

**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: University of South Carolina (S422B230018)

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	22
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	28
Sub Total	100	93
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	102

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: University of South Carolina (S422B230018)

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 that is focused on the grant's priorities to develop teachers in American history. The applicant represents an exceptional approach to the priorities of this competition through the use of evidence-based practices and the combination of services offered, including graduate coursework and micro-credentials.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant appropriately completed a needs analysis so that they could identify need in their population (e13), which was to improve content knowledge in American history and geography and improve media literacy skills in that context (e13, e20). The Logic Model clearly connects inputs to activities, outputs, and outcomes (e64).

(ii) The combination of services offered is exceptional. The project provides several services focused on increasing teacher knowledge: a graduate course/summer class, story board creation, a graduate education course, micro-credentials in media/literacy, and a workshop/showcase (e14). The applicant has intentionally chosen topics that teachers might not have been exposed to and building skills that improve civic participation (e19-e20), including learning about service learning projects, class discussions and debates, and role plays and simulations (e21).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 addresses the magnitude or severity of students' social studies knowledge being below standards. The applicant identifies specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities that the intensive set of professional development for social studies teachers will mitigate. The applicant establishes that the services provided will focus on those with the greatest need.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant adequately establishes that students in this region are not meeting standards on standardized measures of social studies knowledge (e31).

(ii) The applicants identify a paucity of highly qualified Social Studies/American history and geography teachers that may be leading to students' low test scores (e32). Based on a needs assessment, the applicant will target this gap through a unique program of professional development, including micro-credentials (e32), as well as instructional resources that can be used by all teachers in the district.

(iii) The applicant will create additional opportunity for students in these high needs districts to complete an AP American History course. This can create additional opportunity for students in the districts and earn them college credit (e32). In recruiting teachers the applicant will prioritize those with most need in terms of test scores or preparation (e35-e36).

Weaknesses:

(i) Knowing that a school is performing at or below the 10th percentile in the state is incomplete information to judge student performance if we do not know how the state is performing (e.g., a 10th percentile score in one state might be comparable to a 50th percentile school in another state). If the competition were between schools in that state this would be sufficient information, but in a national competition, a little more is needed (e31). The other measures presented can tell us how widespread the issue is but not how severe because we do not know by how much they are not meeting standards.

(iii) The applicant does not plan to target services to students with greatest need within high needs districts and the AP history courses only benefit college bound students, though they are of a benefit to those students.

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 adequately lays out the management plan including defined responsibilities and timelines, as well as ways that success will be measured. The applicant plans procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the project, including annual, quarterly, and monthly meetings in which using data to improve the project is an agenda item.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant clearly lays out reasonable responsibilities for individual personnel (e36-e39). The objectives and timeline table clearly lays out the goals and measurement tools for the project as well as when they shall be completed and by what project team (e39-e40). The objectives are concrete and measurable (e39-e40).

(ii) Appropriately, the applicant plans many annual, monthly, and quarterly meetings and part of their stated agenda is the use data to improve the project (e41-e42). This is a way to continuously examine whether the program is meeting its objectives.

Weaknesses:

(i) The applicant did not always phrase measurement tools clearly (for example, the difference between sharing storyboards and providing storyboards is unclear; the measurement tool for objective 2.2 does not specify what is being produced) (e39). Project milestones have not been clearly established.

(ii) It is unclear what data will be used and how it will be used to improve the project (e41-e42).

Reader's Score: 22

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 adequately demonstrates the support from USC. The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the teachers and students in Darlington County School District and Sumter School District. The applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including USC's resources, demonstrated commitment of the partners, and the evidence of broad support from stakeholders. The applicant establishes the relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

- (i) The applicant establishes the adequacy of support of USC in terms of facilities and financial backing (e42-e43), as well as their previous experience in similar partnerships (e43).
- (ii) The costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance for the teachers and students in Darlington County School District and Sumter School District. The largest share of costs goes towards personnel (e173).
- (iii) The lead applicant established that it has sufficient funding to continue to provide project services after the end of the project (e45). In addition, there is an established partnership between USC, Darlington County School District and Sumter School District from other projects that have successfully continued (e45).
- (iv) USC is a relevant partner in that it is a major regional school that has a history of sustained and viable relationships with K-12 school districts. The Sumter and Darlington County school districts are relevant partners because they have need and have worked with USC in the past on projects related to improving teaching and learning. The letters of support demonstrate appropriate commitment to the project (e115-e118).

