

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/03/2023 03:22 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Constitution Center (S422B230053)

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	23
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	28
Sub Total	100	94
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	105

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - AHC-NA - 1: 84.422B

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: National Constitution Center (S422B230053)

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:

The National Constitution Center proposes to develop a middle school version of its Constitution 101 online civics curriculum. Launched in 2022, the NCC's Constitution 101 course provides students "with a basic understanding of constitutional text, history, structure, and interpretation over time" (e13). The middle-school curriculum, consisting of 15 modules, is an age-appropriate version of Constitution 101. Each module draws upon the NCC's Interactive Constitution and its Founder's Library, and include a short video lecture, primary sources, and engaging activities such as matching games and political cartoons. The NCC proposes a professional development program the leverages the resources of the NCC to support educators. The professional development program includes customized full-day workshops, monthly 90-minute webinars, and a monthly virtual professional learning series. In its rationale for the project, the NCC touts its deep resources and networks, along with the successful rollout of the high school version of Constitution 101. The project provides a strong entry into the absolute priority of delivering innovative instruction and professional development, and for innovative engagement into civics activities and critical thinking.

The National Constitution has created an innovative curriculum for high school students called Constitution 101, which demonstrates the applicant's ability to create innovative curriculum (see e21-24 for overview of modules). The applicant further demonstrates its ability to create innovative curriculum by providing a sample module on the Bill of Rights (e48-e100). The applicant's Founders Library provides insight into more than 170 historical texts, and more than 50 landmark Supreme Court cases (e18). The critical thinking component includes three main components: Historical Foundations through Storytelling; Constitutional Interpretation Skills; and Civil Dialogue and Reflection. The components are designed to get students to think like constitutional scholars (e28). The NCC has a track record for exceptional professional development. Each year the NCC administers over 50 professional development programs to over 3000 educators (e27).

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:

In making the case for the proposal's needs, the NCC identifies the severity of the problem by pointing out the lack of basic knowledge about civics and government from two reliable sources: the National Assessment of Educational Progress and an Annenberg Public Policy Center survey. The NAEP study reveals a decline in testing results among middle school students, while the Annenberg Public Policy Center's survey shows a decline in civics knowledge among adults. The applicant further notes the number of states passing restrictive legislation, and highlights the NCC as "trusted, nonpartisan" partner (e30). The applicant also mentions significant gaps and weakness in middle school civics education, pointing out that 19% of middle school students said they had no civics instruction. The applicant's proposal, a national curriculum for middle school students, bridges these gaps and weaknesses. The applicant's Constitution 101, on which the middle school program is based, targets ten states—Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Michigan, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Utah. The middle school program expects to target similar states. The applicant might identify specific districts and schools within these states. The applicant introduced Constitutional Fellows, a group of 23 educators representing 13 states who pilot and evaluate the Constitution 101. Two of the Fellows come from districts where 100 percent of the students are economically disadvantaged, and another three from districts at or above 50 percent economically disadvantaged; five come from districts with student minority populations of over 50 percent. The applicant looks to expand representation in its middle school Fellows program.

The applicant identifies the severity of the problem while citing vetted research (e29). To close the gaps, the material created can be integrated into content delivery and classroom management tools like Google Classroom, Canvas, Schoology, and Coursera (e15). As an organization, the National Constitution Center is committed to the principles of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity and seeks to ensure that our programming (e27). The applicant intends to include voices of historic figures who have brought new perspectives to constitutional issues (e16) thereby demonstrating a commitment to diverse voices. The applicant includes in its Constitutional Fellows program teachers from economically disadvantaged districts and districts with high minority populations (e32), and the applicant intends more outreach to expand the diversity of the program. The videos will include Spanish language translation captioning (e35).

Weaknesses:

While the applicant intends to include voices of historic figures who have brought new perspectives to constitutional issues, applicant might consider including examples of these diverse voices (e16). The applicant looks to include communities who are currently underrepresented in our educational programming, such as Hispanic/Latino and Native American student, however, the applicant has not yet identified the school districts (e32).

