



OFFICE OF THE STATE  
SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION



## Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers Fiscal Year 2024 Competition Award Procedures

**Purpose:** The purpose of this document is to outline the award procedures for the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) grant competition.

**Background:** The 21st CCLC program (CFDA 84.287C) is intended to establish or expand community learning centers to provide students with academic and enrichment activities designed to complement the academic program of the students' regular school day. Centers located in elementary or secondary schools or other similarly accessible facilities must provide a range of high-quality program activities and services to support student learning and academic development (e.g., tutoring, mentoring, homework help, academic supports); science, technology, engineering and math (STEM); community service opportunities; sports; the arts; and other cultural activities.

Eligible applicants include any public or private organization. Examples of agencies and organizations eligible under the 21st CCLC program include, but are not limited to, the following: nonprofit agencies, city or county government agencies, faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education, and for-profit corporations. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) requires organizations applying for funds to collaborate with the schools the students attend. The statute allows a consortium of two or more agencies, organizations or entities to apply.

### REVIEWER SELECTION

OSSE selects grant reviewers with at least one of the following: (1) knowledge of the impact that afterschool learning opportunities have on improving the academic achievement of students; (2) experience in an education-related field; (3) STEM education experience; (4) specialized education experience; (5) English learners experience; (6) social and emotional learning experience; (7) experience working with a variety of community members to forge meaningful partnerships that foster commitment to improving the lives of youths and families; or (8) previous experience/expertise as a grant reviewer.

### EXTERNAL REVIEW

Each review panel for the 21st CCLC FY24 grant competition is composed of external, neutral, qualified, professional individuals, selected for their unique qualifications in the fields of elementary and secondary education and youth development. Each panel will receive four applications (or more if the number of applications received is not evenly divisible by four) for review and scoring.

Reviewers are expected to draw upon their expertise to review each application and score all required components. Evaluations must be based on the extent to which each application meets the criteria outlined in the scoring rubric. Reviewers must make an objective assessment of each application using only the information provided within the application and provide detailed comments to support each evaluation.

All reviewers must participate in a facilitated discussion for each application. During facilitated discussions reviewers are required to discuss the reasoning behind their respective scores and determine whether a change in scores and/or comments is appropriate. Reviewers are required to document the content of the facilitated discussion, the date of the facilitated discussion, attendees at the facilitated discussion, and any changes in reviewer scores and/or comments in a Facilitated Discussion memorandum that must be submitted to OSSE. Reviewers are required to use data from past 21st CCLC applications to inform their discussion if an application's overall score varies by 40 or more points between reviewers or if the reviewers' score for a specific criterion within an application varies by more than 20% of the total possible score for that criterion.

### INTERNAL REVIEW

Prior to facilitated discussions, OSSE will review the scores and comments of each external reviewer for each application for potential discrepancies. This includes reviewing each reviewer's scores and comments for:

- Variance between the highest and lowest scores at the criteria level or total score level that would trigger a facilitated discussion;
- Comprehensive, reasonable, justifications for ALL panel scores and comments; and
- Discrepancies among peer reviewer scores or comments for the same application (e.g., Reviewer 1: "The applicant clearly identified X"; Reviewer 2: "The applicant didn't have any mention of X").

Once all reviewer scores and comments have been accepted, OSSE determines the ranking of each application.

### AWARD DETERMINATIONS

OSSE reserves the right to make final decisions regarding any applicant's priority status. OSSE will use the priorities identified in ESEA Section 4201(i)(1) and the criterion in the scoring rubric to make awards. OSSE also reserves the right to inspect the proposed 21st CCLC program site and facilities before an award is approved. Regardless of an application's score, OSSE maintains the discretion to determine final award decisions based on any other factors consistent with the federal statute, particularly once it has funded applications according to the statutory priorities (ESEA section 4204(i)). A denied applicant may appeal OSSE's decision only on the grounds that OSSE has violated a District or federal statute or regulation in denying its grant application. For more information on appeal procedures, please contact Kelly Rudd Safran, Ed.D., 21st CCLC State Director at [KellyRudd.Safran@dc.gov](mailto:KellyRudd.Safran@dc.gov).