Weaknesses:

- (i) The applicant did not discuss the relevant physical or technology resources available to 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 exceptionally planned innovative activities for civic engagement.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

- (a) The applicant plans for teacher workshop/showcase participants to create storyboards, which is a hands on activity designed to produce curriculum units designed to demonstrate their learning (e50, e51-e52). Other relevant hands-on projects include a civic engagement project in the second half of the workshop/showcase that students will present on (e50).
- (b) The content of the course does include the history and principles of the Constitution of the United States, including the Bill of Rights (e124, e126).

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

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 plans rigorous, and engaging learning approaches that are intended to give students skills to improve engagement of underserved students in civic life. The applicant plans to work in a relevant location to the priority: K-12 schools.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(a) The project is designed to target districts with underserved students in elementary, middle, and high school.

(b) The project will address the inadequate number of teachers certified to teach AP history courses, a barrier for providing the opportunity to take AP history courses to these students (e53).

Weaknesses:

(d) The applicant establishes that individuals who are more active online participate more in civic life. The project has a component on media literacy to improve student effectiveness in evaluating and synthesizing online information. The applicant did not establish the connection between being more effective in interpreting online information and having higher confidence in media abilities that is related to greater civic participation.

Reader's Score: 4

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of South Carolina (S422B230018)

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	5
Sub Total	7	5
Total	112	110

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: University of South Carolina (S422B230018)

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 provides a clear and concise description of a rationale to support the purpose and goals of this project. The rationale is supported by data gathered from a needs assessment survey administered to 354 teachers (p. e 13). Innovative approaches are included to address the absolute and competitive priorities. Approaches include graduate course work, micro-credentials, and a workshop/showcase approach among other creative initiatives.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant delineates specific goals and objectives for the project designed to promote exceptional professional development for teachers through graduate course work with embedded media literacy, Storyboarding, and Micro-credentials (p. e14) (I & ii)

The project proposed demonstrates a strong rationale that is supported by data from a needs assessment administered to local teachers of history and other teachers across subject areas (p. e13).

The needs assessment was given to local teachers who work in o school districts in partnership with the applicant in this proposed program. The high return rate and the results are reflected in the rational (p. e 13). (i)

Coursework and other approaches are outlined in chart and narrative format providing much detail regarding coursework, PD, and storyboarding (p. e17) (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 quality of the need for the project is exceptional.

Data provided by the applicant supports the severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Data sources include Palmetto Assessment of State Standards and End of Course test and is provided in both narrative and table form for clarity.

p. e31). Gaps and weaknesses are clearly described and with a focused connection to the needs of the students and reflected in the purpose of the project (p. e32). The students targeted for participation in this grant are those with significant educational needs and will benefit from teachers who have received the proposed training (p. e33-34).

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

The applicant provides extensive data to support the needs of the students and the teachers included in the school/university partnerships. (p. e31-33) The Palmetto assessment of State Standards and End of Course for history both provide data to support the needs of students and teachers and specifies the areas that need to be addressed (i)

The applicant uses both the teacher survey and student test scores to highlight the gaps and weaknesses of the population to be included in the proposed project (p. e32-33). Use of these data provides strong evidence of the applicant's desire to ensure gaps and weaknesses are targeted and addressed by interventions presented in the proposed project. (ii) There is evidence to support that the students who are slated to be served by highly trained teachers through the proposed project, are the students with the greatest needs.

p. e34). (iii)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are 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 application includes a well-developed management plan with both narrative descriptions and a chart that displays goals/milestones, personnel, and timespan over the years of the grant period. The chart provides evidence that implementation and timeline dates are planned and designed to achieve the goals of the proposed project on time and on budget (pp. e37-39). Personnel are specifically described and based on the information provided, are qualified to execute their responsibilities as delineated. Appropriate pilot testing of strategies and feedback from teacher participants, along with monthly meetings by key personnel are addressed in this section (pp. e39-40).

