

FY 2016 CSP Grants for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools CALL FOR PEER REVIEWERS

Introduction: The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII), is seeking individuals to serve as peer reviewers for the FY 2016 Charter Schools Program (CSP) Grants for Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools (CMO).

The purpose of the CSP is to increase the national understanding of the charter school model by (1) expanding the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the Nation by providing financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools, and (2) by evaluating the effects of charter schools, including their effects on students, student academic achievement, staff and parents.

Under the CMO program, the CSP awards grants to eligible applicants, including non-profit charter management organizations. Eligible applicants must have demonstrated success, including success in increasing student academic achievement. Grant funds may be used to expand enrollment of one or more existing charter schools by substantially increasing the number of available seats per school, or to open one or more new charter schools based on the model for which the eligible applicant has presented evidence of success.

Congress has appropriated approximately \$333 million to support the continued development of high quality charter schools and dissemination of charter school best practices throughout the nation in FY 2016. Approximately \$65 million of these funds are dedicated to this grant competition. We invite qualified individuals to apply to serve as grant application peer reviewers by registering in G5; please see instructions below.

Requirements: Peer reviewers should clearly indicate having one or more of the following backgrounds:

- Charter management organization planning and operation
- Experts in education program evaluation, especially charter sector evaluation
- Social and education entrepreneurs with experience in the charter sector
- Education professionals with significant experience in:
 - Charter school leadership and professional development
 - Charter School evaluation and monitoring experience
 - Charter school policy and research
 - Charter school planning, program design, and implementation
 - Charter school technical assistance and resources
 - Charter school authorizing
- Charter support organizations
- Education strategy practitioners with experience in the charter sector
- Special education and English learner researchers and evaluators
- Charter school funders
- Practitioners from the social innovation and venture philanthropy fields
- Education and public policy professionals
- Other non-profit entities with experience in the charter sector

Peer reviewers are expected to independently read, score, and provide written comments for grant applications submitted to the U.S. Department of Education under the CSP programs.

Availability: Reviewers for the CSP CMO competition will need to dedicate approximately 50 hours for the review process. This time estimate includes participation in an orientation session by conference call prior to evaluating the applications, time for reading, scoring, developing comments, and discussing assigned applications, and time for editing and finalizing comments for submission.

While exact dates for the review have not yet been finalized, we expect it will be in or around late June – late July 2016.

Sample 2016 schedule for review of applications:

Application Due Date	Mid-June
Peer Reviewer Orientation Webinar	Week of June 20
Estimated Reading Period (one week)	Late June
Estimated Peer Review of Applications Begins	Late June through Mid-July
Estimated Comment Revisions with Panel Monitors Completed	Mid-July

Tools: Each reviewer must have access to the Internet, a phone, and a computer.

Quality of review: Each reviewer must provide detailed, objective, constructive, and timely, well written reviews for each assigned application. These reviews will be used to recommend applications for funding. They will also be shared with each applicant and the comments regarding winning applicants will be posted online following the reviews.

Honorarium: Reviewers will receive an honorarium of \$200 per application for the satisfactory completion of the above requirements during the grant review schedule. A satisfactory review requires that each application is read, scored, and discussed, and that comments and scores are satisfactorily completed. The final, high-quality comments and corresponding scores will be reviewed and approved by a panel moderator prior to their final submission in the G5 system.

How to Apply: If you would like to be considered as a peer reviewer, please register yourself in our online peer reviewer database at www.g5.gov (G5). To serve as a reviewer you will need to register in G5. The online registration requires you to submit your resume; please ensure your resume (maximum of 5 pages) includes a brief list of career highlights and/or outlines your specific expertise in the areas outlined above. Please do not exceed the five-page limit for resumes. When the system prompts you for your areas of specialization, please ensure you select “charter schools”, along with any other relevant areas.

IF INTERESTED: If you would like to be considered as a peer reviewer, please follow the directions in the "Registration Process" file (1 MB) to register yourself in the G5 Grants Management System. In addition, please email a copy of your current resume or vitae to CharterSchools@ed.gov, with the subject heading “CMO Peer Reviewer application”. Your

resume should clearly address your charter school background or expertise. We ask that all interested reviewers register in G5 and email their resume no later than **Friday, May 20, 2016**.

Resumes will be kept on file and panel reviewers will be notified on an as-needed basis. We do not yet have dates for competition reviews, although we have provided a sample schedule above.

Conflict of Interest: Please remember that if your organization intends to apply for a grant under any CSP competitions, you might not be eligible to serve as a reviewer. As a reviewer, you will have a conflict of interest if:

- You helped prepare an application, regardless of financial interest in the success or failure of that application.
- You have agreed to serve, or you have been offered a position, as an employee, advisor, or consultant on the project.
- Your personal financial interests will be affected by the outcome of the competition, which would include any family members, employees or associates of the project applying for funding.

If you have any questions about the peer review process, please contact us by email: CharterSchools@ed.gov.

NON-DISCRIMINATION: The Department solicits reviewers without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. The Department will provide reasonable accommodations for a qualified individual with a disability so that individual might participate in the peer reviewer application process. If you require a reasonable accommodation to apply to participate in this review, please contact Brian Martin by phone at (202)205-9085, or email at brian.martin@ed.gov no later than **4:30 p.m. on Friday, May 20 2016**, to ensure we can facilitate the application process.