

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2014 09:57 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	27
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	25
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	17
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	69

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 6: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

SRI proposes to develop course units in secondary school science and social studies that combines Strategic Instruction Model interventions with mobile technologies to produce a new learning approach. This approach is supposed to respond to the call by Common Core State Standards that emphasize higher order thinking and reasoning. By and large, students with disabilities continue to fall below state standards and so this problem is significant and SRI is offering a novel approach to addressing this problem. The proposed units involve in-class and online engagement, with a focus on collaborative learning. The proposal is an interesting and promising approach to addressing priority three: improving academic outcomes for students with disabilities.

Weaknesses:

There is a heavy reliance on technology and the proposal does not question issues of access to technology.

Reader's Score: 27

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. In determining the quality of the proposed project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(2) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

The design of the program is described with great specificity. The use of SIM interventions have been ideally designed and validated in previous research, but this project will be the first to implement co-design with educators in order to integrate those interventions with mobile technologies. The project outlines eight clear goals, of which the end goal is to create a final version of the enhanced units and professional development modules. These modules would be enhanced after an evaluation process, which includes feedback from teachers and students. The project contemplates various risks. There are two versions of each unit of instruction, one is a traditional unit and one has the SIM interventions, thus the project is well positioned for data evaluation and could likely produce a body of work that would be of interest for the field of study in general. The project has considered the community setting, teachers, and student participants to nuanced degree. The project offers thorough information about its research design, measures, and data sources. The timeline is well thought out and detailed.

Weaknesses:

There is not much discussion in the proposal about data collection for purposes of measuring student progress. The project does not align the eight project goals with their evaluation plan, thus leaving a gap in either their goals or their evaluation, or both.

Reader's Score: 25

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project 's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements

to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

A highly qualified team leads the project, with a track record in innovative research, development, and securing funding. The latter point is particularly important in selecting projects that have the ability to grow over time. Time-based benchmarks indicate project team is aware of the need for gauging progress, though that process of using the data itself is not well defined. In Appendix B, there is a good outline of partner responsibilities and contributions.

Weaknesses:

The management plan presents the team, but does not discuss how different functions of the group will interact.

Reader's Score: 17

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

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

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/20/2014 09:57 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 12:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	26
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	70

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 6: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score:

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

It is clear regarding the extent to which the applicant's proposed project will address Absolute Priority 3 – Improving Academic Outcomes for Students with Disabilities (pg. e20/21). The proposed project addresses a high need area with Next Generation Science Standards (pg. e20). Proposed project is aligned to Common Core Standards (pg. e20). Proposed project has multi-tiered levels of interventions (pg. e25). Proposed project has developed online circles to support which is multi-tiered (pg. e24). Proposed project is combining technology and social media for learning (pg e21-23).

Weaknesses:

Applicant's use of mobile technologies is not a novel approach as mobile technologies have been involved in education for many years (pg. e21). Applicant needs to provide more details on what is proposed for the content area in relation to the circles of support (pg. e24/25). Applicant needs to address access for all students to online learning and access outside of the classroom (pg. e23).

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. In determining the quality of the proposed project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(2) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

Applicant has clear and coherent goals for the project (pg. e28). Proposed project has a well-developed logic model (pg. e29). Applicant has project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving project goals. Applicant addresses potential risks to project success (pg. e37) and strategies to mitigate those risks (pg. e37/38). Applicant is developing 2 versions of each lesson (pg. e27) which has been successful for them in the past. Applicant has a well-developed plan for data collection including classroom observations, interviews, teacher feedback that applicant will use to evaluate success of the proposed project (pg. e 30/32-35).

Weaknesses:

Project goals are not measurable (pg. e28). Applicant proposes double dosage for students but did not address the potential risks associated with this implementation or the best use of student and/ or teacher time (pg. e31). Applicant proposes to have teachers withhold instruction to certain groups of students which applicant addressed knowing it may be difficult for teachers to do (pg. e37).

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project 's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

Applicant has a management plan that articulates key responsibilities of key personnel (pg. e39-42). Proposed project has timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities (pg. e35-39). Applicant has metrics used to assess progress and annual performance targets. Applicant had key partners that provide board support to the proposed project (pg. G-2 to G-28).

The project team has experience with programs of this scope and size (pg. e39-42, G-65 to G 195).

Weaknesses:

Applicant needs to describe role the partners play in the success of the program. Applicant has an external evaluator overseeing content development but does not establish the credentials of the external evaluator as having knowledge in content development (pg. e35).

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

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

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

N/A - Reviewed by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

N/A - Reviewed by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: **0**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/19/2014 12:20 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/18/2014 10:01 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	30
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	26
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	18
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	0
Total	100	74

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 6: 84.411C

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

This proposal is significant in its implementation in that it expands on validated research on SIM interventions, and seeks to further develop how mobile technologies may be used interactively by teachers and students (pg. 9). By seeking to expand on knowledge of "strategies that students require for high quality, collaborative discourse and participation in online social communities," (pg. 2), this project addresses the identified absolute priority. Additionally, by focusing on the impact of professional development communities within identified schools, and across the SIM network, this project seeks to develop and advance the knowledge and practice of mobile technology implementation across the field of study.

