonstrates the defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. The task/milestones are linked effectively to the goals. The timelines are specific as to the year and quarter that the activities will occur. These efforts will ensure that the management team can complete

Sub

the proposed project on time and within budget.

Weaknesses:

The travel costs are relatively high considering the scope of the proposed project and the possibility of the use of virtual tools.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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:**

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

- 1. (1) 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 standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)**

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

- 2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)**

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

- 3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)**

Strengths:

N/A

Sub

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:

- (a) Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
- (b) Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
- (c) Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
- (d) Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
- (e) High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

Strengths:

The applicant demonstrates that the CCP 1 will be addressed by leveraging DE, WBL and CCNC to promote education equity and opportunity for underserved high school students. These efforts will provide for Dual Enrollment enhancement and work-based learning.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:

Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).

Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:

- (a) conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an

assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and

(b) using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

The applicant does address Competitive Preference 2 through the activities and interventions planned for the project. The applicant indicates that the proposed project will conduct community asset mapping and use evidence-based instructional approaches to expand access to rigorous course work by focusing on expanded DE for high need students. The project partners will conduct the asset mapping as a step toward the implementation of the CCS. The services provided through the CCS will be aligned to the results of the mapping. The CCS services are evidence-based. These efforts will ensure that the needs are met to address the gaps left by COVID-19 interruptions.³

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: **3**

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	16
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	9
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	61
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. COVID-19	3	3
Sub Total	6	6
Total	106	67

Technical Review Form

Panel #16 - EIR Early Phase - 16: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

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:

Reader's Score: 16

Sub

1. 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. (20 points)

Strengths:

The proposed project shows sufficient significance in dual enrollment strategies. This proposal builds on 4 proven dual enrollment strategies to improve educational attainment and achievement, in college and career readiness, for high-need high school students across the state of Colorado. The project builds upon these strategies by developing and implementing an entrepreneurial, evidence-based, field-initiated program that focuses on high-need and underserved students, improves their achievement and attainment, and supports their social, emotional, academic, and career development. According to the proposal, the new strategy meets a demand for equality in access to dual enrollment programs, the lack of navigation and support for high needs students regarding DE courses, and the effects of Covid-19 and how it relates to disengagement. The proposal calls for Strategic DE which builds on existing DE strategies by ensuring that courses are sequenced, aligned to pathways, and designed to maximize students' choices. The proposal also calls for a work-based learning component to build capacity, and college and career navigation courses to help students understand career options.

Weaknesses:

The applicant makes generalizations regarding the level of needs for new programing. For example, the applicant notes that there are four most urgent educational problems regarding DE, however, the applicant does not provide research to support these claims.

Reader's Score: 16

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:

Reader's Score: 26

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant provides a clear logic model (Appendix G) which includes descriptive inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes. The applicant provides a strong and clear framework which includes creating tools and resources that will support the implementation of this program including a blueprint for design principles and milestones, action plans, study maps, toolkits, and more. The logic model includes specific, measurable outcomes which are further detailed in the Information form and with specific measurable student outcomes (e117-121). The framework is supported by research establishing a model for success.

Weaknesses:

The are no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)

Strengths:

Goals are fairly clear in this proposal including 4 goals that center around expanding the program, implementation, partnerships, and sharing lessons learned. They plan to establish a baseline to measure progress over the 5-year grant period. Project Objectives and Performance Measures can be found on the Information form and some are measurable with student outcomes (e117-121). A correlation between the goals and the objectives/performance measures can be found in table 1 (e 37-38).

Weaknesses:

Some of the objectives and performance measures are more like tasks (done or not done) than they are measurable student outcomes. It would be clearer if the narrative included more information about outcomes and how they relate to goals and objectives.

Reader's Score: 3

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (15 points)

Strengths:

This proposal clearly and adequately defines high-need students in CO as students from low-income households, students of color, disengaged youth, and students most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The applicant provides ample research to show clear evidence of needs and aims to build the capacity of schools to ensure high-need students can access and succeed in improving HS and postsecondary achievement and attainment. the applicant makes a strong case for the needs of their target population and how they will address these needs.