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:

The applicant provides a strong and detailed management plan that includes specific procedures designed to ensure feedback and continuous improvement. The applicant's Constitution 101 program, launched in September 2022, provides a model for design and roll out. The mechanisms for continued feedback include established groups within the organization, including a Teacher Advisory Council and Teacher Advisory Board of more than 400 educators across 48 states and Washington, D.C., the Constitutional Fellows group, and the employment of web design and digital marketing firms for the online launch and management of the program. The applicant includes benchmarks for measurable goals, such as an increase in student interest in having a dialogue about civics. Because the modules include pretest and posttest assessments, the applicant is able to measure student learning. The applicant intends to use a vetted process, Concurrent Triangulation Design, to assess student performance. The applicant intends to use Johns Hopkins Course Mapping Project to find geographic areas of weakness in when measuring outcomes of its program. The applicant's budget includes funding for an external consultant to evaluate its programs.

The applicant's team is highly qualified and experienced team, with a track record for producing curriculum development and delivering professional development programs, and is therefore capable of meeting the project goals (e36-39). The applicant establishes measurable goals and incorporates qualitative and quantitative data into its evaluation models (e36-40). Through its Teacher Advisory Council, Teacher Advisory Board, and Constitution Fellows, the applicant includes teachers into its mechanisms for feedback (e20) which helps to ensure that the design is suitable for the intended audience of middle school students. The applicant understands its own strengths and weaknesses, and thereby relies on experienced outside vendors for web design and development (e15). The applicant provides samples of its work, including a detailed lesson plan on the Bill of Rights (e48-e100) and a detailed schedule for a professional development workshop (e110-e114).

Weaknesses:

The timeline for deliverables is a bit general. For example, "Spring of Year Two" calls for "Prepare the promotions and outreach plan for formal launch." Nor does it include deadlines for module development (e34-e35). The applicant includes the current roles of its team members (e36-37), yet does not indicate or tie each team member to specific benchmarks and deliverables (e34-35).

Reader's Score: 23

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:

Based on the successful launch of Constitution 101 for high school students, the NCC demonstrates that it has the resources to deliver a rich and innovative curriculum for high school students. The costs, most of which are dedicated to salaries, consulting fees, and honoraria for teacher advisors and participants, are reasonable to the goals of the project. The applicant notes that equipment and other material costs will be incorporated in the NCC's operating budget. The applicant has also secured funding from Bezos Family Foundation for additional expenses associated with the project, and has therefore demonstrated the ability to extend the project beyond the life of the grant. The applicant has also partnered with Khan academy for Constitution 101, which the applicant suggests will raise the profile for its middle school launch.

The applicant demonstrates its resources through samples of its work, including a detailed lesson plan on the Bill of Rights (e48-e100) and a detailed schedule for a professional development workshop (e110-e114). The applicant's successful launch of Constitution 101 demonstrates that it has the resources for the project explained in the application. The applicant provides a detailed budget totaling \$1,052,099.73 (e145-155) and bases the budget on its roll out of Constitution 101 (e43). The applicant notes its collaboration with large school districts and other educational partners such as School District of Philadelphia, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, the College Board, and Share My Lesson.

Weaknesses:

While the applicant has identified partners for Constitution 101, the applicant has not provided commitment letters from its partners related to this work (e18, e44).

Reader's Score: 28

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:

The applicant fully addresses CPP1 and offers an innovative program to engage hands on civics and government learning strategies for both teachers and students, with a particular focus on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The national program has the ability to benefit low income students and underserved populations, although these are not fully pinpointed.

The 15 modules provide hands on engagement to educate about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights (e21-e24). Through established advisory panels the applicant includes teachers in its curriculum design and has an established record for delivering professional development to teachers workshop (e110-e114). The applicant's Constitutional Fellows program includes members from economically disadvantaged communities (e32).

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:

The applicant aims to promote educational equity and adequacy by including in its middle school curriculum the voices of historic figures who have brought new perspectives to the conversation about constitutional issues (e16). The applicant's broad national reach for the proposal makes the program inclusive to understanding and engaging in American democratic practices. Through its Constitutional Fellows program the applicant includes underserved community members in informing decisions.

The broad national rollout of the program has the ability to reach many communities and the Constitutional Fellows program gives voice to teachers from underrepresented communities (e32). Throughout the proposal the applicant demonstrates that the project is rigorous, engaging, and well rounded, with specific examples including political cartoons and matching games (e14).

Weaknesses:

While the applicant seeks to reach a mix of districts and school settings that reflect the diversity of America's student body, thereby indicating its intent, the applicant has not specifically identified district and school partners (e10, e28).

