

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

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 07/19/2019 09:31 AM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Smithsonian Institution (U411C190055)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	20	20

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - EIR Early Phase Tier 2 - 12: 84.411C

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: Smithsonian Institution (U411C190055)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, 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 standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

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

Strengths:

The application is excellent in that the applicant addressed each of the four evaluation criteria exceptionally well. The application provides a clear and concise evaluation plan that includes process, outcome and impact methods and measures. The impact evaluation design employs a mixed methods randomized controlled trial that would meet What Works Clearinghouse standards without reservation.

The application provides a clear and concise description of the process, outcome and impact evaluation the applicant intends to implement. A plan for continuous quality improvement that includes multiple feedback loops should ensure the fidelity of the project's implementation across the two state partners' schools. The applicant includes multiple stakeholders at various time points in the feedback loop including school personnel, parents and students that will support accountability in the project. The impact evaluation employing randomized control assignment of a large school, teacher and student pools will meet WWC standards without reservation. The two-part impact analysis includes using standardized measures (listed in Table 5 pp. 21-22) to determine outcomes and impacts. Table 4 demonstrates the integration of evaluation and reporting into the overall project and the implementation monitoring that will increase program implementation fidelity and mid-course corrections. Using a teacher trainer model will improve sustainability beyond the grant funding. Implementing the project across two states should yield results suitable for replication in other settings. The rubrics developed to assist in observations along with the 8-hour training on how to use the rubrics will increase content knowledge and observational skills of the teacher leaders. These rubrics will also help the teachers ensure fidelity and reinforce the training model with their peers to further advance the sustainability of the project. The evaluation questions, data sources and analysis type along with the measurable thresholds are included in Table 6 (pp. 24-25) clearly align with the project implementation goals and should yield results that can be easily verified through the methods outlined. Using the differences in state standards to mediate the results will provide important policy information for the state stakeholders.

Weaknesses:

None noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: Smithsonian Institution (U411C190055)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Quality of the Project Evaluation		
1. Project Evaluation	20	20
Sub Total	20	20
Total	20	20

Technical Review Form

Panel #6 - EIR Early Phase Tier 2 - 12: 84.411C

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: Smithsonian Institution (U411C190055)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Evaluation

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project. In determining the quality of the evaluation, 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 standards with or without reservations as described in the What Works Clearinghouse Handbook (as defined in this notice).

(2) The extent to which the evaluation will provide guidance about effective strategies suitable for replication or testing in other settings.

(3) The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

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

Strengths:

- The IML model (p. 13) will provide ongoing process evaluation feedback during the project implementation and assist in establishing project fidelity and identifying strengths and weaknesses.
- The mixed model evaluation (p.14) approach will provide interpretation for quantitative findings. This approach is appropriate for studies exploring new initiatives that may encounter unexpected mediating variables.
- The baseline equivalence procedures and attrition plans described on page 22 are adaptive based on implementation and will meet WWC research design performance standards with or without reservations.
- The project is centered across two states and includes over 11,000 students (p. 2). This number of students and geographical distribution should insure a fair degree of generalizability to other rural locations.
- The research instruments and procedures described indicated for this project should produce valid and reliable data (p. 22-23). The training for observers will increase likelihood of collecting valid and reliable observation data (e45).
- Table 6 (pp. 24-25) provides a concise summary and description of the data collection to be carried out by the evaluators. The identification of the research questions, data, and analyses to be conducted will assist evaluators and program managers in the management of the evaluation tasks and help ensure each research question is addressed in an effective way.
- The project fidelity analysis (p. 25) procedures described in the applicant's proposal should yield a measure of implementation that will be effective in determining its impact on project outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 20

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