

Corporation for National and Community Service

2010 Social Innovation Fund

The Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City

Reviewer Comments – Phase 2

SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND 2010 EVALUATION CONSENSUS FORM

Instructions throughout this form are indicated in red.

Before you begin, please fill out the Applicant Name and Application ID# in the above header. This Evaluation Consensus Form (ECF) is where each panel records its consensus assessment of an application. The completion of this form may be led by any panelist; that individual will be designated the Lead Reviewer (LR). All Reviewers are expected to serve as the LR on at least two applications. **The evaluation consensus assessment should be based on the panel's examination of only the subcategories highlighted in red in the chart below, not the full application. In addition, Evaluation Reviewers should only assess how well applicants responded to the specific evidence-based criteria within the subcategories highlighted in yellow in this form.**

Category	Percentage	Subcategories
Program Design	45%	A. Goals and Objectives B. Use of Evidence C. Community Resources D. Description of Activities i. Subgranting ii. Technical Assistance and Support
Organizational Capacity	35%	A. Ability to Provide Program Oversight B. Ability to Provide Fiscal Oversight
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	20%	A. Budget and Program Design B. Match Sources

Panels will utilize Panel Consensus Calls to discuss each application and come to agreement on the content of the Narrative Assessment for each category, the Rating for each category, the Overall Appraisal Statement and the Band in which the application will be placed. When completing this form, the LR should rely on four primary documents: 1) the application being reviewed; 2) the SIF Review Notes page from each panelist; 3) the SIF Notice of Federal Funds Availability (NOFA); 4) the Consensus Rubric at the end of this form.

Please complete the following steps:

1. For each of the 3 categories the LR should:
 - a. **Write a 3 – 5 sentence Narrative Assessment** reflecting the panel's assessment of the quality of the response in the category being assessed; it is important that this narrative include brief summary information, but more importantly, the panel's evaluation of the application's quality.
 - b. **List the application's significant strengths and weaknesses and annotate each.** Each significant strength or weakness **must** be supported by **at least one** of the Eligibility or Application Review Criteria that were in the SIF NOFA. (criteria are included in this form)
 - c. **Taking into consideration** both the Narrative Assessment and the listed strengths and weaknesses, **select a category Rating** by checking the appropriate box.
2. **Complete the Overall Appraisal section.** In this section, you will:
 - a. Provide an Overall Appraisal Statement; and
 - b. Select a Consensus Band that represents the quality of the application as a whole. The Bands are described in the Overall Appraisal section at the end of this form.

PROGRAM DESIGN (45%)

The Social Innovation Fund Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Program Design.

A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Corporation asks applicants to use a thematic approach in describing their proposed investments in community organizations. As established in the Act, there are two basic operational models of SIF intermediaries. The first is a SIF that will operate in a single geographic location, and address one or more priority issues within that location. This model is referred to as a "geographically-based SIF." The second model is a SIF that will address a single priority issue area in multiple geographic locations. This model is referred to as an "issue-based SIF." The Corporation will assess whether the application properly proposes goals and objectives as either a geographically-based or an issue-based SIF.

i. Geographically-Based SIF

The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area(s) within the specific local geographic area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to those issue areas that the applicant will seek to improve.

ii. Issue-Based SIF

The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area within the geographic areas likely to be served, including statistics demonstrating that those geographic areas have a high need in the priority issue area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to the priority issue area that the applicant will seek to improve.

B. USE OF EVIDENCE

i. Applicants must include in their application information describing their track record of using rigorous evidence, data, and evaluation tools to:

- *Select and invest in subgrantees;*
- *Support and monitor the replication and expansion of subgrantees; and*
- *Achieve measurable outcomes.*

D. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

i. Subgranting

- ##### **a.**
- Applicants must describe the process by which they will competitively select their nonprofit community organization subgrantees, and, if applicable, the process by which they have pre-selected some subgrantees. Specifically, applicants must describe how their competitive subgrant selection process will ensure a portfolio of subgrantees that are innovative nonprofit community organizations serving low-income communities and that possess:*

- *A commitment to and track record of using data and evaluation for performance and program improvement;*
- *Evidence of effectiveness, including a demonstrated track record of achieving specific measurable outcomes related to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary;*
- *Strong potential for replication or expansion;*
- *A well-defined plan for achieving specific measurable outcomes connected to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary, evaluation of program effectiveness, performance improvement, and replication or expansion; and*

ii. **Technical Assistance and Support**

- a. *Applicants must include in their application information describing how they will provide technical assistance and support (other than financial support) that will increase the ability of subgrantees to achieve their measurable outcomes, including replication or expansion. Replication or expansion may happen in various ways (including, for example, creating new sites or affiliating with another program to replicate an intervention) and in multiple contexts (including, for example, serving more people in a current geography or growing to new geographies).*

Provide a panel assessment of the application's PROGRAM DESIGN as follows:

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
- **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
- **Select a Rating for this section.**

Panel Narrative Assessment

The applicant proposes a tight integration between needs assessment, program activities and evaluation. The applicant bases its program design on prior experience in New York City, and would replicate with evidence-based modifications in other locations. The application details the elevated poverty rates and educational attainment in targeted areas, and proposes to impact human capital development with measurable changes in education, job skills, employment, and assets. A network of programs is designed to achieve the impacts through employment initiatives, conditional cash transfers, savings initiative, and an internship program. The applicant details the prior evidence of impact of these programs and proposes to evaluate the replicated programs through a partnership between the Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) and the MDRC. This partnership was established under the current program administered by the applicant, and would be expanded and replicated with SIF funds. Four of the five sub-programs would be evaluated with randomized control trials that are built into the program from the beginning, with the remaining program evaluated with other methodologies.

