Advancing Equity in Adolescent Health through Replication of Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs and Services (TPP Tier 1)

Grant Reviewer Training

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OASH | Office of Population Affairs

Before we get started….

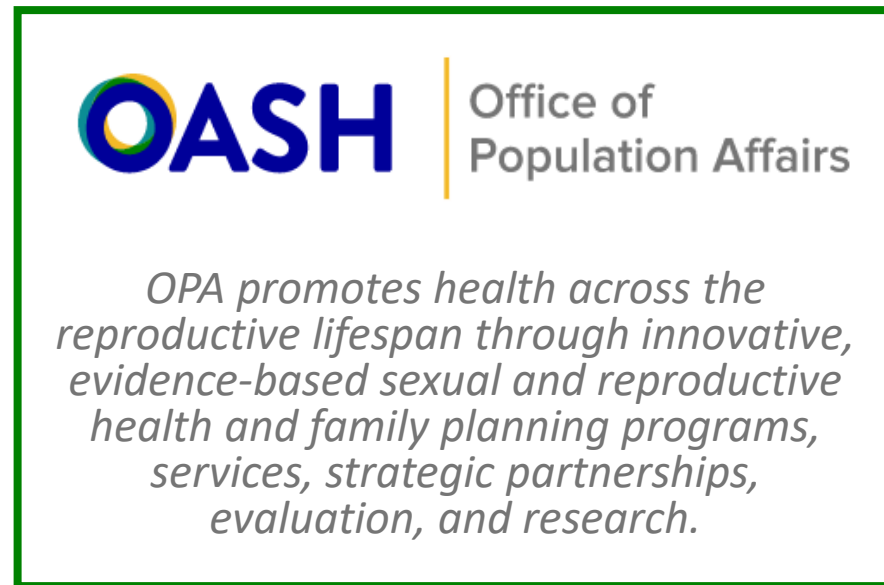## Thank you for your commitment!

About OPA and the TPP Program

The **Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Program** envisions a nation where adolescents have the support, confidence, and resources to thrive, be healthy, and realize their full potential and rights

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OPA promotes health across the reproductive lifespan through innovative, evidence-based sexual and reproductive health and family planning programs, services, strategic partnerships, evaluation, and research.

- **Established in 2010 and funded through OPA**
- **National, evidence-based program**
- **Funds diverse organizations working to reach adolescents to improve sexual and reproductive health outcomes and promote positive youth development**
- **Funds two tiers of projects:**
  - ✓ Implementation of evidence-based programs **(Tier 1)** and
  - ✓ Development and evaluation of new and innovative approaches **(Tier 2)**

Learn more about OPA and the TPP Program https://opa.hhs.gov/

Getting started….

READ THE ANNOUNCEMENT!!
Watch the Info Webinar!!

NOFO Overview

- **The goal** of this initiative is to improve sexual and reproductive health outcomes, promote positive youth development, and advance health equity for adolescents, their family, and communities through the replication of medically accurate and age-appropriate **evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs (EBPs) and services**.

- OPA is soliciting projects to serve communities and populations with the **greatest needs and facing significant disparities** to advance equity in adolescent health.

This NOFO is **NOT** for:
- ➢ Service delivery
- ➢ Research

For purposes of this NOFO, service delivery means the delivery of health care services. The term "health care services" means any services provided by a health care professional, or by any individual working under the supervision of a health care professional, that relate to the diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of any human disease or impairment.

Application and Award Overview

Estimated Federal Funds Available	$68,625,000
Anticipated Number of Awards	70
Award Ceiling (Federal Funds including indirect costs)	$2,000,000 per budget period
Award Floor (Federal Funds including indirect costs)	$350,000 per budget period
Anticipated Start Date	July 1, 2023
Estimated Period of Performance	Not to exceed 5 year(s)
Anticipated Initial Budget Period Length	12 months
Type of Award	Cooperative Agreement

NOFO Expectations

a. Focus on Areas of Greatest Need and Facing Significant Disparities

b. Engage in a Planning Period

c. Replicate to Scale Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs with Fidelity and Quality

d. Review Materials Prior to Implementation

e. Engage Youth, Caregivers, and the Community Throughout the Project

f. Connect to a Network of Adolescent-Friendly Supportive Services

g. Ensure Equitable, Safe, Supportive, and Inclusive Environments

h. Monitor and Improve the Overall Project

Focus on Areas of Greatest Need and Facing Significant Disparities (p.6-7)

- Focus project on a community(ies) and population(s) that are disproportionally affected by unintended teen pregnancy and STIs.
- Have a defined community(ies), with clear geographic boundaries and a clearly identified population of focus
  - **Primary participants to receive programming for this project are adolescents and youth (i.e., individuals between the ages of 10-24)**
- Assess the needs and resources of the community and population of focus through the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to:
  - **Maintain an understanding of what the specific needs and resources are, who the key stakeholders are, and the relationship between all these components that may be driving disparities within the community; and**
  - **Ensure efforts are being targeted to community(ies) and populations with greatest need.**
- Engage key stakeholders, community members and partners in data collection, interpretation of findings, and refining priorities.

Applicants may propose serving a single community or multiple communities

Engage in a Planning Period (p.7-8)

- Under this NOFO, we will allow up to a 6-month planning period for recipients to set the project up for success in meeting all the expectations over the life of the project.

- Recipients will be allowed up to a **6-month** planning period

- By the end of the planning period, recipients should have met key milestones (p.7-8) and begin implementation in all identified settings

> ➤ Applicant should clearly identify and describe the activities that will take place during the planning period **that may not exceed 6 months**.
> ➤ They should demonstrate how the planning period activities align with the key milestones in Section A.2.b (p.7-8) and how it will result in EBP implementation in all identified settings by the end of the planning period.

