

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/04/2015 09:41 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	0
Quality of Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
Sub Total	100	18
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity		
1. CPP 1	3	0
Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices		
1. CPP 2	5	0
Sub Total	8	0
Total	108	18

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - i3 Scale-up Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project addresses a challenge for which there is a national need for solutions that are better than the solutions currently available.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. In determining the applicant 's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

(3) 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 Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed 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 clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period.

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

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 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 without reservations.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

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

Strengths:

The project evaluation plan appears promising for producing evidence about project effectiveness. The applicant identifies and provides details on how they will use a mixed-method cluster-randomized control trial research design that would meet What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards without reservations. The large sample of proposed schools will be randomly assigned to the treatment and control groups thus avoiding bias. The evaluation questions are clear and achievable. The sampling and power analysis are thoroughly described on page 21. The methods appear to be appropriate for the evaluation questions posed. The applicant includes a rich description and justification for the use of a larger sample of ELL students on page 14 to address the potential effectiveness of the project for a diverse student population. The three level (site, cross-site team, and development team) implementation plan on pp. 35-36 support implementation with fidelity. Additional key components of the evaluation such as reporting and dissemination of evaluation results are fully explained on page 10. The budget for the evaluation also appears adequate for the proposed work involved. The experience and well published track record of the external evaluation group is promising.

Weaknesses:

The evaluation questions do not align directly with the project goals and objectives. There is a lack of alignment between the project goals, project inputs, and project short and long term outcomes that could be supported in an evaluation logic model.

Reader's Score: 18

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity****1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity (zero or 3 points)**

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

- (a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.**
- (b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per student costs.**
- (c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.**

Other requirements related to Competitive Preference Priority 1:

An application addressing this priority must provide

- (1) A clear and coherent budget that identifies expected student outcomes before and after the practice, the cost per student for the practice, and a clear calculation of the cost per student served;**
- (2) A compelling discussion of the expected cost-effectiveness of the practice compared with alternative practices;**
- (3) A clear delineation of one-time costs versus ongoing costs and a plan for sustaining the project, particularly ongoing costs, after the expiration of i3 funding;**
- (4) Identification of specific activities designed to increase substantially the cost-effectiveness of the practice, such as re-designing costly components of the practice (while maintaining efficacy) or testing multiple versions of the practice in order to identify the most cost effective approach; and**
- (5) A project evaluation that addresses the cost-effectiveness of the proposed practice.**

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices (zero or 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:

(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.

(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.

(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.

(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.

Strengths:

NA

Weaknesses:

NA

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/04/2015 09:41 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/01/2015 01:47 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	0
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	0
Quality of Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	0
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	18
Sub Total	100	18
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity		
1. CPP 1	3	0
Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices		
1. CPP 2	5	0
Sub Total	8	0
Total	108	18

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - i3 Scale-up Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project addresses a challenge for which there is a national need for solutions that are better than the solutions currently available.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. In determining the applicant 's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

(3) 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 Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed 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 clarity and coherence of the applicant's multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period.

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

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 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 without reservations.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

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

Strengths:

The proposed program will be independently evaluated by American Institutes for Research (AIR). This group has evaluated 14 i3 grants, has utilized the proposed multi-site randomized control trials in seven i3 grants, and is also the evaluator for the applicant's current i3 Validation grant (p. 38). A logic model on p. 8 shows the relationships among project inputs, outputs, and intended outcomes. These outcomes have also been expressed as objectives on pp. 27-28. The applicant has identified four key questions to be addressed by the evaluation (p. 39) and describes in detail how each of these questions will be addressed. The applicant will assess impact on student reading achievement (Q1), classroom environment and teacher literacy practices (Q2), fidelity of program implementation (Q3), and program sustainability (Q4). A mixed-method experimental cluster-randomized control trial will be utilized with 60 schools from four urban LEAs. The school level will be the treatment or control condition. Because the schools have diverse populations, results for student subgroups such as ELL and racial/ethnic minority groups, can also be assessed. The applicant has made accommodations in its model for student attrition due to various reasons, and includes a chart (p. 42) showing grades included each year, estimated sample sizes, and a minimum detectable effect size (MDES). The applicant also describes how teachers will be sampled (p. 43) and has calculated the MDES for each year. A data collection schedule for each domain (pp. 43-44) shows the timeline for data collection and the instruments to be used. For data analysis (pp. 46-48), the applicant will compare baseline equivalence data among treatment and control groups for student and teacher characteristics (using two-level HLM model) and for school characteristics using regression or logistic regression. It appears, as indicated by the applicant, that the rigorous methodology to be employed by AIR will meet the WWC standards without reservations for the credibility of intervention results. The project budget for evaluation appears to be reasonable and includes a CLI staff member to serve as liaison to AIR (75% time) for years 2-5 and four AIR staff members, plus funds for AIR for supplies, printing, travel, etc.