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

Qualifications and responsibilities of key personnel are clearly described and include background and experience required to support the proposed project's goals, including relevant background in instructional systems and learning technologies (p. e36). Hiring personnel across departments is important for collaboration and university commitment.

(i)

The chart that includes the timeline of project goals and personnel responsibilities is well designed and contributes to grant management (pp. e37-39). The chart demonstrates the applicant's vision for completing goals and objectives on time and on budget. (i)

Continuous feedback for program improvement is included and will be reviewed quarterly across all project staff (p. e42). The frequency of feedback meetings provides ample opportunity to make necessary changes to ensure the program is moving forward at an appropriate pace and effectively implemented in order to meet the goals and objectives of the project. (ii)

Teacher recruitment is addressed and will be implemented with preference give to those teachers who work with students experiencing the greatest needs based on data provided in the application (p. e35-36) (i)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses are 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:

The quality of the resources is exceptional. The lead organization is prepared to offer major support in the areas of facilities, equipment and other resources available on the campus of a Research 1 university. Fiscal resources are clearly delineated and include ongoing funding from the state lottery for educational initiatives (p. e43). (i)

The cost appears reasonable to support the goals and design of the project with clear oversight from key project staff listed (p. e44). (ii) Partner commitment and sustainability are clearly addressed with evidence such as a list of resources that are available to continue the program after the life of the grant and letters of support (p. e44-48) (iii)

The applicant provides extensive evidence of support with facilities and other resources clearly outlined in the application (p. e42-43). (i)

Reasonable cost required to implement the program design, consisting of professional development opportunities, graduate courses, among other components of the design, are evident based on the reference to the Fiscal Handbook and the University Business Administration Handbook (p. e"). (ii)

The applicant provides extensive evidence to support resources to operate the project beyond the life of the grant, such as the Executive State Budget Summary with numerous other resources listed (p. e44-45). The list of partnership initiatives also contributes to evidence of broad support from school districts and a history of working collaboratively and other projects (p. e40). (ii)

Strong commitment from each partner is grounded in the needs of the students and teacher in the participating school districts and strongly connect with other initiatives that are specifically listed such as clinical experiences, apple core, Noyce grants, among others (p. e49). (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 promotes and intends to implement engaging activities that are also evidenced based through coursework, micro-credentials and professional development.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths

Hand-on activities are described and will provide participants with the opportunity to showcase their accomplishments.

Civic engagement projects will be encouraged providing other opportunities to educate students about the principles of the Constitution and Bill of Rights (p. e50). (a & b)

The applicant will offer a five-day travel component with a videographer to help incorporate Storyboarding, allowing educators to use content in lesson planning (p. e51). (b)

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 quality of the CPP2 is adequate.

The applicant provides evidence of promoting equity and adequacy to student from participating districts. The evidence clearly outlines percentages of students with lower test scores who will be taught by teachers with improved knowledge and skills in the target fields of study. (p. e53). Rigorous approaches to learning are included and supported by research. The underserved students in the partner school districts will be the focus of this proposed project and are described in this section of the application (p. e54).

Supporting Statements

Strengths:

Evidence of promoting equity in resources and opportunity for underserved students and their teachers is provided and includes data to support the needs of the participants (p. e53). (b)

Elementary, middle, and high school student in high need school districts benefit from the proposed project through preparation of teachers who have participated in coursework with embedded media literacy and micro credentials (p. e54). (a)

The application includes many rigorous activities such as evaluating sources through using standards of proof understanding and recognizing bias, among other equity focused activities that will ensure promoting equity is a major focus (p. e54). (c)

Weaknesses:

Weaknesses:

It is unclear how the project will interact with other members of the school/university community, including parents and caregivers, to foster engagement in civic activities (p. e57) (d)

Reader's Score: 5

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: University of South Carolina (S422B230018)

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	20
Adequacy of Resources		
1. Adequacy of Resources	30	28
Sub Total	100	93
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	105

Technical Review Form

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

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: University of South Carolina (S422B230018)

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 rationale for the project. The applicant created the program based on a needs assessment of teachers who want more professional development in American History and geography. The approach is exceptional because the project will include a graduate course, a summer institute, workshops, and videography. By the end of the project, the participants will also complete five micro-credentials which will result in media literacy and teacher credentials that address the state's shortage of history teachers.