Replicate to Scale Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs with Fidelity and Quality (p.8-11)

- **Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs (EBPs)** = *programs that have been proven effective through rigorous evaluation to reduce teenage pregnancy, behavioral risk factors underlying teenage pregnancy, or other associated risk factors*

- Replicate EBPs to scale in **3 or more settings** in order to promote and improve the health and well-being over the course of adolescence and across an adolescent's physical and social environments.

- Page 9 has a non-exhaustive list of settings – each of which is counted as **one setting**

  - ▪ **"School setting" is considered one setting that encompasses elementary, middle, high schools, charter schools, and alternative schools**

- In each setting adopt strategies to implement EBPs to scale, maximizing youth participation

Applicants should have:
- Provided reach estimates
- Made funding requests that reasonably support their proposed reach

A historical funding table was provided as a resource (p.2 and 24)

Applicants did NOT have to: Identify EBPs to implement in their applications

Engage Youth, Caregivers, and the Community Throughout the Project (p.11-13)

- Projects should be community-driven and leverage the expertise held by community members to implement effective solutions that address their needs and increase the chance for sustainability

- Recipients are expected to **meaningfully engage**:

  - **Youth,** as equal partners, in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project

  - **Parents/caregivers** in a way that demonstrates a commitment to support them and provides them with guidance and education needed to develop and maintain positive relationships and reinforce positive, healthy decision-making

  - **Key stakeholders, community organizations, and leaders** throughout the entire project, including in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the project

- Engagement approaches should be innovative to have a sustained impact

Connect to a Network of Adolescent-Friendly Supportive Services (p. 13-14)

- Identify, actively engage, collaborate with, and maintain a network of diverse, multi-sector partners in order to increase awareness of, access to, and utilization of adolescent friendly services which address the needs of the population of focus.

  - Develop a robust network of diverse, multi-sector partners with specific processes and protocols for connecting youth and their families to supportive services;

  - Ensure partners address the various needs of the community and population of focus while also complementing the implementation of EBPs, **to include but not limited to, sexual and reproductive health serves and mental health services.**

- Utilize their needs assessment to assess the extent to which the community and population are aware of, able to access, and utilize available resources; specifically engage youth and their families to understand what unique barriers prevent them from accessing services.

- Implement strategies to build the capacity of youth and their families to independently navigate systems and be able to advocate for high quality, adolescent-friendly care

- Assist health providers and health care settings in offering adolescent-friendly healthcare services.

Ensure Equitable, Safe, Supportive, and Inclusive Environments (p. 14-15)

- Execute the entire project and implement EBPs in an equitable, safe, supportive, and inclusive environment using trauma informed and positive youth development approaches.

- Be innovative in their approach to meeting this expectation

- Recipients should include their partners and youth in ensuring this expectation is met

Monitor and Improve the Overall Project (p.15-16)

- We expect recipients to monitor and improve the overall project, including EBPs, to ensure programs and services offered are equitable, accessible, and of the highest quality and best fit for the community(ies) and population(s) served.

- Monitoring and Improvement Plan (MIP) - monitor progress in meeting project goals and objectives. Components of the MIP are listed on page 15.
  - **Should be used to inform professional development and capacity building of staff and partners, and to make continuous improvements to the project**

- Recipients must obtain permission from all partner organizations to collect required data and adhere to all relevant state laws, organizational policies, and other administrative procedures prior to collection

- Recipients **should not** collect any data as it relates to changes in sexual behaviors **because this is not a research award** and they do not have a control group to make appropriate comparisons

- OPA only requires that recipients meet the reporting requirements as stated in Section F.17. (p. 55) (i.e. they are **not** required to collect such data as it relates to knowledge, attitudes, and intentions on sex).

Applicants...

- **Should not** allocate more than 10% of requested federal funds to the collection and analysis of data related to the project
- **May not** use funds for a rigorous impact evaluation
- Need to provide the status of the IRB determination (see page 26) **only if** the project includes asking survey questions beyond program satisfaction **(which is not required!)**

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Notice of Funding Opportunity TP1-23-001

Questions?

Application Review Scoring Criteria (Section E.1)

1. Focus on Areas of Greatest Need and Disparities (20 points)
2. Selection and Implementation of Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs to Scale (15 points)
3. Proposed Approach (20 points)
4. Organizational Capability and Experience (15 points)
5. Collaboration and Partnerships (15 points)
6. Project Management (10 points)
7. Work Plan and Budget (5 points)

Focus on Areas of Greatest Need and Disparities (20 points) (p.43)

- Extent to which applicant clearly defines the geographic boundaries and describes the community or communities and population(s) of focus.

- Extent to which the applicant clearly demonstrates
  - An understanding of the current need of the community(ies) and population(s) of focus that places them at the highest risk for disparities related to teen pregnancy and STIs within the community(ies).

- A clear understanding of what is impacting sexual and reproductive health outcomes and positive youth development in the community(ies) and population(s), and what resources are already available in the community to address the needs.

- The proposed project will fill gaps in TPP services for the community and population of focus and will not duplicate existing programs and activities.

OF NOTE:

The onus is on the applicant to clearly demonstrate there is a need.

Applications should include: (p.22-23)

- *Current* data on the community and population of focus (p.22).
- Any community context and/or historical factors and illustrate gaps in services that may help understand existing disparities.
- Data that supports the rationale for focusing on identified community(ies) and population(s)

Selection and Implementation of Evidence-Based Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs to Scale (15 points) (p. 43-44)

- Extent to which the applicant clearly and separately describes the number of youth, parent/caregivers, and/or other individuals that they will reach each year with evidence-based programs in each of the 3 (or more) settings. The applicant includes specific details on how they obtained the estimates. The demographics of the community(ies) selected supports the estimates. Estimates also appear accurate and reasonable to achieve.

- Extent to which the proposed 3 (or more) settings clearly align with:
  - **The need(s) of the population of focus; and**
  - **The various physical and social environments where youth live, learn, work, play, and worship.**

- Extent to which the strategies for implementing EBPs to scale in the community maximize access to EBPs, seem feasible, and are likely to result in reaching as many youth as possible in each of the 3 (or more) settings. The strategies include implementation at the highest-level system-wide and getting buy-in at the grassroots level (e.g., implementation throughout child welfare agency and buy-in from case managers at residential homes).