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide clear details on the competitive and random nature of the selection process for schools or for students and does not clearly indicate a plan of action to ensure that the most at need students will be those selected.

Sub

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)

Strengths:

The proposal clearly indicates a commitment to equitable hiring and the applicant provides qualifications for key project personnel that are highly qualified for their roles in executing the project goals and objectives. Further details on personnel qualifications are in the résumés in Appendix B.

Weaknesses:

There were no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. 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. (10 points)

Strengths:

The applicant provides a quality management plan for the proposed project. Table 1 shows responsibilities for leading and supporting OPT milestones and activities, as well as the timeline and associated objectives and performance measures. The applicant identifies the individual staff members leading work on various activities and milestones. The management plan clearly identifies how it will manage the proposed project. The budget narrative clearly addresses all project components and appears adequate to meet the scope of the project.

Sub

Weaknesses:

Budgeted costs for travel appear high at \$75,000 of the total budget; however, an adequate description of how funds will be used has been included. It was odd that there was no money set aside for supplies.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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:**

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

- 1. (1) 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 standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)**

Strengths:

na

Weaknesses:

na

Reader's Score: 0

- 2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)**

Strengths:

na

Weaknesses:

na

Reader's Score: 0

- 3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)**

Strengths:

na

Weaknesses:

na

Sub

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:

- (a) Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
- (b) Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
- (c) Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
- (d) Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
- (e) High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

Strengths:

The applicant provides a clear project aimed at promoting educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunities for underserved students in high school by providing advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.

Weaknesses:

There are no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:

Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).

Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:

- (a) conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and
- (b) using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate

learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

This applicant clearly provides a project designed to build a CCS that supports high-need students and their families, including those most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and supports student engagement and re-engagement. This applicant clearly notes that it will conduct community asset mapping and student disengagement assessments to address the impacts of Covid-19 on its target population. According to the applicant, the maps and assessments will lead to key recommendations on fostering community partnerships, creating a CCS, and deploying reengagement strategies. This proposal aims to provide technical assistance on topics that include creating inclusive environments to support high-need students, CCS implementation, building a continuum of academic supports across K-12 and postsecondary, and partnership development.

Weaknesses:

There are no noted weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 3

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	20	16
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	10
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	9
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	0
Sub Total	100	61
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
1. Promoting Equity	3	3
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
1. COVID-19	3	3
Sub Total	6	6
Total	106	67

Technical Review Form

Panel #16 - EIR Early Phase - 16: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

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:

Reader's Score: 16

Sub

1. 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. (20 points)

Strengths:

The proposal demonstrates an innovative model to build on existing strategies for improving educational achievement, college readiness, and workforce training for high school students. The proposal provides for courses to accelerate academic achievement that leads to post-secondary degrees and credentials for the labor market. The proposal provides a means through a specific course – college and career navigation. The proposal provides an innovation aimed at improving students' achievement.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not focus on how this proposal would be different from what already exists. The proposal does not identify tools and resources that are already in place for replication to adopt the new model. The applicant does not describe how the program is unique from others.

Reader's Score: 16

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:

Reader's Score: 26

Sub

1. (1) The extent to which there is a conceptual framework underlying the proposed research or demonstration activities and the quality of that framework. (10 points)

Sub

Strengths:

The conceptual framework detailed specific roles and responsibilities for implementing the program. The proposal provides an excellent conceptual framework to improve achievement and student outcomes. The proposal builds on existing strategies for college course 101 and the workplace culture navigation course. The College and Career Navigation Course will include three main areas 1) college introduction, 2) an ethnographic approach to exploring the world of work, and 3) an early career navigation course. Further strategies include offering college credit courses, further accelerating students' progress.

Weaknesses:

Detailed current underlying research needs to be identified. More detail is needed on the competitive process that will be used to schools.