Significant Strengths

(+) Applicant provides significant evidence of program efficacy based on the evaluation of existing or related program. (Program Design, IA and B). The interlocking programs, Jobs-plus, Work Advance Family Rewards, \$aveUSA, and the Young Adult Internship Program have been implemented in New York City, and monitored or evaluated individually. (Program Design, IA and B)

(+) The program relies on the partnership between the applicant and the MDRC. The MDRC has a solid history of program design experience and evaluation using, among other methodologies randomized control trials (RCT). The proposed program would use RCT extensively in evaluation. (Program Design, IA and B)

(+) The applicant draws on evidence from related programs as evaluated by independent experts and the MDRC to inform program design (Program Design, IA and B).

(+) The applicant proposes to evaluate 4 of 5 programs using Randomized Control Trials, with a fifth evaluated more "modestly", on the strength of existing evidence. (Program Design, IA and B)

(+) The applicant potential partners have committed to integrating evaluation in the programs. The applicant states that mayors of partner cities have committed to "prioritizing evidence-based policies and programs," including proposed dedicated staff to support the project(s). (Program Design, IA and B).

(+) Applicant selection process includes criteria for use of performance measures and tracking systems. (Although the applicant does not specify the relevant weightings of this versus other criteria.) (Program Design ID)

(+) The applicant proposes to provide Technical Assistance provided to sites and nonprofits, and cites specific example of taking corrective action to ensure data gathering (p.19)

(+) The applicant would utilize a city-specific selection committee to select recipients in various localities. The committees would include members from the applicant's organization and partners as well as local officials and partners.

Significant Weaknesses

(-) The current Young Adult Internship Program has not yet had an evaluation into impact (though tracking does occur). (Program Design, IA and B, p14); thought the replication of the program through the SIF would be evaluated through a random control trial with survey and administrative records over the SIF period. It would also be desirable to also assess the long-term impact of the program as well. (Program Design, IA and B)

Select a Rating for PROGRAM DESIGN (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

Excellent

Strong

Satisfactory

Weak/Non-responsive

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (35%)

The **Social Innovation Fund NOFA** states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Organizational Capacity.

A. ABILITY TO PROVIDE PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

In evaluating your organization's ability to provide program oversight, the Corporation will consider:

- i. *The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:*
 - *The ability to provide sound programmatic oversight, including:*
 - *Experience with and capacity for evaluation; and*
 - *Experience with and capacity for supporting replication or expansion.*
 - *A well-designed plan and systems for organizational (as opposed to subgrantee) self-assessment and continuous improvement*

 - ii. *Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment, including the extent to which you:*
 - *Have a track record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact;*
-

Provide a panel assessment of the application's ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY as follows:

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
 - **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
 - **Select a Rating for this section.**
-

Panel Narrative Assessment

The applicant describes the implementation of programs in New York City, and a history of working closely with MDRC to provide program design support, technical assistance to grantees, and program evaluation. The evidence on the implementation and evaluation of the programs strongly suggests that the applicant would successfully replicate the programs in the select cities.

Significant Strengths

(+) The applicant has a prior collaboration between the Mayor's Fund, the CEO, and MDRC on a \$58 million anti-poverty program that would be expanded to include other localities (Organizational Capacity II. A).

(+) The applicant has worked with over 100 nonprofits and on dozens of anti-poverty programs. (Program Design ID). The applicant has funded over 100 programs. (Organizational Capacity II. A).

(+) The applicant proposes to work with local governments in administering the program, increasing the chances for successful replication in other localities (Organizational Capacity II. A).

(+) The prime partner for evaluation, the MDRC, was established in 1974 has a long history of program evaluation, especially multi-site RTCs (Organizational Capacity II. A).

(+) Applicant states that all supported programs are evaluated on a variety of strategies, with continuing support based on evidence-based results. The applicant provides a specific example of a terminated program. (Organizational Capacity II. A).

Applicant Name: Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City
Application ID#: 10SI115457

(+) Applicant has an internal evaluation team and also works with outside evaluation firms and academic researchers. (Organizational Capacity II. A).

(+) The applicant has identified a person to lead monitoring and evaluation. (Organizational Capacity II. A).

Significant Weaknesses

None identified.