- Extent to which the process described for identifying EBPs is likely to result in selecting EBPs that are a good fit for the needs of the community and population of focus.

OF NOTE:

- Applicants should have proposed an estimated number of participants to receive EBP implementation over the duration of the project. Estimate should clearly align and be adequately supported by the budget narrative (p.24).
- Applicants *should not* be rewarded for having an EBP selected/identified in their application.
- Reviewers *should* assess the extent to which the applicant describes a **process** for selecting EBPs that is likely to result in selecting EBPs that are good fit (p.44)

Proposed Approach (20 points) (p. 44)

- This assessment criteria is focused on the extent to which the application demonstrates its ability to meet the rest of the expectations
  - **Review Materials Prior to Implementation**
  - **Engage Youth, Caregivers, and the Community Throughout the Project**
  - **Connect to a Network of Adolescent-Friendly Supportive Services**
  - **Ensure Equitable, Safe, Supportive, and Inclusive Environments**
  - **Monitor and Improve the Overall Project**

OF NOTE:

Proposed approach should clearly demonstrate
- How it aligns with the diverse needs of the community and population
- It will have the greatest impact on reducing disparities in unintended teen pregnancy, sexual and reproductive health outcomes, and promoting positive youth development among those who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality
- An effective community-driven approach that includes a clear and equitable community engagement strategy
- Key stakeholders **(especially youth)** will be meaningfully engaged in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the overall project.

Organizational Capability and Experience (15 points) (p.44-45)

- Extent to which the organization has **demonstrated a positive working relationship and commitment to advance equity** in adolescent health and reduce disparities in unintended teen pregnancy and STIs **in the focus community.**

- Extent to which the organization demonstrates capacity, experience, and expertise to execute their proposed project.

- Extent to which the organization demonstrated the capacity to meet the demands of the project with **strong relationships and buy-in from key stakeholders, organizations, and leaders in the community.**

- Extent to which the organization has **policies in place to execute the proposed project in an equitable, safe, supportive, and inclusive manner** and **is committed to utilizing trauma-informed and positive youth development approaches** in their programs and services.

- Extent to which the organization has the **experience and expertise to engage, in an equitable and inclusive manner, youth as key decision-makers in the project**.

Collaboration and Partnerships (15 points) (p.45)

Extent to which the applicant describes the diversity of partners who will be engaged, the extent to which those **partners are reflective of the various sectors of the community**, and the **process for fostering and maintaining such partnerships** to meet project goals, objectives, and outcomes.

Extent to which the descriptions of the partnerships that already exist and those that they will need to establish to support this project support the project goals, objectives, and outcomes. To include at **what level the partnership exists/will exist** (e.g., district-level vs. school-level vs. classroom-level; network of clinics vs. individual clinic), and the **likelihood that the partnership will enable implementation of the EBP to scale in the community**.

Project Management (10 points)

- Extent to which the applicant describes **clear and feasible strategies to oversee funding and a project** of this scope and size to include judiciously and efficiently managing financial resources; monitoring and tracking progress, completion, and quality of all program objectives and activities; **monitoring and managing partners/subrecipients**, as well as effectively managing and supporting staff performance.

- Extent to which the applicant **identifies potential challenges and barriers to project success and has clear and feasible strategies to adapt and overcome such challenges and barriers**.

- Extent to which the applicant describes clear and feasible strategies to ensure all **staff r**esponsible for implementing the project, including partner staff, are **actively engaged, well-trained, and prepared** to successfully fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

- Extent to which applicants process for **recruiting and hiring staff** will ensure a team of **diverse** staff who are **reflective of and understand the community and population that the applicant will serve**.

Work Plan and Budget (5 points) (p.45-46)

- Extent to which the **work plan has clear goals, SMARTIE** (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound, inclusive, and equitable) **objectives**, and **specific activities** that reflects, and is **consistent with the proposed approach.**

- Extent to which the applicant proposes a **work plan** that is **reasonable, realistic, and that they can complete in the proposed time period**.

- Extent to which the **budget and budget narrative clearly aligns with the proposed work plan**, **especially to the degree it clearly aligns with the target reach** (i.e., number of participants estimated to receive EBPs).

SMARTIE Work Plan

Provides a concrete way to drive results to produce better outcomes for marginalized communities, address disparities, and advance equity

Clarifying information provided to applicants…(part 1)

- **Replicating to Scale** - For the purpose of this NOFO, replicating to scale is expanding the reach of programs and serving greater numbers of youth, their families, and other key stakeholders (e.g., youth-serving professionals, trusted adults) with EBPs (p.8).

- **Community** - Recipients may serve a single community or multiple communities within their project. Multiple communities could include communities within the same state, communities across states, etc. Onus is on the applicant to *define* each of their communities with geographic boundaries (p.22). Applicants should have included map of their defined geographic area(s) and include locations of the proposed settings where EBP implementation will occur (p.36).

- **Implementation in THREE (3) Settings -** Recipients are expected to replicate EBPs to scale in 3 or more settings in each defined community. Serving different counties would not constitute as serving different settings

Clarifying information provided to applicants… (part 2)

- **School setting -** "School setting" is ONE SETTING that encompasses elementary, middle, high schools, charter schools, and alternative schools. (p.9).

YES - a "school setting"	NO – not considered a "school setting"
- School districts, whether individual or multiple - Private schools - Homeschool groups	- An after-school program that is conducted at a school building but occurs **outside** of school hours - Universities/Colleges (to include community colleges) - A school program located within a juvenile detention center - School-based health clinic

Clarifying information provided to applicants… (part 3)

- **Who should be served through this NOFO?** Primary participants to receive programming under an award should be adolescents and youth and, more specifically, projects should focus on serving youth who are at disproportionally affected by unintended teen pregnancies (including rapid repeat pregnancy) and STIs (p. 7).