Reader's Score: 9

2. (2) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. (5 points)

Strengths:

The proposal identified appropriate goals, objectives, and outcomes. The proposal will provide a positive pathway for student achievement. The OPT (On-Ramp to Postsecondary Transition) partners will provide 4 goals and measurable outcomes over the 5-years a grant period to make a difference in achievement. The 4 goals are (1) expand the number of schools creating OPT opportunities, (2) Implement a CCNC and high-quality WBL aligned with the labor-market demand, (3) foster cross-sector partnerships to provide high-need students with a CCS, and (4) disseminate promising practices and lessons learned to a national audience. The 4 goals provides objectives and defined outcomes. The objectives are measurable; metrics aligned to the outcomes.

Weaknesses:

The applicant benchmark needs to show more student outcomes and include more narrative. The project objective to increase families understanding needs more narrative.

Reader's Score: 4

3. (3) The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs. (15 points)

Strengths:

The proposal provides a design to address the needs of the target population by engaging students that struggle with academic, social, and emotional engagement. The proposal will include demographic data based on race, ethnicity, gender, special education status, and English learner students.

Weaknesses:

There are gaps in student enrollment. Needs more details about engaging the target population. The applicant did not provide detail on the randomization of school selections.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers:

Reader's Score: 10

Sub

1. The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel. (10 points)

Strengths:

The qualifications of the personnel included individuals with expertise and experience to implement the program was attached (e55). The proposal provided a list of team members and their responsibilities along with their organizational title and areas of expertise. The proposal partner organization identified a team of highly qualified individuals to assist in implementing their roles in the proposal goals and objectives.

Weaknesses:

None identified

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

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

Reader's Score: 9

Sub

1. 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. (10 points)

Strengths:

The proposal provides for clearly defined objectives, responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. The proposal provides a clear budget to implement the proposal. OPT (On-Ramp to Postsecondary Transition) identified a responsible budget for personnel staffing over five years. Personnel cost identified salaries for key individuals: Project Director, Project Leadership, Project Manager, and Senior Advisors. The budget was reasonable for identifying several categories for implementation including awards and travel costs.

Weaknesses:

The proposal did not identify supplies and equipment that would be needed. The various organizations are leaders in their fields; however, there needs to be a clear delineation of which organizations are providing which services to have a clear cross-check for implementation.

Sub

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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:

Reader's Score: 0

Sub

1. (1) 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 standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

Strengths:

None

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 0

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Strengths:

None

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 0

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

Strengths:

None

Weaknesses:

None

Reader's Score: 0

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 1

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1:

Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 3 points).

Projects designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in middle school or high school that examine the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, including rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded (e.g., that include music and the arts) approaches to learning that are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status and prepare students for college, career, and civic life, including one or more of the following:

- (a) Student-centered learning models that may leverage technology to address learner variability (e.g., universal design for learning (as defined in this notice), K–12 competency-based education (as defined in this notice), project-based learning, or hybrid/blended learning) and provide high-quality learning content, applications, or tools.
- (b) Middle school courses or projects that prepare students to participate in advanced coursework in high school.
- (c) Advanced courses and programs, including dual enrollment and early college programs.
- (d) Project-based and experiential learning, including service and work-based learning.
- (e) High-quality career and technical education courses, pathways, and industry-recognized credentials that are integrated into the curriculum.

Strengths:

The proposal provides for a student-centered learning model. The proposal provides advanced course programs, including dual enrollment and college programs. The proposal also included a career education course as part of the curriculum.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Competitive Preference Priority 2

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2:

Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty (up to 3 points).

Projects that are designed to address the impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic, including impacts that extend beyond the duration of the pandemic itself, on the students most impacted by the pandemic, with a focus on underserved students and the educators who serve them through:

- (a) conducting community asset-mapping and needs assessments that may include an assessment of the extent to which students, including subgroups of students, have become disengaged from learning, including students not participating in in-person or remote instruction, and specific strategies for reengaging and supporting students and their families; and
- (b) using evidence-based instructional approaches and supports, such as professional development, coaching, ongoing support for educators, high quality tutoring, expanded access to rigorous coursework and content across K–12, and expanded learning time to accelerate learning for students in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity to successfully meet challenging academic content standards without contributing to tracking or remedial courses.

