

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/03/2023 03:49 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Literacy Design Collaborative (S422B230031)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	23
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	27
Sub Total	100	95
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	5
Sub Total	7	5
Total	112	105

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - AHC-NA - 2: 84.422B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Literacy Design Collaborative (S422B230031)

Questions

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 demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
 - (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant exceptionally demonstrates a rationale for their program and program components. The applicant uses several research-based strategies (e.g., culturally responsive pedagogy) to target inequity, engage underserved students, and improve student social studies test scores in areas with underserved students. The proposed project represents an exceptional approach to professional development for social studies teachers in civics/American history/C3 standards through job-embedded and

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant lays out the inputs, objectives, outcomes, and goal in their logic model (e13, e70). The applicant intends to use evidence-based practices, like formative feedback (e15) and culturally responsive teaching. Appropriately the applicant shows clear and measurable deliverables (e39-e42) and the proposed project activities are directly, conceptually related to the proposed impact of improving student knowledge by way of developing teachers.

(ii) The approach is exceptional in its incorporation of evidence-based practices, culturally responsive and relevant teaching, and job-embedded professional development (e39) in one program.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
 - ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)

iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant adequately discussed the magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed: gaps in student knowledge of American history and students' uncritical acceptance of online information, lack of cultural responsiveness, and not enough instructional rigor. The proposed project adequately addresses the identified gaps. The focus on those with greatest need in this project are adequate.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant points to the national problem of citizens having little civics knowledge or media literacy so they can critically consume information in an increasingly polarized world (e31-e32), coupled with non-engaging curriculum models (e32-e33) that are ineffective in improving students' knowledge. The applicant points to students' lack of writing ability, which a recent NAEP showed to be below proficiency for a majority of 8th and 12th grade students. The applicant appropriately uses evidence to establish the magnitude or severity of students lack of knowledge or skills in literacy and writing.

(ii) The applicant targets interventions specifically to the gaps illustrated. Examples include professional development that is job-embedded, content (e.g., unit anchors) that is tied to standards (including explicit links) (e35).

(iii) LDC appropriately plans to recruit schools from the districts that it already partners with who are either primarily low socio-economic status urban students of color or low socio-economic status rural white students (e36, e39) in New York and Kentucky (respectively). These sample populations have a high percentage of students with financial need (free and/or reduced-price lunch) and the urban population has a high percentage of students with disabilities, ELLs, and students of color (e36).

Weaknesses:

(i) The applicant does not establish that these problems are present in the location that the program will be implemented, but instead presents nationwide problems that may be more or less severe in the location of implementation.

Reader's Score: 23

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 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. (13 points)**
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)**

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant exceptionally presents a management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget. The procedures for feedback and continuous improvement are exceptional and over and above the grant

requirements.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant presents program tasks, milestones, timeline, and appropriately connects them to responsible parties (either individuals at LDC or partner organizations, often with a point person or persons listed) (e39-e43). The timeline is reasonable. The measures of success for goals, objectives, and outcomes are clearly explicated (e43) and include measures of student and teacher learning as well as implementation (e48). Personnel are sufficiently experienced (e166-e218).

(ii) Project milestones appropriately include points to collect feedback such as field-testing rubrics (e39), user testing (e40, e41), testing potential formative leading indicators (e40). LDC has used robust continuous improvement processes in other projects (e47-e48) and will use similar methods in this project (e48-e51). Data from the project evaluation could provide valuable data for other districts wanting to implement similar interventions (e59-e61, e248-e272), particularly if it produces a high-quality evaluation that meets WWC standards with or without reservations. The evaluation team will also, appropriately, support the formative evaluation, which can be used for continuous improvement (e61), thought providing feedback on recruitment, weekly meeting to monitor project progress and improve the project.

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

- 1. The Secretary considers the adequacy of resources for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the adequacy of resources, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - i. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)**
 - ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)**
 - iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)**
 - iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)**

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant presents adequate evidence of support. The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. The applicant exceptionally demonstrates it has the resources and experience to operate the project beyond the length of the grant. The partners are relevant and their commitment is well-documented.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The primary applicant established that they have sufficient resources and facilities for the project in that they do similar work with similar resources currently and in the past for other projects (e51-e52). Partners, like The Smithsonian and CRESST, have substantial and relevant resources (e52).