- **Defining "adolescents"** - For purposes of this NOFO, OPA is defining adolescents and youth to be individuals between the *ages of 10-24*.

Application Merit Review

Application Merit Review

- Eligible applications will be reviewed and assessed by a panel of independent reviewers with technical expertise in applicable fields according to the criteria listed in the NOFO.

- The Merit Review process is formal and confidential. Federal staff are available to answer questions and to ensure the process is consistent and fair, but do not participate in discussion and assessment of the application.

- Then applications are reviewed:
  - **By GAM staff for administrative & business compliance.**
  - **By OPA Program Office staff for programmatic compliance.**

Application Merit Review

Key Roles

- 4 Reviewers (+ 1 alternate)

- Chairperson

- Panel Manager (PM) - Federal role

- Review Director (RD) - Federal role

Reviewers have two distinct levels of work:

- Individual Analysis

- Group Work

Chairpersons have two distinct levels of work:

- Facilitate the Group Process

- Formulate the Final Summary Report

Chairs Formulate the Summary Report

▶ Chair assists panel in making final scoring and commentary decisions.

▶ Consolidate panel's summary comments.

▶ Check summary comments for clarity, completeness, appropriateness, and grammar/syntax.

▶ Ensure that summary comments are based solely on the application under review and the published NOFO evaluation criteria.

▶ Ensure the strength and weakness comments support the score.

   ▶ A highly rated proposal should have more strengths than weaknesses and comments should indicate a substantially strong proposal.

   ▶ Conversely, a low rated proposal should have more weaknesses than strengths and indicate a substantially weak proposal.

   ▶ A proposal of average substance should have a score and comments that reflect that.

▶ Be prepared to work with panel to respond to feedback from Panel Manager and Review Director.

Panel Manager's Responsibilities:

▶ Carefully read the NOFO and understand how to apply the evaluation criteria

▶ Resolve and address any conflict of interest, confidentiality violations, or concerns

▶ Provide technical assistance to panel members on the NOFO, scoring criteria, and writing clear and concise comments that align with the scoring criteria

▶ Provide technical assistance to chairs on panel facilitation on writing good summary reports

▶ Carefully review and provide feedback on the summary reports. Transmit summary report to Review Director when Panel Manager's feedback has been adequately addressed

▶ Liaise with the Review Director and Panel Chairs

▶ Intervene tactfully if panel is not progressing at an adequate pace to complete work on schedule. If that doesn't work, get Review Director involved, and do whatever it takes to get things back on schedule.

Review Director's Responsibilities

▶ Convene and monitor grant review sessions, preserve the integrity of the entire grant review process

▶ Possess expertise in programs, the competitive review process, and grants management

▶ Review final summary report for adequacy, return to panel if necessary, and approve final compilation package when edits are completed

▶ Ensure panel is progressing at a rate to complete the panel work on schedule

▶ Relay information to the panels though the Panel Managers

Summary Report Review & Approval

- Panel Manager & Review Director both typically comment on 1st report from each panel

- Get these comments back to panel ASAP so they can apply to the rest of their reports

- After that, Panel Managers typically work with panels to get report shaped up before Review Director sees it (unless there are specific issues that require Review Director input)

- Panel Managers and Review Director typically write their comments in ARM back to chair

Summary Report Review & Approval (continued)

- **PMs may return summary reports when-**
  - A comment is not clear
  - Comments do not support the score given
  - A comment duplicates or contradicts another comment
  - A comment is not clearly associated with a specific evaluation criteria
  - A comment includes both positive and negative feedback in one (e.g., The data was presented clearly but does not seem to address what the need is).
  - Page numbers are not correct, or inappropriate use of "no page found"

Summary Report Review & Approval (continued)

- When Panel Manager thinks report is ready for Review Director to approve, check page numbers and scores then approve via ARM

- If Review Director has additional comments, relay them to panel via Panel Manager in ARM, and reject the application

- When Panel Manager's last summary report is approved, check to see if other Panel Managers need help finishing up

- When last summary report is approved- celebrate!

Hot Tips for Reviewers…

- Read the announcement (again, if necessary)
- Watch the information webinar
- Ask for clarification when needed!
- Write comments toward the scoring criteria – including each sub-point
- Write in FULL sentences with COMPLETE thoughts
- Make sure your draft comments are CLEAR and CONCISE
- Your draft preliminary scores should reflect your individual comments
- Make sure each comment has a corresponding page number
- Do not make a contradiction within a comment (ex: The applicant did *this* well, but did not do *that* well…)

Office of
Population Affairs

Hot Tips for Chairs…

- PLEASE BE PREPARED and STAY ORGANIZED!
- Keep a copy of your written comments easily accessible during the zoom calls
- Be ready to talk guide the discussion through your Panel's comments
- Come to a consensus within your team – it's ok if there isn't total agreement
- Do not submit reports with repeated or similar comments. The complied report should not have duplicated strength or weakness statements (your PM will reject the comments!)
- Be ready to add new comments "on the fly" that are not already reflected in the individual craft comments

More Hot Tips for Chairs….

Before you send the compiled draft to your Panel Manager, make sure:

- Each criterion has been addressed completely
- All sub-points of each criterion have been addressed…. EACH ONE
- The comments are clear and concise
- The comments do not contradict each other
- Check spelling, grammar, word usage, and complete sentences

Your PM will reject your summaries!

Summary Report Review & Approval

- Panel Manager & Review Director both typically comment on 1st report from each panel

- Get these comments back to panel ASAP so they can apply to the rest of their reports

- After that, Panel Managers typically work with Chairs to get report shaped up before Review Director sees it (unless there are specific issues that require Review Director input)

- Panel Managers and Review Director provide feedback through the ARM back to chair and panel

Why are some Summaries rejected?