Strengths:

The proposal provides support for an innovative, engaging program since COVID-19. The proposal identified high-need students that include low-income students, students of color, disengaged youth are most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic to address competitive preference priority 2. The proposal identifies conducting community asset mapping for the proposal purpose.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: **3**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/25/2022 11:43 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/05/2022 11:16 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	22
Total	30	22

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - EIR Tier 2 - 8: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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:

Reader's Score: 22

Sub

1. (1) 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 standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

Strengths:

Measurement: The overall outcome (i.e., college and career readiness) was clearly stated, well defined, and aligned with the intervention. Further, more proximal outcomes (e.g., high school and college credit, eligibility for accelerated high school) support the overall outcome and allow more periodic assessment. The use of a stipend for control schools increases the likelihood that measures are consistently collected across treatment arms leading to more valid inferences about treatment effects. Design: The use of a cluster randomized trial design addresses many threats from confounding variables. This design along with baseline checks and adjustments improves the rigor and validity of causal claims about the treatment effects. The threat from attrition is justifiably low due to data collection methods (e.g., administrative and programmatic data) and when recruitment or attrition is a threat, incentives are appropriately planned. The sample is described well and the nested structure of students within schools is properly accounted for. The adequacy of the sample to detect treatment effects is considered using appropriate design parameter estimates. The evaluation also plans to employ multiple imputations to address missing data which is an effective approach to reduce possible bias from missingness. Analysis: The evaluation correctly pairs a two-level hierarchical linear model to their cluster randomized trial design. Analyses of mediation effects are also appropriate using the identified approach to multilevel mediation.

Weaknesses:

Measurement: No substantial threats to measurement validity and reliability were identified. Design: The selection process for schools (i.e., request for proposals) and limit to schools employing P4W suggests that schools in the control arm will employ a variety of strategies to address career and college readiness. Some consideration of variation in the business as usual control condition is important to clarify inferences about treatment effects but are not included. The selection and randomization process for schools was clear but identification and selection of the approximately 60 students per school was not. Systematic differences in the student sample could lead to biased results and inaccurate inferences about treatment effects. Adequacy of the sample is considered and a likely MDES of 0.195 is identified but the feasibility of the planned program to produce this size effect is not discussed or supported. Baseline equivalency is also considered but the only covariates to be included are SES and 8th grade academic achievement scores. The exclusion of student and school demographics calls into question the sufficiency of the baseline check. Analysis: No substantial threats to evaluation inferences were identified in the

Sub

analytic approaches.

Reader's Score: 16

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Strengths:

The evaluation proposal includes a variety of sources at various time intervals to assess performance and progress. First, data from surveys, focus groups and interviews is likely to provide a broad and deep description of performance and progress. School specific mid-implementation reports are an effective approach to provide specific feedback about performance and progress that varies across school sites. The evaluation also includes structures to discuss the various data collected including monthly and annual meetings. These periodic meetings ensure better periodic feedback about evaluation performance and progress.

Weaknesses:

While a plan is in place to develop performance measures, their unavailability at this stage makes the validity and reliability of performance feedback unclear. Further, the contents or structure of the surveys is not described nor is the planned sample of students, coaches, and staff to inform the performance and progress.

Reader's Score: 3

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

Strengths:

A logic model and Table 1 in the narrative are effective at communicating project components. Mediators (and moderators) are well described in Table 2 in the narrative and are appropriately included in analytic models. Like mediators, outcomes are identified and well described in narrative text and illustrated in the logic model. A detailed plan for assessing implementation is included in the narrative (p. 8) and in Appendix J including frequency of activities as preliminary measures of implementation.

