

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/16/2015 08:50 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	0
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	45	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	20
<b>Total</b>	100	20

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - i3 Development Panel - 4: 84.411C

Reader #1: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

## Questions

### 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 involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(2) The national significance of the proposed project.

(3) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

#### Strengths:

NA

#### Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) 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.

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

(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

#### Strengths:

NA

#### Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

### 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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

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

#### Strengths:

The project evaluation plan is fully developed, well-written and clearly states key questions and methods of analyses. The methods of evaluation should produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations. This project evaluation plan includes both impact research and key implementation research questions that are clear and appropriate for the study (page 17). The project evaluation plan addresses all aspects of the evaluation as it relates to the project.

The budget narrative allocates [REDACTED] for a Director of Research for the project and another \$440,000 to an external evaluator to design and facilitate the external evaluation. The proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project effectively.

The impact evaluation uses a random control trial with random assignment taking place at the school level (page 18). There will be matched pairs of schools based on their geographic proximity to each other, their size and demographic characteristics which will ensure appropriate geographic and demographic distribution of treatment schools. A total of 15 treatment schools and a corresponding total of 15 control schools is within the evaluation, and each school will have a minimum of 20 sixth-grade students in their afterschool program which will be included as part of the research sample. This will allow for the evaluation to produce evidence about the project's effectiveness.

The evaluation also indicated that it will be using Hierarchical Linear Model to conduct analyses as well (page 18). The data points - baseline characteristics, student's science achievement and other outcomes - are all clearly described on page 21. With this information, it is clear how the project evaluation will use these data to address their research questions. It is also clear that the project is equipped to obtain these data.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 20

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Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/16/2015 08:50 AM



Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/22/2015 01:40 PM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

**Reader #2:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	0
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	45	0
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	20
<b>Total</b>	100	20

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - i3 Development Panel - 4: 84.411C

Reader #2: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

## Questions

### 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 involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(2) The national significance of the proposed project.

(3) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

#### Strengths:

n/a

#### Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) 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.

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

(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

#### Strengths:

n/a

#### Weaknesses:

n/a

Reader's Score: 0

### 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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

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

#### Strengths:

Overall, this is a fully developed evaluation plan in which all aspects of the program design are addressed in the analyses, ensuring that program impact will accurately reflect the project results.

- The proposal identifies several key questions (pg. 17) which are relevant to the project and, if answered, will accurately reflect both the fidelity of the project and effect the proposed project has on students.
- Both formative and summative evaluations are described in detail. The summative evaluation does meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations (pg. 18).
- Random assignment by schools is described in detail, and the narrative indicates that steps will be taken to ensure the equivalence of the groups as well as a diverse student population in both groups (pgs. 18-19).
- Attrition and effect size (pgs. 19-20) are also effectively addressed, ensuring that the results of the evaluation will produce evidence of the program's effectiveness.
- Detail is provided on measures that will be used in the evaluation (pgs. 21-22). Measures are likely to uniformly reflect progress of students in each group and will provide data that directly addresses progress on program goals.
- The proposal identifies an outside evaluator with sufficient experience, mentions project staff who will be responsible for collection of data as well as liaison with the evaluator.
- Sufficient funds are put aside for the evaluation (pgs. 12-13 & Budget Narrative).

#### Weaknesses:

- No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 20

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/22/2015 01:40 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/21/2015 09:28 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

**Reader #3:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	35
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	45	44
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	79
<b>Total</b>	100	79

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - i3 Development Panel - 4: 84.411C

Reader #3: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

## Questions

### 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 involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(2) The national significance of the proposed project.

(3) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

#### Strengths:

1) The extent to which the proposed project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies is adequate due to the combination of three strategies; collaborative teaching, curricular bridging and design-based learning are strategies. These strategies when applied separately are effective to improve student learning. The combination of the three strategies improves the project. As a result, the students will have more exposure to science topics because the teachers who work together complement each other as a supportive team. The student will doubly benefit from the teachers. The curriculum bridging will give the student additional opportunity to expand their knowledge on science topics, the design technic will help the student understand the application of science in real life. This makes for a comprehensive strategic network within the proposed project.