Reader's Score: 6

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/03/2023 03:22 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 10:20 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Constitution Center (S422B230053)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	24
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	23
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	28
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	7
Sub Total	7	7
Total	112	107

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - AHC-NA - 1: 84.422B

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: National Constitution Center (S422B230053)

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:

The applicant demonstrates a quality design and clear rationale for this project, which endeavors to create an online middle school civics curriculum and supplement it with professional development for teachers. Moreover, the innovative approaches, including the integration of storytelling and interpretation skills, as well as its asynchronous nature, along with other features make, it an exceptional approach to providing innovation instruction and professional development in civics.

There is a clear rationale for this project. The proposal is to create an asynchronous online course for middle school students, which will be adapted from an existing and successful high school courses called "Constitution 101" (e13). The course is supplemented with professional development opportunities that deepen teachers' knowledge and facilitate their instruction of the course. The applicant also proposes to host a diverse set of educators to pilot the course (e20). Finally, following piloting, prototyping and development, the applicant proposes a campaign to make materials widely available (e25). All of the steps of the process outlined by the applicant represent and comprehensive and logical approach to promoting innovative civics instruction. Moreover, the highly interactive and asynchronous nature of the course rise to the level of an exceptional approach to promoting civics instruction. Because of its thoughtful design, which can be used in-person, in hybrid settings, or fully online, there is a near limitless potential for the course to reach a very wide audience and improve its understanding of Constitutional principles.

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:

There is a clear need identified in this project proposal. Moreover, the applicant identifies specific gaps in existing resources and explains how their proposal fills those gaps. Finally, the applicant makes a clear effort to focus on the needs of underrepresented populations, although the application does not name specific schools or districts that they plan to work with for the middle school program.

The applicant establishes the need for this project by describing the abysmally low national civics proficiency rates in the most recent NAEP assessment, demonstrating a proficiency rate of 25% (e28). Moreover, the applicant notes that basic understanding of civics is alarmingly low in society and cite research that students who are exposed to multiple historical sources do better in their knowledge of civics (e29). Moreover, the applicant roots their proposal in research about both adolescent civic engagement and current political polarization (e30). Not only does the applicant demonstrate the clear national need for improved civics instruction, such an evidence-based approach is likely to yield promising results for students. A specific gap in the national curricular infrastructure identified by the applicant is the relatively sparse adoption of civics curriculum at the middle school level. The applicant demonstrates that their highly engaging, asynchronous product could fill that gap, and they plan to target 10 specific states (e31). Finally, the applicant notes the importance of piloting the course with a diverse and representative sample of students. They name specific schools they worked with for the high school pilot, that are unquestionably diverse, and in some cases almost exclusively made up of students with the greatest needs (e28). Such a singular focus on reaching a diverse and underrepresented population ensures that the needs of this population will be centered in the curriculum development and piloting process.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not name any specific middle schools as partners in this application, or propose any specific schools or districts for their pilot. Identifying and solidifying partnerships with specific schools makes it more likely for an applicant to hit its stated goals around the population it will serve.

Reader's Score: 24

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:

The applicant presents a detailed and thorough management plan that is of high-quality overall, with the small exception that personnel owners are not assigned to sub-objectives and tasks. Moreover, the applicant ensures processes and structures that will lead to receiving high quality feedback and continuous improvement throughout the project.

The applicant presents a strong management plan with very clear metrics. First, the applicant sets overall projects objectives that are ambitious, achievable, and clear, including the long-term goal of adoption by 20% of all US students receiving civics classes in middle school (e34). Additionally, the applicant describes the outcomes and expected impact of the project (e33-e34). Also, the objectives and milestones are broken out by date (e34-e35). The application also includes a general sense for the personnel responsible for executing the project as a whole. Finally, the applicant demonstrates the

planned use of formal evaluation data and less formal feedback session for educator focus groups and surveys to drive continuous improvement (e40-e43). Having such clarity and precision about how the applicant plans to execute the project significantly increases the likelihood of completing the project on schedule and to a high level of quality.

Weaknesses:

The applicant does not assign personnel to specific project subtasks, benchmarks or objectives. Strong project management plans are clear about which individuals are responsible for competing which tasks, making it likelier that things are accomplished on schedule and with accountability.