Weaknesses:

The validity of surveys utilized in outcome and implementation measures is questionable because their development or previous use is not described. It is also unclear the sample of students, coaches, and staff that will be included when measuring implementation with these surveys. Lastly, only limited and preliminary acceptable implementation thresholds are included with others to be developed and identified later.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 10/05/2022 11:16 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 10/05/2022 11:07 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	30	23
Total	30	23

Technical Review Form

Panel #5 - EIR Tier 2 - 8: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Jobs for the Future Inc. (S411C220150)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the 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:

Reader's Score: 23

Sub

1. (1) 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 standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice). (20 points)

Strengths:

The applicant uses a cluster randomized controlled trial with one cohort of 40 schools, in which 20 schools will be randomly assigned to the treatment condition and 20 schools randomly assigned to the control condition. This design is eligible to meet What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservation. Student attendance records will be collected for both treatment and control schools which will allow the evaluator to monitor student rosters in case they are needed due to high attrition. The confirmatory research questions use outcome measures that meet WWC requirements for face validity and reliability, including the award of a high school diploma, applications for financial aid, and completion of an industry recognized credential, certificate, or license. These measures will be collected from both the treatment and control schools during the same data collection windows to ensure comparability. Several strategies will be implemented to minimize attrition, including selection of schools through a competitive process, providing incentives for original data collections, and maximizing the use of administrative data when possible. Baseline data will be collected and used to verify the equivalence of the treatment and control groups in the analytic sample and used as covariates in the impact analyses to increase the precision of the effect-size estimates. Effect sizes will be estimated using two-level hierarchical linear models which is aligned to the evaluation design that includes students nested within schools. In addition, the analyses will appropriately apply a multiple comparisons correction. A power analysis is included to support the evaluation plan's sample size and its likelihood to detect an effect size as small as 0.195. Missing data procedures align to the WWC standards and include imputing missing outcomes and covariates.

Weaknesses:

There is little information on the control condition other than that control schools will continue with business-as-usual activities. The 40 participating schools will be selected through a competitive request-for-proposal process and may be very similar or very different to the planned treatment in some cases, so additional information is needed to contrast the treatment with the control condition. This application provides no information on the treatment of students who join the school in the impact analyses. While the applicant specifies an intent-to-treat analyses, it is not clear if students joining a school after random assignment will be included or excluded in the analyses.

Sub

Reader's Score: 17

2. (2) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes. (5 points)

Strengths:

The independent evaluator will meet with the project leadership team at least monthly to provide feedback on the program implementation based on data collections and administrative data. Monthly meetings provide a sufficient mechanism for providing timely feedback on the project's progress toward achieving the intended outcomes. Discussions at these meetings will include results from multiple measures, including staff surveys and site visits and student interviews and focus groups. These measures will be designed to identify factors that are helping or hindering implementation. These data will be supplemented with attendance records and other administrative data that can help inform the status of the project.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not provide sufficient information on how the results of the quantitative analyses of survey and administrative data and qualitative analyses of interview and focus group data will be combined to inform whether changes to the project are needed to achieve the intended outcomes. Specifically, it is not clear how the data collections will inform actions related to project changes.

Reader's Score: 3

3. (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key project components, mediators, and outcomes, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation. (5 points)

Strengths:

The applicant provides an evaluation that is consistent with the key components identified in the logic model and organized by a set of clearly articulated research questions. There are several moderators and mediators that will be studied to determine the extent to which they are associated with student outcomes. Moderators include student characteristics, and mediators include the key project components. The framework for future implementation thresholds is provided and will be completed later with the project partners. The framework provides reasonable and measurable categories for implementation thresholds by component.

Weaknesses:

The applicant provides very little information on the moderation and mediation analyses and which specific student characteristics and key project components will be studied. While a framework is provided for the thresholds for acceptable implementation, the actual thresholds are not provided and could not be evaluated.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 10/05/2022 11:07 AM