Strengths:

(i) The applicant demonstrates a rationale for the proposed project (page e13). The applicant conducted a survey of 354 teachers in grades 3, 4, 5, 8, and 11 who completed the survey, and 88.7% noted that they needed to increase their knowledge of American history and geography. The applicant also discusses other rationales for the project objectives (page e17) such as Jacob and Zmuda (2023) which notes the importance of storyboarding for teachers and their students. The project will employ a videographer during the summer trips capturing footage that will create videos that hold students' attention. These methods demonstrate the rationale behind the project that will increase teacher effectiveness and student engagement.

(ii) The applicant describes an exceptional approach to the project (page e25) which focuses on participants designing, researching, evaluating, and planning their own course materials (Little, Katzenbach, & Smith, 2003). Strategies are included in this approach which focuses on a summer institute for the teachers and a graduate course. In this course, the teachers will develop American history and geography modules with a media literacy component. Other strategies will include spring workshops with well-known speakers, and the project participants will be required to serve as mentors in the later years of the project (page e29). This approach is innovative because the teachers will help the students to learn the course materials with a deeper understanding of American history and geography.

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 describes an exceptional need for the project. The project includes a component that focuses on the American History graduate curriculum for the teachers. This approach is innovative and includes micro-credentials. These teachers will end the program meeting teacher certification needs to improve the teaching outcomes of the state of South Carolina.

Strengths:

- (i) The applicant demonstrates the magnitude or severity of the problem to be addressed by the proposed project. On page e31, the applicant notes that the majority of the schools participating in the project are performing at or below the 10th percentile among all schools in the state. Many of the schools have not performed well on the Palmetto Assessment of State Standards. For instance, Darlington County reported that 63.6% of students did not pass the 2022 U.S. History Consortium tests. These gaps will be addressed by the project by improving teacher training which will translate to students' tests because the teachers will have a better understanding of the history material to teach students.
- (ii) The applicant describes the gaps or weaknesses in services and how the project will address these gaps. On page e32, the applicant will provide teachers in grades 3rd, 4th, 5th, 8th, and 11th with a highly qualified teacher in Social Studies, American History, and geography. These teachers will receive professional development through American History graduate courses with five micro-credentials that result in meeting teacher certification needs. Furthermore, the micro-credential courses will help the teachers to teach the students on how to evaluate online data which is important for students to understand as they navigate information online (page e33).
- (iii) The applicant describes the services for those with the greatest needs. For example, the applicant will increase the number of teachers in Darlington and Sumter (page e34). In 2022, not enough teachers were available to teach the Advanced Placement U.S. History Courses. The project will increase the number of teachers in the districts of Darlington and Sumter and will address this gap in offerings for the disadvantaged students in the districts. Teachers will also complete the U.S. History Advanced Placement course during the summer institute which will also help with addressing this shortage. (pp. e33-34).

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 adequate exceptional management plan for the project. The applicant clearly outlines the task, responsible party, allotment of time, and milestones for the task. Through these comprehensive plans, the project will continue to improve because communication of issues will occur monthly, quarterly, and annually. While the applicant provides details on the evaluation, there is no mention of quantitative data to support this plan. The applicant could have made this section more clear.

Strengths:

- (i) The applicant outlines the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget with responsibilities and milestones (page e36). The applicant details who is responsible for each task such as Dr. Bon who will devote 12.5% of their time to the project overseeing tasks such as recruiting and monitoring project participants. The time for these tasks includes Fall 2023 and 2024 (page 36). Other details are noted such as teaching the graduate courses (HIS 599 The Growth and Expansion of America) in Summer 2025 (page 38). These clear objectives with assigned responsibilities will ensure that everyone knows their assigned tasks and will keep the project on track.
- (ii) The applicant presents procedures for ensuring continuous feedback. For instance, the applicant details how the project director and other staff members will monitor the project and use data to improve the project (page e41). These meetings will occur monthly, quarterly, and annually. The project director and staff will use data and other reports at each time period to improve the outcomes of the project. More importantly, on page e42, the applicant details that the project director and staff will communicate these findings regarding the issues to make substantiative changes to the project. These sound methods will improve the project outcomes because the proper stakeholders will receive communication and understand how to improve the project.