Weaknesses:

This proposal would benefit from considering how the reliance on mobile technologies may limit the number of schools who are able to implement its findings to those with sufficient resources to implement mobile learning. Likewise, it would benefit from addressing how families without access to mobile technology would transfer this learning to the home environment. Providing extensions for out-of-school learning, for those with and without access to the technology, would also strengthen the aims of this proposal in meeting the identified absolute priority.

Reader's Score: 30

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. In determining the quality of the proposed project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(2) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

This proposal's project design utilizes multiple, quantitative and qualitative data collection streams via: SOCSSYS; teacher feedback; class observations; interviews; think alouds; content tests (pg. 13). Additionally, the proposal considers multiple issues/noted concerns based on the research design, and addresses the contingencies to address or mitigate each (pgs. 18-19).

Weaknesses:

This proposal would benefit from addressing the possibilities that RCT will be a challenge for schools' "class schedulers" (pg. 12), and ways to address this burden on schools. Likewise, the burden placed on teachers to withhold instruction from students at specific times should also be addressed from the teacher's perspective, in order to help guarantee fidelity. Considering incentives and strategies for staff and teachers to follow research protocols will help ensure a collective purpose and mitigate possible complications to the research.

Reader's Score: 26

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and

how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

This proposal's management plan and personnel will benefit from the executive director's testing of technology standards set by the USDOE's What Works Clearinghouse (pg. 16). All project activities have clearly defined and time-based benchmarks, with identified deliverables included in their management plan (pg. 16). The plan also includes matching funds for building school capacity, based on the research results.

Weaknesses:

This proposal's management plan relies on content development based on Common Core State Standards, which may prevent its application to states not subscribing to CCSS. The management plan may benefit from considering multiple sets of academic standards in order to ensure that all states are able to adopt standards-based learning outcomes.

Reader's Score: 18

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

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

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/18/2014 10:01 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2014 04:10 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	12
Total	100	12

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 6: 84.411C

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

na

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

na

Weaknesses:

na

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. In determining the quality of the proposed project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(2) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

na

Weaknesses:

na

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project 's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

na

Weaknesses:

na

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

- (1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.**
- (2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.**
- (3) The extent to which the evaluation plan clearly articulates the key components and outcomes of the project, as well as a measurable threshold for acceptable implementation.**
- (4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.**

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

The applicants propose a promising robust randomized control trial (RCT) research design to produce strong causal evidence according to What Works Clearinghouse evidence standards (p. 12). The plan is to utilize an experimental design with clearly delineated control and treatment groups (p. 24). The applicant also outlines how the evaluation will account for the teacher attrition that might occur. The applicants demonstrate depth and breadth of knowledge on what is needed for full implementation and adequate sample size but it is not always taken into consideration before recruitment (p. 24). Proposed is a thorough plan to adhere very closely throughout the evaluation and project implementation to What Works Clearinghouse standards of causal evidence. There is a thorough discussion on the power analysis (88%) and minimum detectable effect size (MDES) (.18, .47, and .26) respectively according to IES 2014 requirements. There is a logic model on (p. 10) that includes a rich discussion of project inputs, design features, outputs, outcomes (proximal and distal), and impacts.

The applicants cited several previous studies on evaluation results and reports to support their comprehensive evaluation plan. One of the eight project goals (pp. 28-29) is the evaluation implementation with fidelity. All the essential components needed to conduct an effective evaluation is followed closely by the applicants such as designing data collection instruments, collecting data, analyzing data, reporting results, and improving programs (pp. 23-25). It is highly likely that some evidence of promise is achievable if the evaluation is fully implemented with fidelity as the applicants propose.

There appears to be a strong and highly qualified evaluation team. The evaluation lead proposes the use of Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) as the statistical methodological approach which is the one of the most rigorous methods identified by What Works Clearinghouse causal evidence standards and experimental studies done in school settings. This statistical tool is also the best fit for this evaluation study and there is detailed information provided on reliability and validity measures. This is a solid evaluation plan that has described to include a detailed budget for the evaluation activities to allow the applicants to conduct an efficient and effective assessment of the proposed project.

Weaknesses:

The key evaluation questions and the evaluation goals and objectives are not aligned with the eight project goals identified on (p. 10). The objective performance measures thresholds are unclear.

Reader's Score: 12

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/20/2014 04:10 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/18/2014 12:52 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Summary Statement		
Summary Statement		
1. Summary Statement	0	0
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	35	0
Quality of Project Design		
1. Project Design	30	0
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan/Personnel	20	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	15	14
Total	100	14

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - 2014 Development Full Panels - 6: 84.411C

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: SRI International (U411C140003)

Questions

Summary Statement - Summary Statement

1. Summary Statement (Optional)

General:

NA. Scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Significance

1. In determining the significance of the project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the proposed project addresses the absolute priority the applicant is seeking to meet.

(2) The extent to which the proposed project would implement a novel approach as compared with what has been previously attempted nationally.