Weaknesses:

Although the applicant would appoint a CLI staff person to liaise between the project team and the evaluation team, the evaluation timeline does not include a process or schedule for reporting evaluation results to the applicant. The project goals and objectives (pp. 27-28) are not always aligned with the evaluation research questions (p. 39). For example, two project objectives relate to cost effectiveness and replication with no related evaluation questions, and two evaluation questions relate to fidelity of implementation and sustainability with no related project objectives.

Reader's Score: 18

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity****1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity (zero or 3 points)**

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

- (a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.**
- (b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per student costs.**
- (c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.**

Other requirements related to Competitive Preference Priority 1:

An application addressing this priority must provide

- (1) A clear and coherent budget that identifies expected student outcomes before and after the practice, the cost per student for the practice, and a clear calculation of the cost per student served;**
- (2) A compelling discussion of the expected cost-effectiveness of the practice compared with alternative**

practices;

(3) A clear delineation of one-time costs versus ongoing costs and a plan for sustaining the project, particularly ongoing costs, after the expiration of i3 funding;

(4) Identification of specific activities designed to increase substantially the cost-effectiveness of the practice, such as re-designing costly components of the practice (while maintaining efficacy) or testing multiple versions of the practice in order to identify the most cost effective approach; and

(5) A project evaluation that addresses the cost-effectiveness of the proposed practice.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Competitive Preference Priority - Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices (zero or 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:

(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.

(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.

(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.

(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.

Strengths:

N/A

Weaknesses:

N/A

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/01/2015 01:47 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2015 02:20 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	35
Quality of Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	35
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Sub Total	100	80
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity		
1. CPP 1	3	3
Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	8	8
Total	108	88

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - i3 Scale-up Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project addresses a challenge for which there is a national need for solutions that are better than the solutions currently available.

Strengths:

The applicant provided strong evidence to show that the project involves the development or demonstration of promising new strategies that build on existing strategies. This is demonstrated by the applicant writing that after partnering with CLI, not only do schools have deep early literacy capacity, but districts have a cadre of instructional leaders ready to train, coach, and lead others across the district. The applicant also discussed that CLI has a defined scope and sequence that focuses on the early building block skills specified by the National Reading Panel (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000) and the defined research-based instructional practices to teach those skills. (pp. 4)

The applicant shows clear details to support the potential replicability of the proposed project or strategies in a variety of settings. For example, the applicant discussed that CLI builds capacity to leverage and align key structures in the schools, such as grade-level meetings and leadership team meetings to support educators' continuous learning, accountability, and sustainability. After partnering with CLI, not only do schools have deep early literacy capacity, but districts have a cadre of instructional leaders ready to train, coach, and lead others across the district. (pp. 5)

The applicant provided clear details to show that the proposed project addresses a challenge for which there is a national need for solutions that are better than the solutions currently available. For example, the applicant wrote that only 35% of U.S fourth graders are proficient readers, and nearly a third (32%) are "below basic" according to the National Center for Education Statistics, 2013. In addition, the applicant wrote that only 18% of fourth graders who are eligible for the National School Lunch Program are proficient readers, but 51% of their classmates who are not eligible (because their families have higher incomes) are proficient. (pp. 1, 2)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. In determining the applicant 's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the

following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

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

Strengths:

The applicant provided compelling evidence to show the extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application. This is demonstrated by the applicant discussing that LEAs across the country are declaring that they must improve students' reading proficiency and are positioning reading achievement as strategic priority. National level initiatives, such as those promoted by President Obama's My Brother's Keeper, The Education Trust, and The Campaign for Grade Level Reading have amplified the focus on reading particularly third-grade reading, as the number one predictor of school success. (pp. 11)

The applicant clearly articulated the extent to which grant funds will be used to address a particular barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application. For example, the applicant discussed that to grow to meet the market demand, CLI will uses proposed Scale-up dollars to address and eliminate three barriers to scale such as CLI's capital requirements for new market entry and expansion, CLI's cost of service, and CLI's tools for maintaining its fidelity of implementation. The applicant also wrote that these barriers are, in part, related to the nature of CLI's validated intervention as a time and human capital intensive program. (pp. 11)

The applicant clearly details the mechanisms they will use to broadly disseminate information on its project to support further development or replication. For example, the applicant wrote that CLI will disseminate information about its Scale-up project through a tight combination of outreach to partner and adjacent LEAs in the i3 Scale-up "hub" markets to demonstrate (via classroom visits) the impact of the intervention and grow the number of schools receiving CLI's direct services, through online promotion of the Knowledge CELL System as the free knowledge management system behind CLI's validated system to improve teacher effectiveness and student reading achievement, and continuing to present at regional and national-level conferences. In addition, the applicant also discussed that this web based system will not only benefit the more than 400 educators annually participating in the i3 Scale-up project but will also be disseminated and freely accessible to the public nationwide. (pp. 20, 21)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed 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 clarity and coherence of the applicant' s multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period.

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

Strengths:

The applicant provided compelling details to show the extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable. For example, the applicant discussed their project goal that by improving the effectiveness of teachers over the five-year implementation of CLI's proposed Scale-up project, by 2020 approximately 49,500 high-need students will show, on average and at a statistically significant level, greater reading achievement compared to control schools as measured by STAR and third-grade reading tests. One of their project outcomes is that approximately 400 teachers in 33 schools will annually improve their literacy instruction practices, and approximately 9,900 high-need students will annually improve their reading performance. (pp. 25, 26)

The applicant clearly shows 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. This is demonstrated by the applicant discussing that the CLI Executive Director will lead all aspects of the Scale-up project, as he currently does CLI's Validation grant. The Executive Director joined CLI in 2014, and since his arrival, has overseen the approval of a comprehensive growth strategy for CLI focusing on geographic expansion and development of digital resources to improve distribution of high-value content. The Director of Program Design and Professional Development, will serve as Co-Project Director, and oversees CLI training and coaching, the orientation and ongoing training of CLI PDs, and all data analysis. (pp. 30)

There are compelling details provided by the applicant that shows clarity and coherence of their multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national level during the project period. This can be seen by the applicant providing CLI's 5 year scale-up project that shows expectations for coaching, grade level meetings, leadership team meetings, principal meetings and reviews of progress. The multi-year plan also includes financial costs for materials. (pp. 28)

The applicant provides clear details to show their adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. This is shown by the applicant discussing that each area of focus within CLI's Scale-up project has a dedicated team with the necessary expertise needed to deliver on all project outcomes. There is much intentional overlap of the members in various project teams to ensure successful cross departmental communication and feedback. In addition, these CLI teams will be responsible for analyzing, responding to and then communicating key project performance metrics as well any project challenges and solutions to CLI and LEA stakeholders. The applicant wrote that they will receive data from the hub-based project teams, as well as the LEA-level Reviews of Progress, which are ultimately fed by data from school level Leadership Team meetings. (pp. 33)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 35

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 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 without reservations.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

(6) 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

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity (zero or 3 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

