

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

RFA # GD0—SACSO—15

District of Columbia

Office of the State Superintendent of Education



FFY2014 SOAR Act Grants to Non-Profit Third-Party Organizations/Charter Support Organizations

RFA Release Date

May 1, 2015

Intent to Apply Deadline (Mandatory)

May 12, 2015

Pre-Application Conference (Mandatory)

Tuesday, May 12, 2015

Application Submission Deadline

May 29, 2015

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Checklist for Application

FFY2014 SOAR Act Non-Profit Third-Party/Charter Support Organization Grants

- The applicant submitted the Intent to Apply form by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 12, 2015. The Intent to Apply form can be found in Appendix A and on the OSSE website.
- The applicant attended the mandatory pre-application conference. Please see Section 2 in the Request for Application (RFA).
- The applicant completed all steps required by the RFA and submitted a complete application, through OSSE's Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) that contains all the information and appendices requested. Please see Section 3 for an overview of the application components.

Please note: All required application elements must be submitted by entering information directly into the required sections in EGMS. Documents may be attached as appendices or supplemental materials only.

- The application adheres to the directions and criteria of each section of this RFA.
- The application was submitted by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 29, 2015 through EGMS.

PLEASE NOTE

Applications are due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 29, 2015.

Applications submitted at or after 5:01 p.m. EST on Friday, May 29, 2015, will not be reviewed.

All applications must be submitted through the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). For more information about EGMS, please visit

<http://osse.dc.gov/service/enterprise-grants-management-system-egms>

Please avoid last minute technical submission issues by submitting early. OSSE strongly recommends submitting your application by 3:00 p.m.

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Section 1: General Information

1.1 Introduction

Overview of the SOAR Act

The Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act, Pub. L. 112-10, 125 Stat. 199, is a federal law that authorizes funding for District of Columbia (DC) public charter schools “to improve and expand quality public charter schools in the District of Columbia.” §3004(b)(2). Each year, OSSE’s Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support (OPCSFS) submits an application to the US Department of Education (ED) describing how it will administer the funds. Evidence of public consultation is a required component of the application process and OPCFS sought stakeholder feedback during the summer of 2014 prior to submitting the FFY2014 application to ED on August 22, 2014. ED approved the application and issued a Grant Award Notice (GAN) to OSSE on March 31, 2015.

Charter Sector SOAR Funding

Through the approved application and grant award, OSSE provides SOAR funding to public charter schools through five (5) grant programs and a public facilities direct loan/credit enhancement fund. The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the following grant programs was published in the D.C. Register on Friday, April 17, 2015:

Project Name	Budget (Approx.)	Type of Grant
1. Academic Quality Grants	\$5,281,906.80	Competitive
2. Grants to Support Early Childhood Education	\$785,093.20	Formula
3. Quality Grants to Third-Party/Charter Support Organizations	\$2,500,000	Competitive
4. Grants for Public Facilities	\$3,871,790	Competitive
5. Grants for Replication & Growth	\$1,000,000	Competitive

1.2 Purpose of Funds

OSSE's administration of SOAR Act funding is designed to increase student achievement and academic growth of DC public charter school students by supporting the creation and expansion of high-quality public charter schools. In order to accomplish this goal, OSSE established two impact areas for this grant cycle, in consultation with stakeholders:

- Innovative funding to improve school performance and educational outcomes; and
- Effective facility financing and funding to increase the number of high-quality public charter school seats.

Through this RFA, OPCSFS is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants for the following grant program:

- **Grants to Non-Profit Third-Party and Charter Support Organizations**
 - Successful projects will have a direct and rapid (within two years) impact on overall charter school academic achievement or on the achievement of historically under-performing subgroups.
 - Applicants will partner with two or more local educational agencies (LEAs) in order to be considered for these funds.
 - Applicants will have and detail a plan to disseminate best practices to the broader public charter sector.
 - Each applicant will propose activities designed to have a direct and rapid impact on student proficiency rates, whether school wide or for one or more historically-disadvantaged subgroup.
 - Priority will be given to those applicants addressing direct assistance to improve the quality of instructional delivery utilizing data and/or providing direct assistance to develop or improve the capacity of teachers, school leaders, or school boards.
 - Priority points may be given to applicants that partner with LEAs that have schools designated as "Focus" or "Priority" per the ESEA Flexibility Waiver.