(3) The potential contribution of the proposed project to the development and advancement of theory, knowledge, and practices in the field of study.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to explain how the applicant's proposed project addresses the absolute priority and the subpart that it seeks to meet. Additionally, the Secretary asks that applicants explain how the proposed project is unique. Applicants should explain how their proposed projects fit into existing theory, knowledge, or practice, and how their proposed projects will serve as exemplars for new practices in the field.

Strengths:

NA. Scored by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

NA. Scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design

1. In determining the quality of the proposed project design, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and coherence of the project goals, including the extent to which the proposed project articulates an explicit plan or actions to achieve its goals (e.g., a fully developed logic model of the proposed project).

(2) The clarity, completeness, and coherence of the project goals, and whether the application includes a description of project activities that constitute a complete plan for achieving those goals, including the identification of potential risks to project success and strategies to mitigate those risks.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address what activities the applicant will undertake in its proposed project, and how the applicant will ensure its project implementation is successful in achieving the project goals.

Strengths:

NA. Scored by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

NA. Scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. In determining the quality of the management plan and personnel for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the management plan articulates key responsibilities and well-defined objectives, including the timelines and milestones for completion of major project activities, the metrics that will be used to assess progress on an ongoing basis, and annual performance targets the applicant will use to monitor whether the project is achieving its goals.

(2) The extent of the demonstrated commitment of any key partners or evidence of broad support from stakeholders whose participation is critical to the project 's long-term success.

(3) The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

(4) The extent to which the project director has experience managing projects of similar size and scope as the proposed project.

Note: In responding to this criterion, the Secretary encourages applicants to address how the project team will evaluate the success or challenges of the project and use that feedback to make improvements to the project, and the role of key partners and their impact on the long-term success of the project, and how the project director 's prior experiences have prepared them for implementing the proposed project of this size and scope successfully.

Strengths:

NA. Scored by another reviewer.

Weaknesses:

NA. Scored by another reviewer.

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

In determining the quality of the project evaluation to be conducted, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The clarity and importance of the key questions to be addressed by the project evaluation, and the appropriateness of the methods for how each question will be addressed.

(2) The extent to which the evaluation plan includes a clear and credible analysis plan, including a proposed sample size and minimum detectable effect size that aligns with the expected project impact, and an analytic approach for addressing the research questions.

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

(4) The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

Note: In responding to this criterion, applicants should describe the key evaluation questions and address how the proposed evaluation methodologies will allow the project to answer those questions. The Secretary encourages applicants to include questions about the effectiveness of the proposed project with the specific student populations being served with grant funds. Further, the Secretary encourages applicants to identify what implementation and performance data the evaluation will generate and how the evaluation will provide data during the grant period to help indicate whether the project is on track to meet its goals. Finally, applicants should also address whether sufficient resources, which may include the qualifications of the independent evaluator, are included in the project budget to carry out the evaluation effectively.

Strengths:

The proposal specifies eight goals (pp. 9-10) as well as a logic model on page 10 that specifies the expected project outcomes. Additionally, Exhibit 4 (p. 14) shows the sources of data to be examined for each outcome. These are important to the implementation of a quality evaluation design as they can assist the applicant to structure an evaluation that is targeted at the project's critical outcomes and processes.

The proposed evaluation will use a randomized controlled trial design (p. 12) where sections within each teacher will be assigned to either the intervention or comparison group. The use of this design will help to control for threats to internal validity.

The proposed sample size will provide for minimum detectable effect sizes (p. 13) that are reasonable based upon prior studies of the use of the intervention (p. 6).

The application provides a comprehensive chart that shows the variety of outcomes to be examined in the evaluation and the source(s) of data for each outcome (p. 14). This helps to specify the evaluation analysis.

The project will develop summative assessments to be administered at the conclusion of each unit (p. 13). The project also plans to develop surveys to be administered to students and teachers (p. 13). These are appropriate instruments to provide data needed to assess project goals. Reliability and validity of the assessments will be determined (pp. 13, 16 & 17) which helps to ensure the quality of the data that will be collected.

The proposed project will collect a variety of process and implementation data that will assist to provide a more complete picture of how the project achieved the quantitative results (pp. 13-16). One special activity in this regard is the use of student input groups that will provide detailed and subgroup specific feedback about the quality of the enhanced units (p. 11). These data can also be used as part of feedback to help determine whether the project is on track to meet its goals.

To help ensure that the project is on track to meet its goals each unit will be used twice during the project period (p. 12). The data collected and analyzed from the first use will be used to inform the need for unit revisions prior to the second use (p. 18).

The staff that will conduct the evaluation has the qualifications necessary to implement the evaluation as designed, and the resources that will be allocated to the implementation of the design appear to be appropriate to a project of this scope and size.

Weaknesses:

The alignment between the evaluation questions on pages 23 and 24 and the information in Exhibit 4 is not clearly described.

The relationship and responsibilities of the various contractors and individuals (Leaders Network, [REDACTED], [REDACTED]) that will assist with the data collection and analysis is not clearly indicated.

Reader's Score: 14

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/18/2014 12:52 PM