Select a Rating for ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

Excellent Strong Satisfactory Weak/Non-responsive

COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (20%)

The Social Innovation Fund NOFA states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

A. BUDGET AND PROGRAM DESIGN

In evaluating the cost effectiveness and budget adequacy of your proposed program, the Corporation will consider:

- i. *Whether your program is cost-effective*
- ii. *Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.*

Provide a panel assessment of the application's COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY as follows:

- Write a brief Narrative Assessment;
- List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and
- Select a Rating for this section.

Panel Narrative Assessment

The applicant proposes to dedicate a significant share of resources to program design, TA, and evaluation. The MDRC would be the prime recipient of funds for evaluative purposes. In the budget contractual and consultant services represent about one third of the total budget, it is unclear how much of this expense is related to evaluation and how much is for program design, non-evaluation TA and implementation.

Significant Strengths

Applicant Name: Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City
Application ID#: 10SI115457

- (+) Budget includes funding for evaluation design, site visits, random assignment, TA, data collection, surveys, analysis and dissemination of the results (Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy, A)
(+) Prior experience between the applicant and MDRC suggests a realistic estimate of evaluation costs.

Significant Weaknesses

(-) Evaluation and Technical services are grouped together in the budget narrative, so it is difficult to determine the independent cost of evaluation alone. The total amount in this category represents over one-third of the total budget. (IIIA and budget narrative)

Select a Rating for COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

Excellent Strong Satisfactory Weak/Non-responsive

OVERALL APPRAISAL

I. Provide a 3 - 5 sentence Overall Appraisal Statement of the application taking into consideration:

The applicant proposes a tight integration between needs assessment, program activities and evaluation. The program design (45%) is based on prior evidence and the applicant's past experience with similar programs. The extensive and rigorous evaluation of the programs is a central element of the program design and would utilize RCTs conducted by the MDRC which has partnered with the applicant on past programs. The applicant also demonstrates the Organizational Capacity (35%), to replicate the programs across several locations. The established partnership with the MDRC brings both the evaluative capacity as the program-specific experience that would lead to a successful program. The budget (20%) should contain sufficient resources to undertake the evaluation, although the specific amount devoted to evaluation is unclear, making it difficult to sully evaluate the cost effectiveness of the evaluation component. However, given the prior relationship between the MDRC and the applicant, it is reasonable to expect a realistic assessment has been made.

II. Select one Band for this application (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked") Ensure that your selection is supported by your panel's Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, Ratings, and Overall Appraisal Statement. Take into consideration the weighting of each category.

- Band I (Excellent):** A comprehensive and thorough application of excellent merit with very significant strengths and no/minimal significant weaknesses.
- Band II (Strong):** An application that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support, where the value of the significant strengths outweigh the identified weaknesses.
- Band III (Satisfactory):** An application with potential, where strengths and weaknesses are approximately equal. However, some fundamental weaknesses have been identified.

Applicant Name: Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City
Application ID#: 10SI115457

- Band IV (Weak/Non-Responsive):** An application with very significant weaknesses and no/minimal significant strengths that have been identified. This option may also include an application that is non-responsive to the published criteria.

CONSENSUS RUBRIC

Please use this Consensus Rubric as guidance when selecting your Ratings or Bands.

BAND I (Excellent) — *A BAND I rating reflects that the application is compelling, consistently excellent in quality, and addresses all requirements; thereby showing the highest potential for success.*

The **Excellent** application consistently:

- ✓ Goes beyond what was requested, showing that the applicant has anticipated issues that may arise.
- ✓ Provides a thorough, detailed response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a clear and highly compelling description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Provides clear evidence to support all objectives of this section (no assumptions are made).
- ✓ Supports ideas and objectives with comprehensive plans explaining and connecting ideas to objectives.

BAND II (Strong) — *A BAND II rating reflects that the application is solid, good-quality, and has great potential for success.*

The **Strong** application:

- ✓ Provides a response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a realistic description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Explains most assumptions and reasons.
- ✓ Supports ideas with comprehensive plans, examples, or outlines.

BAND III (Satisfactory) — *A BAND III rating reflects that the application generally meets requirements for a reasonable chance of success, but is neither especially strong nor especially weak.*

The **Satisfactory** application:

- ✓ Covers most of the information requested, with a few exceptions.
- ✓ Is sometimes unclear how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Makes some assumptions and leaves some reasons unexplained.
- ✓ Supports individual ideas with plans, examples, or outline.

BAND IV (Weak/Non-responsive) — *A weak/non-responsive rating reflects that the application is below standard especially in ability, skill, or quality; indicating that this application will most likely not succeed as described or is not responsive to the application requirements.*

The **Weak/Non-responsive** application:

- ✓ Does not provide one or more key pieces of requested information.
- ✓ Gives an unclear description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Gives many unsupported assumptions and reasons with little or no connection to objectives.
- ✓ Tends to "parrot" back the question, rather than answer and explain it

Applicant Name: Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City
Application ID#: 10SI115457

- ✓ Makes many assumptions and many reasons are not defined.
- ✓ Did not connect the activities to the anticipated results.
- ✓ Does not address or respond to the requirements/conditions of the NOFA.
- ✓ Proposes activities that are not consistent with the NOFA and application instructions.