1.3 Source of Funding

The United States Department of Education, through the DC School Choice Incentive Program, 84.370C, Public Law 108-199, III, DC School Incentive Act of 2003; Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, effective April 15, 2011 (Pub. L. 112-10; 125 Stat. 201). Federal Award Identification Number (FAIN) U370C140001.

1.4 Requirements of Funding

In addition to the requirements of this RFA, the assurances made in the submitted application, and the terms of the Grant Award Notice (GAN) issued by OSSE to the subgrantee, a key condition for receiving these funds is compliance with activities necessary to carry out a mandated evaluation of the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP), as specified in Section 3011(a)(1) of the SOAR Act. Pursuant to this section, the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is required to evaluate annually the performance of students who applied to the OSP (Sec. 3009). Because some OSP applicants will be enrolled in public charter schools, it will be necessary for IES and its evaluation contractor to collect data on and from public charter school campuses once each year during the applicable grant period. Please be advised that noncompliance of the organization with the terms and conditions stated in the SOAR Act GAN may result in the withholding of further federal grant funds administered by OSSE.

1.5 Funds Available and Funding Period

At least \$2,500,000.00 is available for awards through this RFA. OSSE will provide up to \$500,000 per award. Awards are limited to one per organization. The expected grant award range is \$100,000 to \$250,000. The duration of the Non-Profit Third-Party/Charter Support Organization grant is for a period of two (2) years from the grant award date.

1.6 Eligibility

Eligible Non-Profit Third-Party Organizations /Charter Support Organizations:

- Must be a non-profit organization with experience in successfully working with the charter school sector; and
- Must serve under this grant program at least two (2) or more LEAs within DC and their underserved special populations, with a preference for LEAs with “Priority” and “Focus” schools.

1.7 Permissible Use of Funds

The funds associated with this RFA are available strictly on a reimbursement basis and may only be used for allowable grant project expenditures during the grant period as follows:

- All costs must:
 - Meet requirements of permissible use of Federal Funds within EDGAR 34 CFR Part 75, Part 76 and Part 80 and applicable OMB Circulars, including 2 CFR Part 200;
 - Align with and support the principles outlined in the DC’s Request for Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Waiver submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (ED) on March 31, 2015, *available here*:
<http://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/DC%20ESEA%20Flexibility%20Renewal%20Application%20Redline%20Version%2003%2031%202015.pdf>;
 - Support projects that address needs identified within the partnering LEA’s Needs Assessment conducted;
 - Support projects that are linked to evidence-based research and have been shown to increase academic achievement; and
 - Support projects that apply promising practices to increase academic achievement.

All grant project budgets will be reviewed by a peer review panel, as well as OPCSFS staff, to ensure that planned expenditures are allowable and are appropriate, reasonable, and necessary to support the grant objectives and requirements. Additional

guidance about standards for determining costs for federal grants is available from The Federal Register at: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/12/26/2013-30465/uniform-administrative-requirements-cost-principles-and-audit-requirements-for-federal-awards>

Section 2: Schedule

2.1 RFA Release

The release date of the RFA is May 1, 2015. The RFA is available online at www.osse.dc.gov.

2.2 Pre-Application Conference

The mandatory pre-application conference will be held at the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, located at 810 First Street, NE as follows:

- Non-Profit Third-Party/Charter Support Organization Grants – Tuesday, May 12, 2015, 10:00–11:00 a.m., 3rd Floor, Grand Hall

Each interested non-profit organization must send at least one representative in order to meet the attendance requirement. This representative should be someone that has collaborated directly with charter school representatives.