- (a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.
- (b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per student costs.
- (c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

Other requirements related to Competitive Preference Priority 1:

An application addressing this priority must provide

- (1) A clear and coherent budget that identifies expected student outcomes before and after the practice, the cost per student for the practice, and a clear calculation of the cost per student served;
- (2) A compelling discussion of the expected cost-effectiveness of the practice compared with alternative practices;
- (3) A clear delineation of one-time costs versus ongoing costs and a plan for sustaining the project, particularly ongoing costs, after the expiration of i3 funding;
- (4) Identification of specific activities designed to increase substantially the cost-effectiveness of the practice, such as re-designing costly components of the practice (while maintaining efficacy) or testing

multiple versions of the practice in order to identify the most cost effective approach;
and

(5) A project evaluation that addresses the cost-effectiveness of the proposed practice.

Strengths:

The applicant clearly address its cost effectiveness throughout the project by discussing that CLI reduced its overall per pupil cost of service by 10%, from \$419 per student for the Validation project to \$378 per student for the proposed Scale-up project. In addition, further cost reduction will be evidenced by the applicant writing that CLI anticipates being able to reduce its overall per pupil cost further. At the close of the i3 Scale-up grant in 2020, CLI expects to reduces the per student costs by an additional 5% to \$359 per pupil. (pp. 2, 16)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide a clear and coherent budget that identifies expected student outcomes before and after the practice, the cost per student for the practice, and a clear calculation of the cost per student served. The applicant did not provide a compelling discussion of the expected cost-effectiveness of the practice compared with alternative practices.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices (zero or 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:

(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.

(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.

(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.

(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.

Strengths:

The applicant provided a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity. In addition the applicant wrote that CLI's proposed Scale-up project will test its ability to positively impact the reading performance of high-need students in four previously unserved LEAs (in CO, FL, NJ and TX) with high numbers of English Language Learners. There are details provided to show that CLI's proposed Scale-up project will create a robust, publicly-available knowledge management system to ensure fidelity of services from CLI and to broadly disseminate CLI's validated content and implementation knowledge in an online format providing flexible, on-demand, interactive learning tools. (pp. 2)

Weaknesses:

The applicant did not provide details to show their evaluation of different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2015 02:20 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2015 06:43 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

Reader #4: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	10
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	34
Quality of Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	34
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Sub Total	100	78
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity		
1. CPP 1	3	3
Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	8	8
Total	108	86

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - i3 Scale-up Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #4: *****

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project addresses a challenge for which there is a national need for solutions that are better than the solutions currently available.

Strengths:

Project integrates best practices in professional development and research-based reading instruction into an effective literacy development program. Progress from a educationally significant validation study to scale up demonstrated applicability and efficacy in varied settings. The combination of best practices in professional development, research-based reading instruction, and assessment is superior to reliance on conventional reading curriculum resources alone.

Weaknesses:

none

Reader's Score: 10

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. In determining the applicant 's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

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

Strengths:

Applicant identifies widespread demand and unmet needs for effective professional development in reading instruction in critical early grades (p.4). The applicant used a validation study to incorporate additional changes to its program that enhanced its efficacy and facilitate bringing the program to scale. Enhanced services to support the project's clients

include local capacity development resources for teachers. The knowledge management system (Knowledge CELL system), teacher leadership development feature (model teachers) and principal involvement address barriers for reaching the proposed level of scale, particularly the barrier of maintaining fidelity to the program across several implementation sites (pp.20-24). Coding initiatives should ensure fidelity of implementation during scale up. Hub marketing and the development of the Knowledge CELL system will expand the user base.

Weaknesses:

Methods of reaching pre-service preparation programs and public school districts beyond hub borders not fully developed.

Reader's Score: 34

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed 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 clarity and coherence of the applicant' s multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period.

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

Strengths:

Project classroom include classroom features, teacher knowledge and skills and student achievement on standardized literacy assessments, forming a comprehensive and inclusive set of observable and measurable outcomes. The number of teachers to be served and hours of service provided in coaching and leadership development display a commitment to professional development as an integral part of the program (pp.27-28). The organizational and management structure include feedback loops and the use of data to improve the service.