Weaknesses:

- (i) No weaknesses noted.
- (ii) While the applicant lists data to improve the project, the applicant does not detail what the data is. Therefore, it is difficult to clearly understand the continuous improvement plan for the project. (page e41).
- (iii) No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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 list of facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources for the project. The applicant does not connect how the facilities and money listed will be used to support the project. More specifically, the applicant could have included classrooms or labs that would have strengthened the project's goals. Also, the applicant could have included how the partners will contribute funding for the project.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths:

(i) The applicant presents a limited list of facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources for the project. The applicant describes the campus as 359 acres with a large endowment for the school and other budget details are described such as a \$80 million in lottery funds. These resources may be used to assist with the project objectives (pg. e43).

(ii) The applicant presents a reasonable budget. On pages e179-e183, the applicant describes the grant resources to support the project such as personnel, fringe, travel, and other costs like stipends and graduate school tuition. These costs are integral to running the project because the teachers must be supported so they can complete this critical training and resolve the need of American history and geography teachers in the state.

(iii) The applicant outlines reasonable costs for the project. For instance, on page e44, the applicant states that they will use significant financial resources to support the project after the grant funding period ends such as the \$610,300,00 endowment and \$80 million lottery fund. Other financial resources are noted such as \$9,787,427 operational funds that will be used to support the project. These comprehensive financial resources ensure that the project will continue after the grant period ends.

(iv) The applicant details the commitment from each partner such as the local education agencies, other research grants like the Robert Noyce Scholarship grant, and Apple Core Initiative. All these resources outline how the students will be supported while attending classes at the university. Other support is demonstrated by letters from the College of Arts and Sciences and Sumter School District (Appendices) Both letters indicate that they will provide teachers, provide faculty, and participate in professional development for the project.

Weaknesses:

(i) While the applicant lists an extensive list of facilities, money, and partnerships for the project, the applicant fails to connect how the project will use the facilities and money for the proposed project. The application could have been strengthened if the project connected the facilities to the courses or how any money will be expended to support the project objectives page e42.

(ii) No weaknesses noted.

(iii) No weaknesses noted.

(iv) No weaknesses noted.

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 presents an exceptional approach to the priority. For instance, the teachers will participate in activities such as workshops and seminars with well-known speakers. Also, the applicant will provide graduate courses in American History that will assist teachers with achieving credentialing goals to address the teacher shortage in history in the state.

Supporting Statements:

Strengths: pg e49

The applicant details methods for innovation and civic engagement such as workshops and seminars with postdoctoral fellows who will speak on race, freedom, and democratic citizenship. Other activities include the teachers presenting their storyboards created from content in the graduate courses. Moreover, during the civic engagement focus of the workshop, participants will receive instruction in service-learning, extracurricular, and discussion activities. These activities are all designed to promote civics engagement for teachers and students, which will deepen their understanding of such subjects.

Participants will be educated about the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights by attending graduate courses in history. Through these innovative activities, civic engagement is expected to increase for the students who are served by the project.

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 an exceptional project that will promote equity among disadvantaged students. For instance, the applicant outlines how the project will prepare teachers to teach rigorous courses in American History and civics, thus preparing the teachers to help students deepen their understanding of the subject matter.

Strengths:

The applicant describes the methods to promote student equity through this project. For instance, on pages e52-e54, the applicant states that the project will focus on increasing student achievement in social studies for elementary and middle school students. The applicant will provide teachers with professional development and micro-credentials that will increase student achievement in American History. These teachers will also take 9 hours of graduate school education that will help them with teaching these subjects. As a result, the teachers can become certified to teach the U.S. History Advanced Placement helping the students to prepare for advanced coursework.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses.

Reader's Score: 7

Status: Submitted
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