- **PMs/RDs return summary reports when-**
  - A comment is not clear
  - Comments do not support the score given
  - A comment duplicates or contradicts another comment
  - A comment is framed in terms of what the panel fails to do, rather in terms of what the applicant fails to do (e.g. should say "The applicant fails to demonstrate.." rather than "It is not possible to determine…")
  - A comment is not clearly associated with a specific evaluation criteria
  - A comment includes both positive and negative feedback in one (e.g., The data was presented clearly but does not seem to address what the need is).
  - Page numbers are not correct, or inappropriate use of "no page found"
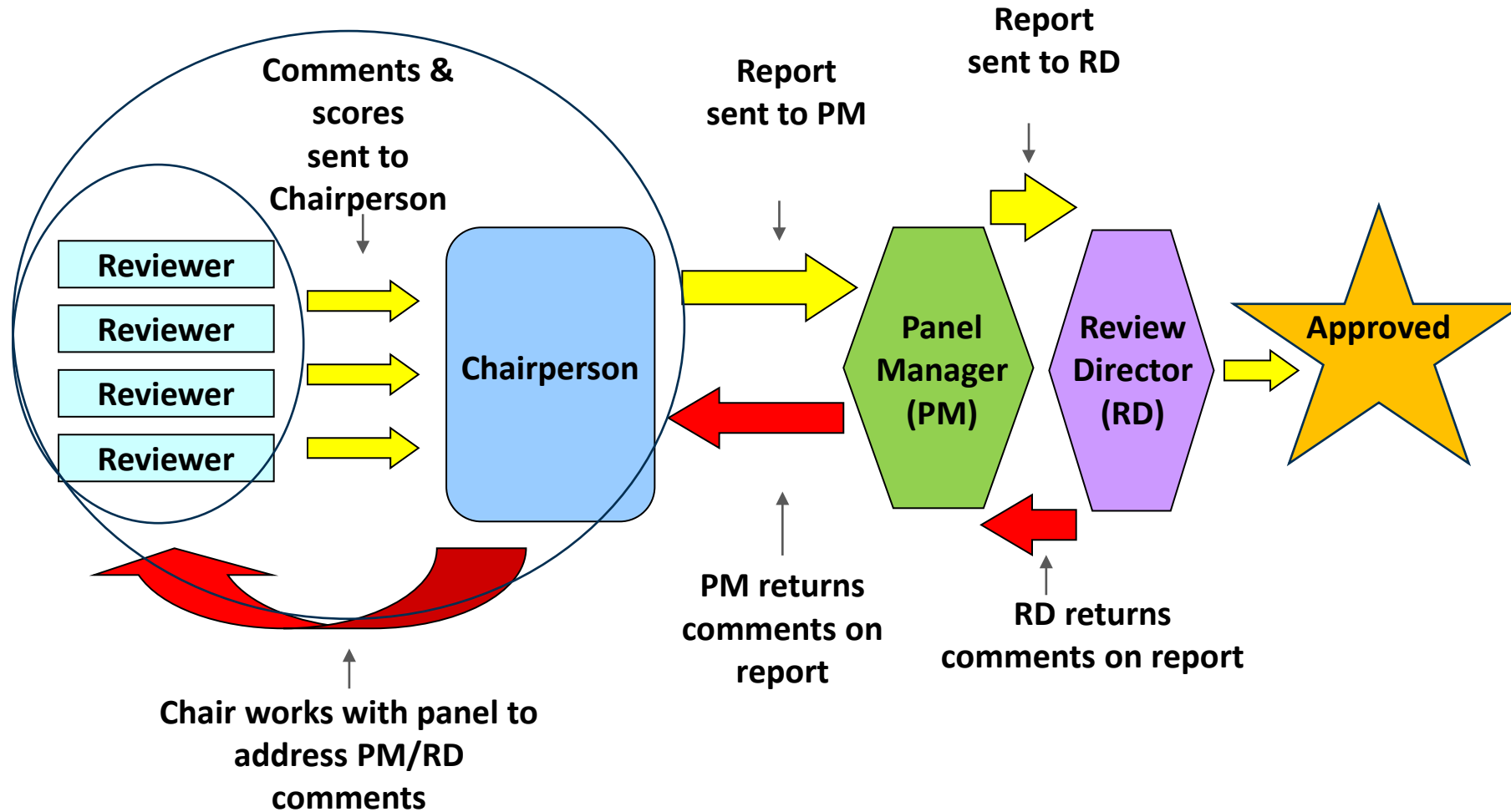
Thank you for participating!!