Weaknesses:

13 full-time key personnel displays some imbalance between resources in the home office and resources at hubs.

Reader's Score: 34

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 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 without reservations.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

(6) 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

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity (zero or 3 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

- (a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.
- (b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per student costs.
- (c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

Other requirements related to Competitive Preference Priority 1:

An application addressing this priority must provide

- (1) A clear and coherent budget that identifies expected student outcomes before and after the practice, the cost per student for the practice, and a clear calculation of the cost per student served;
- (2) A compelling discussion of the expected cost-effectiveness of the practice compared with alternative practices;
- (3) A clear delineation of one-time costs versus ongoing costs and a plan for sustaining the project, particularly ongoing costs, after the expiration of i3 funding;
- (4) Identification of specific activities designed to increase substantially the cost-effectiveness of the practice, such as re-designing costly components of the practice (while maintaining efficacy) or testing

multiple versions of the practice in order to identify the most cost effective approach;
and

(5) A project evaluation that addresses the cost-effectiveness of the proposed practice.

Strengths:

The balance between reduced costs per student served and increased services to coaching and professional development of model teachers in the professional development activity will result in better value for teachers and students served in comparison with the validation study. The development of hub model will bring a focus on local professional development and support needs at lower costs (less travel, lodging). Once hubs are established, costs will be further reduced as each hub expands its client base. Evaluation activities will inform project leaders of the costs associated with achievement gains in each setting.

Weaknesses:

none

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices (zero or 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:

(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.

(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.

(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.

(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.

Strengths:

Coding of practice through the enhancement of the knowledge cell system and the customer relations management system (CRM) builds capacity for broad based adoption during scale up and beyond. Refinement of practice based on evaluation of validation stage features strengthens the toolkit, resource allocation, and management. The model for selecting expansion hubs includes capacity enhancement through philanthropy and trust building. The development of the toolkit should serve to maintain fidelity of the model as it is distributed widely.

Weaknesses:

none

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/03/2015 06:43 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2015 06:15 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

Reader #5: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Significance		
1. Significance	10	9
Strategy to Scale		
1. Strategy to Scale	35	32
Quality of Project Design and Management Plan		
1. Project Design/Mgmt. Plan	35	31
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	0
Sub Total	100	72
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity		
1. CPP 1	3	3
Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices		
1. CPP 2	5	5
Sub Total	8	8
Total	108	80

Technical Review Form

Panel #1 - i3 Scale-up Panel - 1: 84.411A

Reader #5: *****

Applicant: CHILDRENS LITERACY INITIATIVE (U411A150002)

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

(3) The extent to which the proposed project addresses a challenge for which there is a national need for solutions that are better than the solutions currently available.

Strengths:

- o Embedded coaching is a strong approach to improving teacher knowledge and skills. It also provides unique opportunities for professional development without extracting teachers from the classroom (p.9). Additionally, the coaching scenario provides teachers with on-the-spot reinforcement or course correction to their teaching practices. Teachers will not need to guess whether they understood certain strategies or learn merely from trial and error with students as their "test market". This format of professional development provides teachers with expert guidance, addressing the specific needs of students in his/her classroom. The coach will be in a position to identify specific ways to help the classroom teacher improve and/or correct their instructional practices in "real-time".
- o Meetings with various participants allow for sufficient planning and implementation of the coaching scenario. For example: The applicant includes 3 full day seminars to deliver content and pedagogical practices, in-the-classroom mentorships through coaches, PD for administrators, and on-line support for teachers in subsequent years. The strength of this plan is in the provision to ensure a deeper understanding of content and pedagogy, and then reinforce this new learning while teaching it to young learners in the classroom.
- o The proposal clearly identifies a national need to transform professional development from one-stop-shop to job embedded experiences. The success of CLI programs that incorporate the coaching philosophy has far exceeded the traditional approach of stagnate one or two day workshops. The impact is systemic with a proven record of impacting teaching knowledge and pedagogy while improving student's reading scores. (p6)
- o The structure of the coaching model lends itself to building capacity that supports educators' continuous learning, accountability, and sustainability. (p5)

Weaknesses:

- o The applicant may consider expanding on how the CLI project will be replicated in non-CLI geographic regions (p.11).

