STATEWIDE FAMILY EDUCATION CENTERS PROGRAM
FY 2018 CALL FOR PEER REVIEWERS

CONTEXT

The Department of Education (Department), Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII), is seeking peer reviewers for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFEC) grant competition.

The SFEC program is authorized under title IV, part E of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA). The purpose of the SFEC program is to provide financial support to organizations that provide technical assistance and training to State educational agencies (SEAs) and local educational agencies (LEAs) in the implementation and enhancement of systemic and effective family engagement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student development and academic achievement.

The Secretary is authorized to award grants to statewide organizations (or consortia of such organizations) in partnership with an SEA to establish SFECs that (1) carry out parent education and family engagement in education programs, and (2) provide comprehensive training and technical assistance to SEAs, LEAs, schools identified by SEAs and LEAs, organizations that support family-school partnerships, and other such programs.

Who?

We are seeking peer reviewers from various educational backgrounds and professions, including family engagement practitioners, State or district education officials, PK-12 teachers and principals, college or university educators, researchers, and evaluators with experience, content knowledge and expertise in one or more of the following areas:

Parent and family engagement:

- Effective family engagement policies, practices, strategies and activities
- Latest evidence-based research on family engagement to improve student academic and developmental outcomes
- Effective home-school partnerships that support student achievement, school improvement and increase the number of high-quality educational options available to families
- Parent education and family engagement in education programs
- Training and technical assistance to build capacity at the State and district levels to develop and implement family engagement policies, programs, and activities that are inclusive of families and lead to improvements in student development and academic achievement
- Provision of direct support to parents, teachers, and others that strengthen the relationship between families and schools to foster greater engagement and assist in meeting the educational and developmental needs of children

Education and Program Administration

- Ability to determine whether services to be provided reflect up to date knowledge from research and effective practice
- Experience analyzing projects in terms of capacity building and long-term results
- Engagement of diverse stakeholders, including parents, teachers, nonprofits, the business community, and a variety of disciplinary and professional fields
- Experience understanding partnerships and leveraging resources of multiyear projects
• Experience understanding the impact of partner support on a project’s long term success

*Evaluation of Educational Programs*

• Understanding of family engagement research and evaluation to increase school choice and improve student academic outcomes, quantitative and qualitative methods of project evaluation, and recent findings of the relevant literature
• Understanding of the use of evaluation data in accountability structures, program and grant management
• Familiarity with EDGAR and What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) evidence standards including those for promising evidence

**WHAT?**

Peer reviewers will independently read, score, and provide written comments for grant proposals submitted to the Department from applicants seeking federal funding under the SFEC. Working with up to two additional reviewers and a panel manager, SFEC peer reviewers are also required to participate in conference calls to discuss each application before finalizing their scores and comments. Reviewers will receive an honorarium for their services.

Completed reviews will be used to recommend applications for funding. Scores and comments will be shared with each applicant; scores and comments for funded grant applications will be made available to the general public after grant awards are announced.

**REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the skills, attributes and expertise highlighted above, peer reviewers must also meet the following requirements:

*Availability.* In order to make awards before the end of the fiscal year, the 2018 SFEC competition is running on an extremely tight deadline. Reviewers for the competition will need to dedicate approximately 60 hours over a three week period from August 3 – August 24 for the review process. This time estimate includes participation in an orientation session by conference call/webinar prior to evaluating the applications, time for reading, scoring, developing comments, and discussing assigned applications. An estimated 35 hours will be needed to read, score, develop comments, and submit reviews for all assigned applications from August 3 - 12, and another 20 hours will be needed to participate in the remote panel calls and finalize reviews from August 13 - 17.

*Location.* Reviewers will read, score, develop and revise comments remotely. Panel discussions will be held by conference call.

*Tools.* Each reviewer must have access to the Internet, a phone, a computer, a printer and have the ability to interact within the web environment.

**Panel Moderators**

We are also seeking panel moderators for this competition. If you would like to be considered for the role of a panel moderator, the responsibilities are:
• Schedules and oversees panel calls.
• Ensures that panel calls run smoothly.
• Answers general questions including questions that arise during panel calls.
• Ensures that reviewers are remaining on schedule and entering scores and comments as requested.
• Reviews, edits, and provides feedback to reviewer’s comments.
• Evaluates reviewers’ performance.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

If you are affiliated with an organization that intends to apply for a grant under the SFEC competition, you may not be eligible to serve as a reviewer.

As a reviewer, you may have a conflict of interest if:
• You helped prepare an application, regardless of financial interest in the success or failure of that application; or
• You have agreed to serve, or you have been offered a position, as an employee, advisor, or consultant on the project; or
• Your personal financial interest will be affected by the outcome of the competition; or
• You have a relationship with certain people (such as family or household members, employers, professional associates) who have a financial interest in the outcome of the competition.

These and other potential conflicts of interest will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis once identified/disclosed.

**INTERESTED?**

If you would like to be considered for this role, please:

1. Complete the Peer Reviewer Screening Form, which can be found hyperlinked both in this document and at the SFEC Center website under “What’s New,” and
2. Submit the screening form and an updated resume or curriculum vitae to sfec@ed.gov with “PEER REVIEWER RESUME” in the subject line by Friday, July 20, 2018.

The Department solicits reviewers without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. The Department will provide reasonable accommodations for a qualified individual with a disability so that individual might participate in the peer reviewer application process. If you require a reasonable accommodation to apply to participate in this review, please send an email to sfec@ed.gov no later than Friday, July 20, 2018 to ensure we can properly facilitate the application process.