(ii) Costs are reasonable for the services provided (e53) with a cost of \$214 per student in the 140 schools. Costs are lower since the applicant is providing nearly all services virtually (e257), and a good value because the project includes an evaluation component.

(iii) The applicant has previous history in operating projects beyond the length of a grant (e53-e54, e55). Appropriate for continuation of the project after funding, the project will create resources that can easily be used after funding has ceased and it will establish processes for supporting teacher learning (e54-e55). The applicant also presents a reasonable workstream for actions post grant year 1, 2, and 3 (e58).

(iv) The partners are relevant. The partners include the school districts recruited, partners at other school districts who have become experts in particular aspects of the project (like Rankin School District personnel who are the LDC-SCALE micro-credential experts), organizations with experience in teacher professional development, and technical assistance (e58-e59). Partner support through letters of support is adequate (e165-e231).

Weaknesses:

(i) The applicant presents work on previous and current projects as evidence of the resources to complete the current project. While this is convincing, additional information about the types of resources used for those project and how they would be available for the current project would be helpful in determining the adequacy of resources.

Reader's Score: 27

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant adequately addresses CPP 1 through proposing a program that uses an innovative and evidence-based approach that also include the Constitution of the United States and Bill of Rights.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(b) The applicant presents an innovative and evidence-based program to encourage improved content, pedagogical, and pedagogical content knowledge of social studies, and the curriculum include the constitution and bill of rights (e15, e30, e150)

Weaknesses:

No weakness noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)

Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—

a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs (6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) 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 civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant adequately addresses promoting equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(a) The project proposal focuses on a relevant group for the grant: teachers of middle school and high school (e30).

(b) The applicant will appropriately target high needs districts (e30, e36, e39) including rural and urban, districts with low SES students and those with high proportions of ELLs or students with disabilities.

(c) Appropriately the professional development has culturally responsive pedagogy intentionally baked in (e34) so that it is inclusive with regards to student characteristics.

(d) The applicant, pending funding, plans to use the platform developed for this project to communicate with and empower caregivers (e30-e31).

Weaknesses:

(d) Because the development of the platform for caregivers is contingent on funding from another source it may or may not be implemented for this project.

Reader's Score: 5

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Literacy Design Collaborative (S422B230031)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	30
Sub Total	100	100
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	6
Sub Total	7	6
Total	112	111

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - AHC-NA - 2: 84.422B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Literacy Design Collaborative (S422B230031)

Questions

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 demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

Overview: The quality of the project design is exceptional.

The applicant demonstrates a strong rationale for the proposed project by including independent evaluation findings presented by the applicants existing evidenced based American history, civics, government, and geography instruction and professional development activities for teachers (p. e12). The applicant provides a logic model that clearly connects the LDC model to the grant's innovative professional development and instructional priorities (p. e12-13). Research supported components central to the application are included throughout this section and constitutes an exceptional approach to the priorities for this competition.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

Data from the applicants existing project will be used to inform the current proposal along with additional evidenced based research providing strong support for the rationale which includes innovative instruction and professional development (p. e12). (i)

The applicant includes a logic model that supports and represents an exceptional approach designed to complement the priorities established for the proposal. The components of the approaches presented have been successfully used in a past USDOE grant (p, e13). (ii)

The applicant uses research-based approaches such as culturally responsive pedagogy to be offered asynchronous and synchronous as PD support (p. e12). This delivery model option will likely be positively received by teachers who are often not given a choice for how they receive PD. (ii)

Student rubrics that provide feedback to teachers is an excellent tool to use and could be included in continuous feedback for improvement throughout the grant period (p. e12). (i)

Job-embedded professional learning with a focus on collaborative problem solving and scaffolding informational literacy skills is an exceptional approach for teachers and has been recommended as one of the most impactful approaches to providing professional development (p. e14). (ii)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. **The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - i. **The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)**
 - ii. **The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)**
 - iii. **The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)**

Strengths:

Overview: The need for the project design is exceptional.