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Strategy to Scale

1. In determining the applicant 's capacity to scale the proposed project, the Secretary considers the following factors:

(1) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates there is unmet demand for the process, product, strategy or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of scale that is proposed in the application.

(2) The extent to which the applicant will use grant funds to address a particular barrier or barriers that prevented the applicant, in the past, from reaching the level of scale proposed in the application.

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

Strengths:

- o The applicant intends to meet the demand for improving student learning of specific literacy skills by creating a culture for learning among school teachers and administrators. The proposal includes extensive professional development by training Model Teachers who will lead in training new teachers in the core instructional practices, providing demonstrations, and guiding grade-level meetings. These highly skilled teachers will serve in multiple leadership positions, after grant funding expires, to ensure long-term implementation of practices learned through the CLI project. (p9-10)
- o CLI will establish a presence in multiple new markets, making the CLI strategies accessible to students in multiple regions of the country. By identifying LEAs in different regions, the applicant demonstrates a commitment to meeting the needs of students in varying demographics. (p.13)
- o The use of data to identify efficiency of the professional development to different teaching populations shows a solid rationale for adjustments to the proposed "scale-up" model. Serving more teachers is a positive result of this analysis. (p.17)
- o Gaining buy-in from key stakeholders strengthens this proposal by ensuring longevity of the project beyond the employment of current administrators. (p.19)
- o CLI's Knowledge CELL System will be used to deliver and disseminate the ideals of core instructional practices and collaborative learning strategies. Such strategies have been proven effective during the applicant's Validation grant programs. Using technology, the CELL System will be easily accessible to all participants, meeting different needs of both teachers and school administrators. (p.22)

Weaknesses:

- o It is unclear why CLI will need new office space or "hub" locations and who will maintain it after the term of the grant. Funding for the continued use of these facilities, after the term of the grant, is not specified. (p.17)

Reader's Score: 32

Selection Criteria - Quality of Project Design and Management Plan

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

(1) The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed 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 clarity and coherence of the applicant' s multi-year financial and operating model and accompanying plan to operate the project at a national or regional level (as defined in this notice) during the project period.

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

Strengths:

- o Goals, objectives, and outcomes are sufficiently identified. The applicant identifies specific outcomes for each objective, including doubling the number of schools CLI will serve within the next five years; providing training, coaching and materials for teachers as well as making aligned resources available to teachers beyond the term of the grant project; and producing a quality internet site as a long-term resource. Feedback from LEAs will contribute to the measurability of the project goals.
- o The proposal clearly identifies key personnel, their qualifications, and their longevity with CLI. This reduces the amount of time needed to get everyone on board and will allow a smooth transition from the Validation grant to the Scale-up project. (p.32)
- o The proposal clearly identifies key components of the management plan. The timeline is comprehensive and doable.
- o Salesforce Customer Relationship Management (CRM) will support CLI through data management by implementing segmentation into components such as product type, geographic location, hub cities, and the CLI department (p36) By contracting CRM in the applicant's Validation grant, the continuance of their contract will bring continuity to data collection of the scale-up grant that is relevant and reliable. (p.36)
- o "Project leadership, staffing and teams that foster feedback" are direct outcomes from the applicant's Validation grant. Based on past experiences, CLI will utilize Veteran CLI leaders who are clearly familiar with the proposed project and the need to be sensitive to feedback from past participants. (p30)
- o CLI will also employ an Executive Management Team to coordinate the efforts of all personnel involved in the i3 Scale-up initiative. (p34) Weekly team meetings are anticipated to open communication among the leaders and provide opportunities to share concerns or adjustments to the implementation of the project. (p.35)

Weaknesses:

- o The absence of strong commitments from external stakeholders is concerning. There is only a letter of promise from these potential funders, but no final commitment to ensure matching funds. (p.38)
- o There is a concern that the project leans too heavily on administrative positions/costs. (p.32)

Reader's Score: 31

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 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 without reservations.