Reader's Score: 23

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:

The proposal demonstrates adequacy of support all around, with clear organizational capacity, a reasonable proposal from a cost standpoint, a plan for project sustainability, and a description of commitment from partners, although there are no letters of support from project partners included in the application.

The applicant proposes a lean operation. Because of the virtual nature of the development of the course, the applicant proposes to simply use existing general operating expenses for the equipment and cost of materials, demonstrating both a commitment to the project and adequacy of organizational resources (e43). Additionally, the single largest expenditure is on stipends for participation, even eclipsing the line item for personnel costs (e145). The applicant also notes that having completed a very similar project recently, the cost estimates are likely to be very accurate (e43). Overall, the budget demonstrates that the costs are extremely reasonable given the scope and set of objectives proposed.

The very nature of this project, as an asynchronous set of modules accessible online, is designed to be sustainable and accessible to hundreds of thousands of learners. The organization has a track record of hosting similar materials and has the organizational capacity to ensure the materials remain accessible and active. As a result, there is little doubt that the applicant will be successful in ensuring the long-term accessibility of the proposed program.

Finally, the applicant lists a set of committed partners, including school districts and other educational entities. For instance, the applicant touts a relationship with Khan Academy, which they have leveraged to catalyze the distribution of their high school materials for Constitution 101 (e45). Such partnerships contribute to strong implementation, which is likely in this instance.

Weaknesses:

The proposed project does not include any letters of support from proposed partners. Letters of support demonstrate a strong commitment to participation, and forethought in the type and nature of the roles played by all parties in the project. A lack of these letters of support weaken the overall argument that the project has a set of strong, willing, and committed partners.

Reader's Score: 28

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:

The proposed program promotes new evidence-based strategies on civic instruction that are both hands-on and educate students about the Constitution of the US.

The proposed project is replete with engaging professional development and instructional materials that have already been vetted in their high school program. For instance, teachers in a the Summer Teacher Institute attend site visits "to provide historical context and real-world illustrations of how these ideas have been interpreted by and inspired by individuals throughout history (e19), resulting in a deeper understanding of the content and richer pedagogical base to teach from.

The proposed project is centrally focused on instruction about the US Constitution. For example, Module 4, "Constitutional Convention and Ratification," is about the debates and compromises that happened during the nation's Constitutional convention, demonstrating how squarely the content focuses on Constitutional issues, which ensures that students participating in the online course emerge with a solid foundational understanding of the key issues.

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:

The applicant promotes instructional materials that are rigorous, engaging, and well-rounded, as well as that improve the engagement of underserved community members in the structures they have embedded in the proposed process.

Embedded throughout the application are opportunities for experiential learning for underserved populations and rigorous Constitution-centered instruction (e15). Moreover, the applicant centers the use of an advisory board, which has been deliberately constructed to be representative and inclusive. The previous iteration of the advisory board included 23 teachers representing 13 states from a diverse range of educational settings. Such an approach ensures engagement of a variety of stakeholders, including those from underserved communities.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 7

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/04/2023 10:20 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 08/04/2023 09:15 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: National Constitution Center (S422B230053)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	20	20
Need for Project		
1. Need	25	24
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	25	23
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	28
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	7
Sub Total	7	7
Total	112	107

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - AHC-NA - 1: 84.422B

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: National Constitution Center (S422B230053)

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 narrative discusses the project rationale and has infused evidenced-based components into the proposed project. Educators and students, through relevant professional development, will engage in hands-on experiences, workshops and seminars to expand their depth of knowledge in teaching and learning. The project is exceptional in its broad scale usage. Specifically, over three thousand educators in more than 50 program across the country have used Curriculum 101 series (page e20).