The magnitude of the needs to be addressed in the proposed project is clearly described and includes data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress which showed that only 27% of both 8th and 12th graders performed at or above the proficient level in writing (p. e33). Other studies are cited and contribute to determining specific gaps or weaknesses in services. Some of these gaps were reported by the Pew Research Center, the Annenberg Foundation, and the National Council for Social Studies (p. e32).

Both the needs of students and teachers are delineated, along with the proposed approaches to be used to address the greatest needs (p. e32).

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant provides a table that includes demographics of students served through previous grants (p. e36) provides assurance of the organization's experience in working with students with the greatest needs. (i) Information from the chart clearly substantiates the link between needs and demographics, supporting the applicant's commitment to continuing with like populations in the proposed project.

The applicant calls attention to needs such as quality textbooks, quality instructional materials, and low skilled or novice teachers, along with low expectations of teachers. (p. e36). (i) The addition the description of the current situation, for a majority of students in underserved communities, is real and fully recognized in this proposed project.

Five specific gaps and weaknesses were delineated by the applicant and will be targeted and addressed by the proposed project (p. e34). The applicant links these gaps to the interventions clearly delineated in this section, providing evidence of the approaches to be used to address the greatest needs of the students and the teachers participating in the project. (ii, iii)Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

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 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. (13 points)
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)

Strengths:

Overview: The quality of the management plan is exceptional

The applicant provides a well-developed management plan designed to achieve the goals of the proposed project through the milestones chart provided which includes project tasks, milestones, time frame, and the responsible personnel. Continuous feedback is specifically addressed in the chart provided (p. e40). The applicant provides a separate chart which includes SMART Goals (p. e43).

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

Tables are developed with great detail and provide evidence and vision of the project roll-out designed to be successful in achieving the goals of the proposed project (p. e39-42). (i) Well developed project implementation plans support initial start ups and allow for check along the way to ensure implementation is on target.

The applicant provides great detail in the charts describing continuous improvement and includes measurable goals, measurable objectives, and measurable outcomes as the central components of the chart (p. e43). A continuous improvement section is also provided as part of the description of the proposed project evaluation section. (p. e47, e60).(i) The design of the continuous improvement plan will provide project staff with transparency needed to stay abreast of project goals and objectives.

The applicant provides both well-developed tables and narrative to support the likelihood of completing the proposed project on time and on budget (p. e39-42) (i)

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

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

- i. **The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)**
- ii. **The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)**
- iii. **The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)**
- iv. **The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)**

Strengths:

Overview: The quality of resources is exceptional.

The applicant has successfully implemented comparable grants over the last 10 years and provides exceptional facilities, equipment, supplies and other resources necessary to successfully support the proposed project (p.e51). Costs appear reasonable based on the management plan in the previous section and the necessary supports delineated in the section. A multiyear plan to extend the grant beyond the grant cycle is clearly described and includes a plan overview chart (p. e54).

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant provides a detailed description of the resources necessary for successful implementation of the proposed project, including facilities, equipment, and supplies (p.e51,52). (i)

The applicant has been accumulated many resources with high level partnerships over several years and are equipped to support significantly larger projects. The technology infrastructure will be of major major importance to the implementation of the proposed project.

The management plan and the additional rubric data, providing costs per child, is strong evidence of costs that are reasonable to support the proposed project's goals and objectives (p.e53). (ii) Considering the number of students expected to be served, the value per student is most reasonable.

The applicant provides a multiyear plan to extend the grant beyond the grant cycle and a plan overview chart is provided and includes grant year, annual projected cost, schools/teachers and number of students (p. e53). (iii) Providing a plan from the beginning of a project is often ambitious but plan appears attainable, especially with the collaborative partners included.

A supportive sustainability chart which includes ongoing communication, product release, and sustainability funding is included (p. e57-58). (iii) The sustainability chart includes 3 years serves as a visual for the work to be done which is extremely helpful when speaking to those committed to the work or those who need convincing.

Strong partnership commitment from each partner is supported by evidence described in a post grant year chart provided (p.e58,59). (iv)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted..