Grants and Acquisitions Management

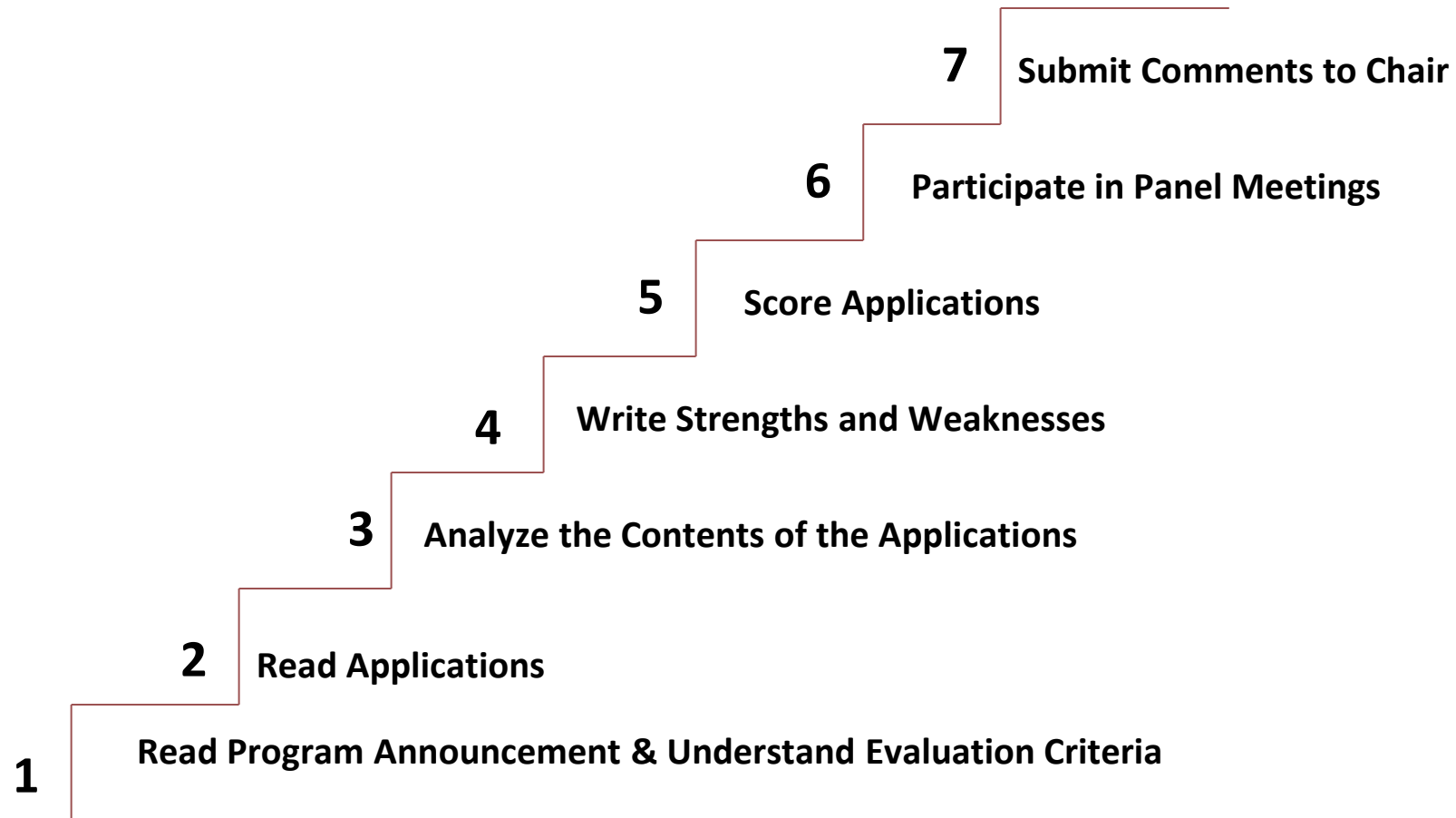## Guidelines for Participation in the Review Process

GAM Process Overview

- Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality
  - Understanding conflict of interest

- Evaluating Applications

- Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Discretionary Grant Review Cycle: Participants and Roles

Reviewer Responsibilities: Application Review Steps

7 | Submit Comments to Chair

6 | Participate in Panel Meetings

5 | Score Applications

4 | Write Strengths and Weaknesses

3 | Analyze the Contents of the Applications

2 | Read Applications

1 | Read Program Announcement & Understand Evaluation Criteria

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Reviewer Responsibilities

Write Strengths and Weaknesses

Goal:

- To write evaluative comments that are not judgmental but constructive.

What are "evaluative" comments?

- Evaluative comments assess the value, worth, or quality of the information in the application.

Why are evaluative comments important?

- They assist OASH in the federal funding process.
- They serve as technical assistance to applicants.

Reference the program support webpage for additional documents to assist with writing evaluative comments (ex: Useful Descriptions, Useful Verbs, Acceptable & Unacceptable Comments)

GrantSolutions

Reviewer Responsibilities

Write Strengths and Weaknesses

Guidelines for Writing Comments:

- Important when stating the applicant has met the guidelines be sure to **PROVIDE** the basis for this conclusion.

- Provide adequate details and cite the page numbers

- **Justify** each strength and weakness statement with examples

- Evaluate, rather than merely describe

- **Do not** restate the announcement

- Use complete sentences, proper grammar and spelling

- Spell out acronyms in the first reference.

- Do not mix strengths and weakness in the same comment

GrantSolutions

Less Useful Comment

Criteria

Objectives and Need for Assistance

Page

3

Strength

The applicant demonstrates an understanding of the needs of low income children and families.

Useful Comment

Criteria   **Page**

Objectives and Need for Assistance

Strength   **3, 5, 6**

The applicant specifically describes the target population by
providing charts that detail multiple comparative characteristics of
both the children currently in care and the available resource
families.

9, 10,11

Weakness

The literature review cites dated material and does not reflect a
clear understanding of best practices related to the proposed
project. The applicant does not convincingly demonstrate that the
proposed project is likely to contribute to the knowledge base of
trauma in families affected by substance abuse.

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Less Useful Comment

Criteria

3. Approach

Page

15

Strength

The applicant provided a plan of action.

Useful Comment

Criteria

3. Approach

Strength

The proposed project includes a collaborative planning process that engages community leaders, community members, foster and adoptive parents, social workers, youth and individuals who have had involvement with the child welfare system.

19, 20

Weakness

The applicant fails to present a timeline that indicates target dates for achieving major milestones. For example, the applicant presents a multi-pronged recruitment strategy but fails to specify when recruitment efforts will occur. No dates are provided for implementing parenting classes or education activities for children.

25, 28, and

Exhibit C

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Reviewer Responsibilities
Scoring Applications

Requirements for Scoring:

- Ensure that the scores are consistent with the written comments
- Score applications independently

Avoid:

- Giving a perfect score to a criterion or element **that has even one stated weakness**
- Providing an applicant with a high score with **insufficient comments to justify it** OR providing an applicant with a low score with insufficient comments to justify it

If you think something is questionable, please bring it to the attention of your panel chair.