(2) 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.

(3) The extent to which the evaluation will study the project at the proposed level of scale, including, where appropriate, generating information about potential differential effectiveness of the project in diverse settings and for diverse student population groups.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

(6) 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

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity

1. Competitive Preference Priority 1 Improving Cost-Effectiveness and Productivity (zero or 3 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that address one of the following areas:

- (a) Substantially improving student outcomes without commensurately increasing per-student costs.
- (b) Maintaining student outcomes while substantially decreasing per student costs.
- (c) Substantially improving student outcomes while substantially decreasing per-student costs.

Other requirements related to Competitive Preference Priority 1:

An application addressing this priority must provide

- (1) A clear and coherent budget that identifies expected student outcomes before and after the practice, the cost per student for the practice, and a clear calculation of the cost per student served;**
- (2) A compelling discussion of the expected cost-effectiveness of the practice compared with alternative practices;**
- (3) A clear delineation of one-time costs versus ongoing costs and a plan for sustaining the project, particularly ongoing costs, after the expiration of i3 funding;**
- (4) Identification of specific activities designed to increase substantially the cost-effectiveness of the practice, such as re-designing costly components of the practice (while maintaining efficacy) or testing multiple versions of the practice in order to identify the most cost effective approach; and**
- (5) A project evaluation that addresses the cost-effectiveness of the proposed practice.**

Strengths:

The reduced cost and increased services through coaching align well with “substantially improving student outcomes while decreasing costs.” (p17-18) The CLI coaching model empowers teachers to become leaders, making them potential coaches for future new teachers in their schools. This reduces the cost of professional development, as CLI creates a “guide-by-the-side” mentor for teachers throughout the schools. (p6) The budget is clear and detailed. (beginning p e264) Costs for training materials are minimal, making them affordable to schools that are not included in this grant project. The Knowledge Cell System Website will provide cost-effective options for building analytic tools to aid in

content and site revision and user tracking. (p e303)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 3

Competitive Preference Priority - Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices

1. Competitive Preference Priority 2 Enabling Broad Adoption of Effective Practices (zero or 5 points)

Under this priority, we provide funding to projects that enable broad adoption of effective practices. An application proposing to address this priority must, as part of its application:

(a) Identify the practice or practices that the application proposes to prepare for broad adoption, including formalizing the practice (i.e., establish and define key elements of the practice), codifying (i.e., develop a guide or tools to support the dissemination of information on key elements of the practice), and explaining why there is a need for formalization and codification.

(b) Evaluate different forms of the practice to identify the critical components of the practice that are crucial to its success and sustainability, including the adaptability of critical components to different teaching and learning environments and to diverse learners.

(c) Provide a coherent and comprehensive plan for developing materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that other entities would need in order to implement the practice effectively and with fidelity.

(d) Commit to assessing the replicability and adaptability of the practice by supporting the implementation of the practice in a variety of locations during the project period using the materials, training, toolkits, or other supports that were developed for the i3-supported practice.

Strengths:

Resources are strong and will serve as critical components of the proposal. Differentiated professional development will facilitate teacher understanding of the varying student populations while strengthening teacher knowledge about reading content and pedagogy. (p8) The professional development includes 3 full day seminars, lesson studies, and classroom mentors to facilitate teacher implementation of best practices. This PD sets the stage for replicability as teachers learn how to be leaders within their classrooms and their schools. One-stop-shop PD scenarios are proven failures in changing student outcomes, while in-the-classroom mentorships, under CLI's leadership, have improved learning for both teacher and student. (11)

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses were found.

Reader's Score: 5

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/03/2015 06:15 PM