Reader's Score: 30

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders, particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

Overview: The quality of the CPP1 is exceptional

The applicant fully addresses evidenced-based strategies based on evidentiary and conceptual research (p.e30). This component is fully addressed, and examples are provided in the appendix (p. e30).

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant clearly promotes evidence-based strategies from previous grants over the last eight years, including innovative professional development activities for teachers who serve students in low-income communities (p.e30). (a)

The applicant speaks to the specific activities and materials which are clearly listed in the appendix. Evidenced-based strategies, particularly from the applicant's prior work provides confidence in the applicant's ability to continue to produce great work for students from underserved communities and their teachers,

Throughout the proposed project, the applicant describes the approach to using hands-on civic engagement activities and programs that educate students about the history of the Constitution (pp. 35-37). (b) Using project-based and evidenced-based activities will have a better change of appealing to the students of today. Being digital natives, inquiry-based lessons will allow students to use their research skills in a more positive and productive manner.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)

Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—

a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education

programs(6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) 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 civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

Overview: The quality of the CPP2 is adequate.

The applicant addresses the four elements, including the appropriate educational setting of middle school for this proposed project, inequities clearly described in throughout the proposal, particularly in the Needs section. Approaches described are rigorous and engaging to support students understanding civic engagement and the importance of elevating their voices.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant provides a description of the middle school students and their under-supported teachers who will be served by the proposed project (p. e30). (a)

The applicant provides full descriptions through examples of well-rounded approaches to learning that are inclusive of student differences (p. e30). (a,b)

The applicant is currently working on how to empower family caregivers to be more engaged in their learning pathways in order to support the engagement of underserved communities in making informed decision that influence policy and practice (p. e 30). (b)

Weaknesses:

Though the applicant hopes to empower family caregivers to become more engaged in user-centered but has no specific plan or how the initiative will be funded and taken to the next level (p. e30, e31). (d)

Reader's Score: 6

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Status: Submitted

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Literacy Design Collaborative (S422B230031)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	25
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	15
Sub Total	100	85
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority 1		
Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement		
1. Civic Engagement	5	5
Sub Total	5	5
Competitive Preference Priority 2		
Student Access to Resources and Opportunities		
1. Promoting Equity	7	4
Sub Total	7	4
Total	112	94

Technical Review Form

Panel #2 - AHC-NA - 2: 84.422B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: Literacy Design Collaborative (S422B230031)

Questions

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 demonstrates a rationale. (10 points)
- (ii) The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priority or priorities established for the competition. (10 points)

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant presents an exceptional project design. The applicant will focus on best practices for teacher preparation and increase the critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills of students in American History and Geography.

Strengths:

- (i) Page e 12. The applicant details the project rationale. For instance, the project includes a rationale based on evidence-based findings and independent evaluations from the applicant's previous projects (Wang et al., 2020). The Stanford Center for Assessment and Equity (SCALE) will be used as a measurement for testing and analyzing the grant objectives. The SCALE program will provide rubrics and assessment materials. Other literature is noted from Elmore Instructional Core research which enhances writing performance tasks in social studies curricula.
- (ii) The applicant notes the exceptional approach on page e13. The applicant describes the previous work from the 2015-2020 Investing in Innovation (I3) grant which was statistically significant. The project will build on these best practices by engaging students in social studies to prepare them for civic life. These actions include critical thinking, problem-solving, and participating in groups. Other noteworthy parts of the approach include an interdisciplinary curriculum that includes the arts and humanities (page e13).

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

Selection Criteria - Need for Project

1. The Secretary considers the need for the proposed project. In determining the need for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- i. The magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. (8 points)
- ii. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including

the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. (7 points)

iii. The extent to which the services to be provided by the proposed project are focused on those with greatest needs. (10 points)

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant presents an exceptional need for the project. For instance, the applicant notes that 1 in 4 Americans do not know the three bodies of government. Also, the applicant describes those to be served by the project including a large number of Black, Latino, and free-reduced-price lunch students. These underserved students will benefit from the services of this project because the applicant will reach them with services to improve teacher professional development in American history/civics and improve students' critical thinking and problem-solving.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant discusses the need for the project. On page 20, the applicant states that the objectives of the project, which include improving the knowledge of American participation in civics, are extremely important today. Other literature is cited such as the Brookings Institute which notes that Americans are demonstrating a limited knowledge of civic life. This limited knowledge is demonstrated by a 2016 survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center which states that 1 in 4 Americans cannot name the three branches of government. Lastly, the need is illustrated by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation's 2019 study Reimagining American History Education stating that most history education is not inquiry based. The applicant's approach will address these deficits by focusing on improving students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