2) On pages three and four the applicant adequately addresses the factor of the national significance by explaining the importance of the project by how the applicant will increase the student's achievement in science and how the selected strategies involving hands-on science experiences will maintain students' interest. The evidence cited on page three based on a study of 34 countries that participate in the Programmed for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows the rank at which the United States is regarding STEM fields; this information supports the need for the project.

3) The use of partners, located all around the country, indicates significant potential for the project being replicable within a variety of settings. Maximizing use of after school classes that are integrated with the curriculum will serve in reinforcing conceptual learning in the classroom. The activities performed by teachers in class and after class are aligned with the curricula.

#### Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 35

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

**(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.**

**(2) 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.**

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

**(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

1) The goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by this project are clearly specified and measurable as evidenced in the appendix that shows the management plan's short and long term goals and expected outcomes for the three years of the project. The applicant explains that the proposed project will focus on high need minority schools, teachers in school and establishing partnerships. The potential strength of this project's impact with its intended population is outlined in the specific outputs the proposed project lists: the amount of students, teachers, and dedicated hours and reports.

2) 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 is well defined and explained. The applicant pays good attention to detail throughout this project component. Tables delineate the tasks and responsibilities of all key personnel, the milestones and activities that will be performed each year in order to fulfill the goals establish by the proposed project (pp. 11-13).

3) The proposed project adequately describes the tasks to be performed in order to have feedback for evaluation and continuous improving (pp. 15-16). Table 10 specifies the type of feedback, the procedure, and the description of the procedure. This gives an idea of how the proposed project director will manage the project and how they will deal with risks throughout project implementation.

4) The mechanisms the applicant purposes to use to broadly disseminate information on its project are adequate. Page 16 includes a thoughtful description of the dissemination methods. The use of policy briefs, research reports by Research Alliance for New York City Schools (RANCYS), and other dissemination mechanisms such as professional association conferences will guarantee that the proposed project will be known widely.

**Weaknesses:**

1) The budget narrative needs some additional explanation on how the applicant will align the use of it to develop materials and meaningful strategies to maintain the student's interest (p.4), and how that use matches with after-school activities for the students who will be served.

**Reader's Score: 44**

**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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

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

**Strengths:**

n/a

**Weaknesses:**

n/a

**Reader's Score:**     **0**

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**Status:**           Submitted  
**Last Updated:**   09/21/2015 09:28 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/18/2015 10:09 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

**Applicant:** The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

**Reader #4:** \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	32
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	45	40
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	72
<b>Total</b>	100	72

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - i3 Development Panel - 4: 84.411C

Reader #4: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

## Questions

### 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 involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(2) The national significance of the proposed project.

(3) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

#### Strengths:

The aim of this project is to reach some of the neediest communities in the New York City area by organizing teams of formal and informal educators to deliver design-based curricula to middle school students, the majority of whom identify with groups often underrepresented in STEM fields (p. 1). The project team plans to employ an evidence-based approach that links formal and informal educators and curricula to motivate students to be more engaged with and develop STEM-related skills (p. 2). This well thought-out link between the formal and informal education sector offers evidence with regard to the positive impact the project will likely have on its participants. The partnership between the educators will not only benefit the students, but also the educators themselves (pp. 8-9). Additionally, the project management team plans on recruiting community-based organizations to participate in providing informal educators and helping to develop content (p. 5). The inclusion of community-based groups will further ensure that both the content and structure of after-school programs will better serve the specific needs of the students who belong to those communities. Given its history and partnerships (e.g., the New York Hall of Science), The After-School Corporation is poised to accomplish its short and long-term goals. In addition to its strong dissemination plan, the project's dependence on community-based organizations enhances its replicability across the country (p. 5).

#### Weaknesses:

The project relies heavily on design-based curricula in order to generate participant interest and engagement (p. 2). A more focused approach on building peer-to-peer and peer-to-educator relationships would strengthen the development of effective strategies that may have positive national significant. Moreover, it is unclear what level of experience the participating educators will have had in developing design-based curricula (p. 5), which may weaken the extent to which this project will develop new strategies.