Supporting Statements:

- (i) The narrative comprehensively demonstrates the components/rationale of the proposed project (e.g., civic dialogue practice sessions, customized full-day workshops, and monthly 90-minute webinars). Curriculum 101 is designed and will be implemented for middle school students, and is likely to produce relevant results (pages e16-e20). Successful implementation will provide educators and students with the background to engage in constitutional debate. Relevant hands-on activities are also included such as matching games, to analyzing political cartoons that reflect historical debates, to participating in a group exercise to develop a proposal for a 28th Amendment to the Constitution. This is considered a strength as it provides educators with the foundational knowledge base to facilitate learning and engagement of civics education and methods for teaching civil dialogue in middle school classrooms (pages e2-e26). (10 points)
- (ii) The proposed project is considered exceptional based upon its widespread usage. Specifically, the curriculum has been viewed nearly 175,000 times; 70% of users view the videos in a classroom setting representing approximately 2.85 million views to date; and the professional development programming has been a resource for teachers, schools, school districts, and peer institutions, reaching 3,000 educators through more than 50 programs across the country (page e27). (10 points)

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses were noted.
- (ii) No weaknesses were 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 addressed the need for the proposed project. Several areas are identified and supported by National data which highlight the disparaging percentages of eighth grade students who lack educational acumen in civics and history on a national level. The development of the Constitution 101 curriculum for middle school students will address the identified gaps. The curriculum will be piloted in 10 different states and in schools attended by underserved populations and populations who are ethnically diverse. Strategies are provided to ensure that continued strategies are employed to reach marginalized communities.

Supporting Statements:

- i. The applicant adequately delineates the magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Less than 25% of students achieved a score of proficient on the civics section of the National Assessment of Educational Progress Report (2022) testing of eighth grade civics and history (page e28); and 19% of eighth grade students had no civics instruction at all based on the NAPE latest report; there was a 50% decline in adult understanding of civics in government (page e29) and debates about appropriate and allowed classroom content were identified as pressing issues on a national level (page e30). (8 points)
- ii. The proposed project will address the identified weaknesses through the implementation of a middle school curriculum in 10 states (i.e., Curriculum 101) (page e31). This is considered a strength in that it will enhance the knowledge base of teachers and improve students' civic engagement and participation. Integrating the content into management tools (i.e., google, etc.) enables the seamless access and implementation of the product. (7 points)
- iii. Several factors provide evidence that the proposed project will serve those with the greatest need. Examples include working with communities who are underrepresented and have diverse ethnic backgrounds such as Hispanic/Latinx and Native American (page e32). Assistance will be provided by the Advisory Board and Council to provide feedback on how the applicant can engage more effectively with underserved populations (page e33). These efforts facilitate and underscore how the applicant will ensure it is serving those with the greatest need. (10 points) – 8 points awarded.

Weaknesses:

Overview:

The applicant adequately addressed the need for the proposed project. Several areas are identified and supported by National data which highlight the disparaging percentages of eighth grade students who lack educational acumen in civics and history on a national level. The development of the Constitution 101 curriculum for middle school students will address the identified gaps. The curriculum will be piloted in 10 different states and in schools attended by underserved populations and populations who are ethnically diverse. Strategies are provided to ensure that continued strategies are employed to reach marginalized communities.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

- i. The applicant adequately delineates the magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Less than 25% of students achieved a score of proficient on the civics section of the National Assessment of Educational Progress Report (2022) testing of eighth grade civics and history (page e28); and 19% of eighth grade students had no civics instruction at all based on the NAPE latest report; there was a 50% decline in adult understanding of civics in government (page e29) and debates about appropriate and allowed classroom content were identified as pressing issues on a national level (page e30). (8 points)
- ii. The proposed project will address the identified weaknesses through the implementation of a middle school curriculum in 10 states (i.e., Curriculum 101) (page e31). This is considered a strength in that it will enhance the knowledge base of teachers and improve students' civic engagement and participation. Integrating the content into management tools (i.e., google, etc.) enables the seamless access and implementation of the product. (7 points)
- iii. Several factors provide evidence that the proposed project will serve those with the greatest need. Examples include working with communities who are underrepresented and have diverse ethnic backgrounds such as Hispanic/Latinx and Native American (page e32). Assistance will be provided by the Advisory Board and Council to provide feedback on how the applicant can engage more effectively with underserved populations (page e33). These efforts facilitate and underscore how the applicant will ensure it is serving those with the greatest need. (10 points) – 8 points awarded.

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted

(iii) The applicant has not provided evidence that it has identified the communities that are underserved within the external school districts. A strategy, plan, or procedure would be helpful to ensure the identification of students who meet the criteria for participation and buy in of potential school districts.

Reader's Score: 24

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 management plan is adequate to achieve the program objectives. The strengths of the plan rests in the provisions for effective oversight and aligned responsibilities, clearly stated objectives, outcomes and impact; timeline and milestones for accomplishing project tasks. Feedback procedures dictate the ability to identify project progress or the need for project modifications. The budget is aligned to the narrative which ensures the project may be completed on time and within budget.