(ii) The applicant details the specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructures, or opportunities. On pp. e34-e35, those include a deficit of culturally responsive pedagogy, a lack of content to engage underserved students, a lack of professional development supporting teachers in underserved schools, a lack of instructional rigor, and a lack of deeper data for learning. The project will address these deficiencies by providing content, professional development, and assessment support. The content will include collaborative student engagement and participation in civic processes. The unit lessons will be provided by the Smithsonian Institute and used to support students in class. The professional development will include measuring the effectiveness of the teacher's classroom skills and actions are assessed in real-time. These data points are collected by SCALE C3. Lastly, the assessment will include a student work rubric that supports student learning and allows teachers to notice student success and whether they are mastering the skills. All these components are integral to the overall objective of the program which includes improving student engagement in American history and civics. The gaps and weaknesses noted by the applicant will be remedied by the rigorous teacher professional development and student mastery of these subjects.

(iii) The applicant describes the services for those with the greatest needs. For instance, on page e36, the applicant describes the current population for the project which includes underserved students in school districts in New York City and Kentucky. In NYC, 83.35% of students are free-reduced price lunch and 79.6% in Kentucky are free-reduced price lunch. Other students who identify as Black and Latino in NYC include a population of 88.07%. The applicant estimates that they will serve at least 80% of through this program. These students will improve their knowledge of American history and civics and participate in civic engagement.

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

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 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. (13 points)
- ii. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. (12 points)

Strengths:

Overview: The applicant presents an exceptional approach to the project milestones, tasks, and responsible parties. The applicant outlines how the project will integrate feedback from teacher and student performance in real time. These sound methods of continuous feedback will be impactful to the project because the applicant will understand what immediately needs to be changed in the objectives.

Strengths:

(i) On page e39, the applicant describes tasks, milestones, and parties responsible for accomplishing the project tasks. For instance, the project includes school/teacher recruitment which will occur in October 2023 to June 2024. There are four people assigned by the applicant to complete this task. Also, the project timeline includes designing a culturally responsive curriculum including appropriate staff members and periods in 2024. This clear management plan ensures that the applicant will complete the tasks on time because the project team will have a clear plan to follow.

(ii) The applicant presents procedures for ensuring continuous feedback. On page e48, the applicant will apply previously proven methods from other grants such as web-based technology to collect data in real time. Some of the data to be collected include student data, teacher learning data, and data on content use, impact, and efficacy. These methods have proven effective in making changes to projects. Furthermore, such data will be used to generate reports showing the teacher and student progress (page e48). These continuous improvement methods will allow the project team to intervene, as necessary. necessary.

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Adequacy of Resources

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

- i. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization. (6 points)
- ii. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)
- iii. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multiyear financial and operating model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, teachers' unions) critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. (8 points)
- iv. The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project. (8 points)

Strengths:

Overview: The applicant presents a limited presentation of resources for the project. The applicant does not address the additional facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources that will be used to support the project. Also, the letters of commitment presented do not fully commit to the teachers attending professional development when the project is funded.

Strengths:

- (i) The applicant lists other resources garnered for another project such as the resources and partnerships created. No strengths noted.
- (ii) The applicant presents limited evidence of costs that are reasonable for the project. On page 53, the applicant lists a table that has an annual grant budget of \$ 1 million with general categories such as pre-implementation, recruitment, content, etc. The applicant also provides additional details for budget expenses on p.257 budget narrative.
- (iii) The applicant demonstrates resources to support the project after the project ends. For instance, on page e54, the applicant describes the history of working on projects that have been sustained after grant funding ends. For instance, the applicant launched Improvement Network Hub in 2013 which focused on creating user-centered products. Other methods of generating funds are noted on page e58 such as board members from several companies like edTech companies (John Katzman) and Foundation leaders like Dr. Carl Anthony –Watson who are committed to supporting the grant after federal funding ends. Through these sound methods, the project will continue when federal funding ends.
- (iv) Appendix E p. e219. The applicant presents limited details in the letters of support for the project. For instance, The New York City Department of Education will potentially participate. Other letters of support are noted such as the Conestga Valley School District which states they will potentially participate.