GrantSolutions

Reviewer Responsibilities
Scoring Applications

Suggested Scoring Guidelines:

- The following scale may be used by reviewers as a guideline when assigning scores to each criterion. For these purposes, an element is an item pertinent to a review criterion as defined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

Total Point Value for a Review Criterion	Outstanding	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
5	5	4	4	3*	2-0
10	10	9	8	7	6-0
15	15	14	13-12	11	10-0
20	20	19-18	17- 16	15-14	13-0
25	25-24	23	22 -20	19-18	17--0
30	30-29	28-27	26-24	23-21	20--0
35	35-34	33-32	31-28	27-25	24-0
40	40-39	38-36	35- 32	31-28	27--0
45	45-43	42-41	40-36	35-32	31-0
Approx.% (Overall)	100- 96%	95-90%	89-80%	79-70 %	69-0%

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Reviewer Responsibilities
Scoring Applications

Outstanding

- All elements of the criterion are unambiguously addressed, well-conceived, thoroughly developed, and well supported.
- Documentation and required information are specific and comprehensive.
- The criterion has no deficiencies or weaknesses.
- All strengths identified should unambiguously be above and beyond the baseline requirements.
- No restatements of the application or the NOFO requirements.

Very Good

- Elements are unambiguously addressed with necessary detail and the evidence is thoroughly supported.
- Documentation and required information are specific and comprehensive.
- Any weaknesses identified will have minor impact on the successful implementation and execution of the proposed project.

Good

- Elements are addressed, although some do not contain necessary detail and/or support.
- Most documentation and required information are present and sufficient.
- Application has some strengths but with at least one weakness identified that will have moderate impact on the successful implementation and execution of the proposed project.

Reviewer Responsibilities
Scoring Applications

Marginal
- Most elements are addressed, although when addressed, do not contain all the necessary detail and/or support.
- Documentation and required information are deficient.
- Application has few strengths and some weaknesses and of the weaknesses identified, only one major weakness.
- The one major weakness could impact the successful implementation and execution of the proposed project.

Poor
- Few, if any, elements are addressed. Documentation and required information are deficient or omitted.
- Application has very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses.
- Weaknesses identified will have substantial impact and prevent the successful implementation and execution of the proposed project.

Inadequate/Deficient
- No elements are clearly addressed. Documentation and required information are deficient.
- Application has no strengths; only numerous major weaknesses.
- Weaknesses identified will prevent the successful implementation and execution of the proposed project.
- The applicant responses do not meet the programmatic intent of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

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Timeline: ARM Opens May 9th
ARM Closes May 25th

Applications	Reviewer Comments Due in ARM (Submitted to Chair Status)	Panel Discussion Times	Panel Summary Report Submitted to Panel Manager
Applications 1-2	Thursday, May 11 by 11:59pm	Friday, May 12	by 3pm ET Monday, May 15
Applications 3-5	Sunday, May 14 by 11:59pm	Monday, May 15	by 3pm ET Tuesday, May 16
Applications 6-7	Wednesday, May 17 by 11:59pm	Thursday, May 18	by 3pm ET Friday, May 19
Applications 8-10	Sunday, May 21 by 11:59pm	Monday, May 22	by 3pm ET Tuesday, May 23

- Scores and comments **MUST** be entered into ARM by the application deadlines listed in the Review Schedule
- Reviewers must revise comments per Chair/RD requests

Alternate Reviewer

This is a critical role in the peer review process and we greatly appreciate you.

You will be assigned to a panel and are expected to read, score and provide detailed, objective, constructive, and timely written evaluations for the first **5 assigned applications**. You will also **attend the first two panel discussions as a silent participant**.

You are expected to follow the review schedule for the first 5 applications assigned to your panel.

Chairperson Responsibilities

1. Read the Notice of Funding Opportunity, and understand the evaluation criteria

2. Thoroughly read and review the assigned applications

3. Facilitate introduction of panel members, establish ground rules and support/assist new reviewers

4. Objectively facilitate the panel review conversations, focus on the evaluation criteria.

5. Assess the reviewers' comments to ensure they have:
   1. Written appropriate and effective comment for each of the required criteria.
   2. Written comments are in complete sentences, which are not phrased in a subjective manner or as an opinion statement, and are not offensive.

6. Provide panelists the opportunity to make changes to their scores and comments prior to finalizing the evaluation

7. Compile and edit written comments for Summary Report in ARM ensuring that comments reflect the score awarded to each criteria

8. Meet the pre-determined deadlines to submit your evaluations throughout the review period.

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Chairperson Responsibilities

Application Scores

Avoid: Wide range in reviewers scores

Application #	Application Name	Reviewer	Score
Ex 1234	ABC Company	Rvr1	88
Ex 1234	ABC Company	Rvr2	96
Ex 1234	ABC Company	Rvr3	67
Ex 1234	ABC Company	Rvr4	72
Ex9874	XYZ Company	Rvr1	86
Ex9874	XYZ Company	Rvr2	36
Ex9874	XYZ Company	Rvr3	44
Ex9874	XYZ Company	Rvr4	74

For ABC Company the lowest score is a 67 while the highest score is a 96. This is concerning. If these were the preliminary score we would expect after the panel discuss for the score to be in a closer range.

The same is with XYZ Company – there are two reviewers who scored rather high 86/74 and two reviewers who scored rather low 36/44 – base on this information it shows division among the panel members and a need for a "healthy" discussion.

Application Final Scores
Remind Reviewers:

- It's important when entering final scores - the priority is to make sure reviewers are considering the views from other panelists.