Supporting Statements:

- i. The management plan which includes objectives, timeline, milestones and team responsibilities, which are adequate and will facilitate effective oversight and implementation of the project (pages e33-e43). For example, six objectives (i.e., students show gains in understanding of the U.S. Constitution, Objective 1) 6 measurable outcomes (i.e., 40% of students have a greater understanding of the U.S. Constitution) and outcomes provide clear guidelines for project activities. Timelines and milestones dictate when responsibilities will be implemented and by whom. The plan is considered a strength because it provides a blueprint, oversight, and implementation guidelines which are likely to be achieved (pages e33-e39). (12 points)
- ii. The procedures for feedback will be found in the evaluation plan. Formative and summative evaluations will produce both quantitative and qualitative data. Other opportunities for students and teachers to provide feedback include educator focus groups and surveys, along with collection of participant testimonials and unsolicited feedback. These data points are incorporated into the annual assessment of educational programming and inform future improvements (page e44). This is considered a strength as it establishes a comprehensive plan for ensuring feedback data is gathered and used to inform project implementation (page e45).

Weaknesses:

- (i) The timelines and deliverables for year 2 of the project are vague. Activities call for an outreach plan for the formal launch of phase 2; however, no details are provided as to how this would occur; nor are responsibilities assigned within the timeline. The applicant displays a weakness in this area which may compromise the effective implementation.
- (ii) No weaknesses were noted.
- (iii) No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 23

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 provides sufficient detail of the adequacy of resources, costs and partnerships needed to sustain the project. No weaknesses were noted.

Supporting Statements:

i. The project is self-sustaining and virtual in presentation. Therefore, facilities, equipment and cost of materials are phased into general expenses. This is considered a strength because it offsets operating costs giving the flexibility for costs to be closer aligned for student and educator engagement (page e43). (6 points)

ii. The budget reflects costs for salaries, fringe, travel, stipends and contractual services. The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project. (8 points)

iii. The applicant delineates its resources to sustain the project which include a range of educational programming, partner commitment and broad support from stakeholders which are critical to the projects' success (page e44). For example, the Bezos Family Foundation has already made a three-year commitment to cover additional expenses associated with the development of the middle school curriculum and professional development activities, and the applicant has secured generous pledges from individual donors (page e44-e45). (8 points)

iv. The applicant has wide partner support from public and private organizations. Examples include the Achelis and Bodman Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities (page e44). These resources provide evidence of broad support from stakeholders (e.g., LEAs such as the School District of Philadelphia) critical to the project's long-term success. (pages e44-e45). (8 points)

v. The applicant identifies several agencies and organizations who provide support, such as the School District of Philadelphia, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, and the College Board to name a few (page e44). The partnerships can be highly effective and instrumental in supporting the adoption of the project within their middle schools ensuring continued viability and sustainability.

Weaknesses:

(i) No weaknesses were noted.

(ii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iii) No weaknesses were noted.

(iv) While the applicant evidences partner support in the narrative, absent from the application are Letters of Commitment from partners verifying their support. It is critical to ensure widespread acceptance within underserved communities and as relevant stakeholders within the project.

Reader's Score: 28

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 provides evidence of how it will address CPP 1. For example, the Curriculum 101 project addresses principles of the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights through professional development activities. The activities will assist educators to transfer knowledge into instructional lessons for students.

Supporting Statements:

The proposed program will educate students about the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights. The Curriculum 101 for middle school students uses founding stories, ongoing debates, and judicial interpretations of the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights and will impact students' academic achievement and civic engagement.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were 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 satisfactorily addresses Competitive Preference Priority 2 with the identification of a middle school educational setting, a process for ensuring inclusive participants and working with underserved communities.

Supporting Statements:

The applicant will address Competitive Preference Priority 2 by promoting educational equity and adequacy in resources and opportunity for underserved students in a middle school educational setting, by reaching a diverse group of participants who are underserved. In so doing, the project ensures equal educational opportunities and experiences are inclusive with regard to race, ethnicity, culture, language, and disability status (page e28).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were noted.

Reader's Score: 7

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 08/04/2023 09:15 AM