Weaknesses:

- (i) While the applicant describes the previous funding received for similar projects, the applicant fails to list the specific facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources they will commit to this project (pp. e51-52). For example, the applicant states that they have implemented a US DOE i3 multimillion five-year grant, but they do not state how any resources will be used for the current project. The application could have been strengthened with this information.
- (ii) While the applicant shares details of a budget and costs, the applicant fails to explain each line item in the budget narrative. For instance, on page 257, the project personnel are not detailed. Typically, the budget narrative will list calculations and percentages of effort to assist with ascertaining the reasonableness of the budget. Furthermore, the SF-424 on page 267 totals over the \$1 million mentioned on page 53. Without a more detailed explanation, it is difficult to understand the reasonableness of the budget.
- (iii) No weaknesses noted.
- (iv) While the applicant presents numerous letters of support for the project, each letter from the school district states that if the grant is awarded, they will potentially participate. The letters do not confirm the commitment of each partner to the project. A clearer letter, giving teacher and student specifics could have strengthened the proposal.

Reader's Score: 15

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority 1 - Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement****1. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Innovative Activities for Civic Engagement (up to 5 points)**

Under this priority, we provide funding to promote new and existing evidence-based strategies to encourage innovative civics and government learning strategies and professional development activities and programs for teachers, principals, or other school leaders,

particularly such instruction, strategies, activities, and programs that benefit low income students and underserved populations. To meet this priority, a project must include one or both of the following-- a) Hands-on civic engagement activities for teachers and students; or b) Programs that educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights.

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant presents a limited approach to the Competitive Preference Priority. The applicant provides limited details on student assignments and how the students will collaborate and present contextual evidence supporting their arguments.

Strengths:

In the Appendix, page e146, the applicant details the approach to the program which will educate students about history and the principles of the Constitution of the United States. For instance, the applicant shares a causal analysis of the great law of peace and the US Constitution for 6-8th grade social studies. Other details are given to promote student education, such as an explanation of the argumentation and tasks associated with the assignment on the rubric (page e75). The students must compare the foundational principles from the text and discuss how the Great Law of Peace helped to create the U.S. Constitution.

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 5

Competitive Preference Priority 2 - Student Access to Resources and Opportunities

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities (up to 7 points)

Under this priority, and applicant must demonstrate that the applicant proposes a project designed to promote educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students—

a) in one or more of the following educational settings: (1) Early learning programs (2) Elementary school (3) Middle school (4) High school (5) Career and technical education programs (6) Out-of-schooltime settings (7) Alternative schools and programs (8) Juvenile justice system or correctional facilities

b) That examines the sources of inequity and inadequacy and implement responses, and that may include one or both of the following:

c) 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 civics programs that support students in understanding and engaging in American democratic practices (up to 3 points).

d) Establishing, expanding, or improving the engagement of underserved community members (including underserved students and families) in informing and making decisions that influence policy and practice at the school, district, or State level by elevating their voices, through their participation and their perspectives and providing them with access to opportunities for leadership (e.g., establishing partnerships between civic student government programs and

parent and caregiver leadership initiatives) (up to 4 points).

Strengths:

Overview:

The applicant presents a limited approach to this competitive preference priority. The applicant does not clearly outline how the project will improve services for community members in the target area.

Strengths:

The applicant presents a limited approach to addressing equity for student access on pages 30-31. The applicant will serve high-need elementary, middle, and high school students with a rigorous curriculum that is culturally responsive. Also, the applicant will create tools that will help family caregivers and students to voice their own opinions and take responsibility for their learning.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant discusses the project and the approach, the applicant fails to connect how the program will address the inequalities of the project participants. Also, the applicant does not explain how they will improve the underserved community members. The application could have been strengthened with this information.

Reader's Score: 4

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