Reader's Score: 32

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) 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.**

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

**(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.**

**Strengths:**

Because middle school has often been recognized as an attrition point in the STEM pipeline, the proposal's focus on middle school students aligns with its long-term design to equip students with STEM skills and interest that may lead to continued success in and pursuit of STEM fields (p. 1). The narrative describes a strong partnership with the New York Hall of Science that has a proven record of developing design-based curricula (p. 7). This expertise has been adequately harnessed in the project via workshops and coaching sessions for participating school-educator teams (pp. 8-9). The inclusion of community groups along with formal educators offers a unique professional development opportunity for these individuals to enhance their skills as teachers (p. 6). Given past successes of The After School Alliance, the successes of the major partnerships involved, the meaningful incorporation of community partners, the narrative's clearly delineated timeline, and thorough feedback plan, it is evident that the planned outcomes will very likely be achieved. Additionally, the planned dissemination goes beyond the usual outlets by including a policy component that may have additional, national impact (p. 16).

**Weaknesses:**

Some details about the exact role of the community-based organizations are lacking (p. 6). It is unclear what the nature of the organizations should be (e.g., after-school organizations, informal STEM learning institutions, youth clubs), and what level of education experience should informal educators from those organizations have in order to participate. These informal educators are expected to play an important role, comprising two-thirds of the teaching team that will provide students with curricula, but no indication is given as to why this ratio would be more successful than any other. Furthermore, the narrative would have been furthered strengthened by a more specific student-recruitment plan (p. 6).

**Reader's Score: 40**

**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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.**

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

**Strengths:**

N/A

**Weaknesses:**

N/A

**Reader's Score:** 0

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**Status:** Submitted

**Last Updated:** 09/18/2015 10:09 AM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/21/2015 12:18 AM

## Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

Reader #5: \*\*\*\*\*

	Points Possible	Points Scored
<b>Questions</b>		
<b>Selection Criteria</b>		
<b>Significance</b>		
1. Significance	35	34
<b>Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan</b>		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	45	41
<b>Quality of the Project Evaluation</b>		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
<b>Sub Total</b>	100	75
<b>Total</b>	100	75

# Technical Review Form

Panel #4 - i3 Development Panel - 4: 84.411C

Reader #5: \*\*\*\*\*

Applicant: The After-School Corporation (U411C150068)

## Questions

### 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 involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing strategies.

(2) The national significance of the proposed project.

(3) The potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies, including, as appropriate, the potential for implementation in a variety of settings.

#### Strengths:

1. Proposed project builds on successful experiences of several non-profit entities by expanding after school program.
2. This project aims to provide "a scalable solution to increase science achievement, interest and engagement for young people " (pg. 3), an undertaking with national significance due to the tremendous need to increase the number of students in the STEM pipeline.
3. Replicability is addressed both by the scalability of the proposed project and by the fact that this project would serve students in grades 6 – 8, recognized as being at risk and identified by the New York City Department of Education (pg. 4). For these reasons it is expected that the project will be particularly replicable in urban areas.

#### Weaknesses:

No weakness found.

Reader's Score: 34

### Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the project are clearly specified and measurable.

(2) 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.

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

(4) The mechanisms the applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

**Strengths:**

1. Goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved are clearly identified (pg. 11) and specify students to be served, sample curricula, professional development and planning, and after school instruction for students.
2. Proposal is well-thought out with ample time provided for training, planning, collaboration and reflection each year of the project. The narrative describes strong partnerships.
3. Responsibilities of key personnel are detailed (pg. 12 – 13) and timelines and milestones are identified in Table 9 for all three phases of the project.
4. Procedures for feedback and continuous improvement are well-defined. (pg. 15)
5. Vehicles for dissemination include local, regional and national venues. (pg. 16)

**Weaknesses:**

1. Management plan lists a director and a manager for the proposed project yet in the budget, the director position is listed at 1.65 FTE and the manager at 1.75 FTE. (p. 1 of budget narrative)
2. Budget is large yet only 15 schools and 300 students per year will be served. (p. 11)
3. Curriculum development for after school activities is included but is time consuming and costly. No consideration was given to using existing, published, co-curricular activities. (p. 9)

**Reader's Score: 41**

**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 methods of evaluation will, if well-implemented, produce evidence about the project's effectiveness that would meet the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards with reservations.

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

**Strengths:**

NA

**Weaknesses:**

NA

**Reader's Score: 0**

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**Status:** Submitted  
**Last Updated:** 09/21/2015 12:18 AM