2.3 Intent to Apply

All eligible entities seeking to receive funding under this RFA must submit their Intent to Apply notification form (please see appendix), signed by an authorized official of the organization, via email to opcsfs.funding@dc.gov by 5:00 p.m. on May 12, 2015.

Failure to submit the Intent to Apply notification will result in disqualification of the Applicant prior to review.

2.4 Contact Person(s)

Applicants are advised that the following OSSE staff members are the authorized contact persons for this grant competition:

- Ronda Kardash, Program Analyst, Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support, ronda.kardash@dc.gov.

- Katherine Cox, Director, Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support, katherine.cox@dc.gov.

2.5 Applications Due

Applications are due May 29, 2015 by 5:00 p.m. and must be submitted through EGMS. Applicants are encouraged to avoid submitting applications early to avoid any technical difficulties. OSSE strongly encourages applicants to submit by 3:00 p.m. to ensure a smooth submission.

2.6 Updates

Information and updates regarding the grant competitions will be emailed to all potential applicants that submit an Intent to Apply form and attend the mandatory Pre-Application Conference specific to this grant.

2.7 Awards Announcement

Awards will be announced via EGMS, email, and the OSSE website by **June 26, 2015**. OSSE will disseminate award letters and grant award notifications following the awards announcement.

Section 3: Application

3.1 Application Content

The Application in EGMS contains all of the following sections or "tabs". Unless noted, each section must be completed as instructed in the system:

- Section 1 – Overview Pages (*informational; nothing to complete*)
 - General Information (*informational; nothing to complete*)
 - Award Process (*informational; nothing to complete*)
- Section 2 – Eligibility
- Section 3 – Contact Information
- Section 4 – Comprehensive Data Summary
 - Project
 - Academic Data

- Section 5 – Needs Assessment and Narrative
 - Needs Assessment
 - Project Description
 - Theory of Action
 - Flexibility Waiver Alignment
- Section 6 – Logic Model
- Section 7 – Detailed Planning Expenditures
 - Budget Overview
 - Budget Data Import
 - Salaries and Benefits
 - Supplies and Materials
 - Professional Services
 - Fixed Property Costs
 - Equipment
 - Other Objects
 - Budget Summary
- Section 8 – Assurances
- Section 9 – Submit (*application is not complete until it is submitted through this tab*)
- Section 10 – Application Print (*hard copies of applications may be printed through this tab*)
- Section 11 – Application History (*the history of who has accessed and modified the application may be viewed through this tab*)

Section 4: Scoring

4.1 Review Panel

The grants described in this RFA will be awarded competitively. A review panel will be convened to review, score, and rank each application. The review panel will be composed of internal and external neutral, qualified, professional individuals selected for their expertise, knowledge or related experiences. The application will be scored against a rubric and each application will have multiple reviewers to ensure accurate

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scoring. The complete rubric can be found in EGMS for review. Upon completion of the panel's review, the panel(s) shall make recommendations for awards based on the scoring rubric(s). The State Superintendent of Education, or her designee, will make all final award decisions.

Appendix A

Official Intent to Apply Notification

(Must be received by OSSE no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 12, 2015)

(PDF Submission Preferred)

TO: OSSE Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support
opcsfs.funding@dc.gov

FROM: _____
(LEA or Organization Name)

RE: Intent to Apply for FFY2014 Scholarships for Opportunities and Results (SOAR) Act Grant(s)

LEA or Organization Name: _____

LEA or Organization Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Person Telephone: _____

Contact Person Email: _____

This Intent to Apply is for the following SOAR Act Grants:

Please place an "x" next to all of the grants for which the LEA or organization intends to apply:

- _____ Early Childhood Grants
- _____ Increasing Academic Quality
- _____ Influencing Replication and Growth
- _____ Investing in Public Facilities
- _____ Third-Party/Charter Support Organization Grants
 - * Partner LEA (if identified): _____
 - * Partner LEA (if identified): _____

Signature: _____
(LEA or Organization Official)

Date: _____