- Reference the Suggested Scoring Guidelines

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Panel Meetings

Panel Managers will join the panel discussions to answer questions

First Panel Meeting Tasks - approximately 30 minute "meet & greet" call with ALL panel members

Each panel has been designate a panel discussion time slot

- Panel members introduce themselves and get acquainted
- Chairperson gather phone numbers
- Chairperson define rules for discussion
- Chairperson establish time limits for each discussion

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Panel Meetings

Reviewer Responsibilities:

- Participate in panel discussions by contributing to the discussion of each application's strengths and weaknesses

- Assist the panel Chair with revisions to the panel summary report

Chairperson Responsibilities:

- Assign panel members to lead discussion, on a rotating basis, ask for a volunteer, or lead it yourself

- Ensure all members participate actively in each discussion

- Identify significant differences in scores and focus panel's time and discussion on that evaluation criterion

- Ensure comments are focused on the evaluation criteria and are stated as strengths or weaknesses

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Panel Meetings

Performance Expectations:

- Be prompt and fully prepared for all scheduled panel discussions
- Panel members share their scores and comments
- Identify the comments that best support the scores given
- Compose comments that provide the most accurate assessment relevant to specific criteria
- Panel members consider revising scores if their assessment changes
- Develop the panel summary report as a team
- Demonstrate respect for fellow panel members – respect their persons **and** respect their opinions
- Maintain confidentiality

Tips for Chairs

- Ask open-ended questions

- Ask panelists to expand on their comments to facilitate further discussion

- Avoid comparisons between/among applications

- Maintain the focus on the comment and application

- Maintain morale (e.g., take breaks as needed)

- Remind panel members that comments must be:

  - Based only on criteria in the FOA

  - Focused on significant strengths or weaknesses

  - Comments need to be evaluative, specific, detailed, and concise

  - Potentially useful to applicants to improve future applications

Chairperson Responsibilities
Preparing Comments for the Summary Report

The Chairpersons should review the comments in the summary report for the following:

- **Contradicting comments**

- **Comments not supported by facts from the application**

- **Redundant comments**

- Comments state the applicant has met the guidelines **without** providing the basis for this conclusion

- **Ensure comments include adequate details with <u>examples</u> to justify the strength or weakness**

- **Ensure comments are not mixed (strength and weakness in same comment)**

- Comments do not restate the announcement

- **Comments** are not offensive or **not based on criteria in the announcement**

- Do not include comments that are poorly written

Addressing these types of comments and their issues is necessary to providing a clear and concise summary report.

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Reminder to All:
Comments for the Summary Report

Panelists need to provide adequate details in their comments.

Chairpersons need to ensure the comments in the summary report provide adequate details.

Example - if says "the application was not clear" or "was not adequate" or identifies a weakness - **there needs to be an explanation of what was not clear, adequate or what is the weakness**.

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REMINDER:
Purpose of Panel Summary Report

- Provide a clear picture of the application and its strengths and weaknesses.

- Provide information to support final funding decisions.

- Provide useful feedback to applicants, including those who are not funded.

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Review & Revision of Panel Summary Report

- MAY need to reconvene panel to discuss PM/RD comments and consider revisions

- Panel options:

  - Chairperson or Reviewers may revise comments

  - Reviewers may need to revise their scores

  - Ask Panel Manager for clarification

- Chairperson makes revisions to summary report in ARM and sends revised report

- Repeat, as needed, until PM/RD approve report

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The Federal Staff Role in the Grant Review Process

Panel Manager (PM)

- Provides technical assistance to panel members on the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

- Carefully review and provide responsive feedback/guidance to the Chair/panel on the summary reports.

  - **Ensuring that the summary report is providing adequate detail in the comments**. If the report has comment that say:

    - "the application was not clear" or "was not adequate" or identifies a weakness - The summary report needs to have an explanation of what was not clear, adequate or what is the weakness.

  - Address issues that may need to be resolved such as lack of supporting comments, conflicting comments, redundant comments.

- Submits summary report to Review Director (RD) after Panel Manager's feedback has been addressed

- Acts as liaison between the RD and Chairperson(s)

Review Director (RD)

- Possess expertise in program and program requirements outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity

- Review summary reports for adequacy, return for revisions as necessary

- Accepts summary reports in ARM

Application Review Services (ARM)

ARM Single Sign-On

The **GrantSolutions Application Review Services** (**ARM**) has updated the user account management to Single Sign-On (SSO) to better protect your account and system security.

In May 2022, the ARM login process changed. If you need assistance, please visit our **Single Sign-On Guidance**.

Login with Single Sign-On SSO

Login with SSO

ARM Single Sign-On

Existing ARM users - If **forgot** your current password:

1. Click the Login with SSO button.

2. Click **Forgot Username or password** to reset your password.

Review Logistics

Remote Review Logistics

When ARM opens

- **Log into GrantSolutions/ARM as soon as possible to ensure**:
  - You can access the system – if have login issues contact the GrantSolutions helpdesk

  - Once you have accessed the ARM system, take time to thoroughly review the applications assigned to your panel. Based on your understanding of the Conflict of Interest (COI) statement in ARM, please notify us immediately @ OASHReview@grantreview.org if you identify a conflict

- Any questions during the review contact OASHReview@grantreview.org

- All dates, deliverables, and deadlines relevant to this review are included in the Remote Review Schedule on the program support page. **Please adhere to the schedule**.

Remote Review Logistics

- Honorarium payments will be processed in partnership with ADP WorkMarket, a secure portal which will streamline the requirements to disburse honorarium funds. Panelist payments will be authorized upon receipt of the Federal client's approval.

- Please create your profile account immediately. A delay in the creation of your account may result in a delay disbursing your honorarium payment. *If you have created a WorkMarket account previously, you do not need to do it again.*

- **Please visit the Program Support Webpage which provides all the detailed information regarding the honorarium payment process**

Essential Points of Contact

OASH Grant Review Team
Any questions during the review
OASHReview@grantreview.org

GrantSolutions Helpdesk
Any issues with the **Authentication Process or any other log in issues**
Phone: 1.866.577.0771
Email: help@grantsolutions.gov
Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. ET (closed on Federal holidays).

ARM Technical Support
Any questions regarding **using the ARM system**
Phone: 1.866.424.2637
Email: reviews@grantsolutions.gov
Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. ET

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Communication

Is vital to success of Grant Review

- Chairpersons make sure to include your Panel Manager in communications when scheduling panel meetings.

- *Each panel has been designate a panel discussion time slot.*

Questions?

- Questions on information presented

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THANK YOU!

Thank you for your participation in this review!

If you have any problems or concerns during the review, please contact the OASH Grant Review Team.

OASHReview@grantreview.org