

# 2015 SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND

## *EXPERT REVIEW HANDBOOK*





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## Know Your Resources: the Reviewer Resource Webpage

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>

The Reviewer Resource Webpage is specifically intended to support the Corporation for National and Community Service's (CNCS) 2015 Social Innovation Fund Grant Application Review Process (GARP). The webpage provides Review Participants with a central location to access the comprehensive information and tools needed to participate in this review; it does not provide information that is particular to each panel.

**Please be sure to review, initial, sign, and submit the Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Form and the appropriate Participation Agreement before getting started.**

CNCS has developed Orientation Sessions that complement this Handbook to ensure that Review Participants are fully prepared for the review process. Reviewers should read the Handbook first, followed by the Review (Scoring) Rubric and Criterion Descriptions. These materials will be referenced during the Orientation Sessions and should be reviewed before taking the trainings.

The majority of the Orientation Sessions are self-paced (pre-recorded) for your convenience. In addition to the pre-recorded sessions, there are two live trainings: one for Panel Coordinators only and the other for all Review Participants. **All orientations must be completed in the order provided before the start of the review on Thursday, April 2, 2015.** Please see the Reviewer Resource Webpage for a complete list of sessions and their scheduled times, as appropriate.

**The following list shows the resources available on the Reviewer Resource Webpage.**

### Application Resources

- ◆ Notice of Federal Funding Availability (*Notice*)
- ◆ Frequently Asked Questions

### Administrative Forms

- ◆ Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Form
- ◆ Participant Agreement for Reviewers
- ◆ Participant Agreement for Panel Coordinators

***For any questions or suggestions about this Handbook or any of the training materials, please contact [PeerReviewers@cns.gov](mailto:PeerReviewers@cns.gov)***

### Review Forms

- ◆ Individual Review Worksheet (IRW)
- ◆ Reviewer (Scoring) Rubric
- ◆ Panel Discussion Report – for Panel Coordinator's only

### Review Resources

- ◆ Timeline & Milestones for the Review
- ◆ eGrants Instructions for Downloading Applications
- ◆ Reviewer Tips: Writing Meaningful Comments & Sentence Starters
- ◆ Sample Program Individual Review Form
- ◆ Sample Evaluation Individual Review Form



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### Welcome to the 2015 Social Innovation Fund External Review Handbook

The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) has developed this Handbook and other training materials to prepare you for your role as a Review Participant in the 2015 Social Innovation Fund (SIF) Grant Application Review Process (GARP). As part of your training curriculum, this Handbook serves as your central reference for preparing for your expert review activities.

CNCS has developed online Orientation Sessions that complement particular sections in this Handbook to ensure that you are fully prepared for your expert review experience. It is recommended that you first read through the sections of the Handbook, and then access the corresponding Orientations Sessions when indicated in the text. These Sessions include:

- ◆ Understanding the Social Innovation Fund Grant Application Review
- ◆ Reviewing the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Applications
- ◆ Applying the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Selection Criteria.

**NOTE:** All Review Participants (new and experienced) are expected to familiarize themselves with all review material and participate in the orientation sessions.

The final Orientation Session will be conducted live (*Understanding the Social Innovation Fund Selection Criteria*) to provide an opportunity for questions. There will be a separate live orientation session for each of the review types: Program and Evaluation. All Orientation Sessions are required; therefore a recording of each session is available to Review Participants to ensure access and full orientation.

All training and reference materials will be available on the **CNCS Reviewer Resource webpage** (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>) where Review Participants will access key forms in the appropriate electronic format (Word or PDF). There are different forms and resources for your attention: including Administrative Forms, Review Forms, and Review Resources.

**Administrative Forms** include the Conflict of Interest (COI) and Participation Agreements. These forms are available in PDF format. Review Participants will need to download, complete (sign), and submit via fax or email.

**Review Forms** include the Individual Reviewer Worksheet (IRW) and Panel Discussion Report (PDR). These forms are provided in a *Word* format and are available as *Word* documents to enable Review Participants to download and use the forms to prepare their draft. Reviewers conclude the review by recording their final review results in their IRWs and after approval, submitting the final IRW to their Panel Coordinator for both Program Reviewers and Evaluations Reviewers.

**Review Resources** include materials that provide helpful tips to strengthen your understanding of the criteria and writing expectations. These resources include tips for Writing Meaningful Comments (Sentence Starters), and instructions for accessing applications through eGrants.

After reading this Handbook and reviewing the required orientation sessions, you will understand:

- The steps of the External Review process for the 2015 Social Innovation Fund competition
- The expectations for your role and other Review Participants in the expert review process
- The schedule and requirements for participation in the External Review process
- The SIF Selection Criteria that are considered in the expert review
- How to evaluate applications according to the SIF Selection Criteria
- How to write meaningful, evaluative comments for applications
- The importance of fairness and equity in the Review, and how you fit into that responsibility
- How to serve as a productive member in your review panel
- How to participate effectively in panel discussions



**This Handbook is structured as follows:**

**CNCS Grant Application Review Process**

- The Life Cycle of Competitive Grants: overview of CNCS' competitive grant life cycle and the context for the expert review of applications
- The Grant Application Review Process: description of CNCS' application review process and expectations of Review Participants
  - The External Review Process
  - Roles and Responsibilities in External Review

**Preparing for the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Grant Application Review**

Overall guidance regarding initial steps and basic planning information

- Reviewer Timeline and Milestones
- Key Review Forms
- Conflict of Interest, Bias, and Confidentiality

**Reviewing the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Applications**

Comprehensive guidance on participating in the review process as a Reviewer

- Conducting the Individual Reviews
  - The SIF Selection Criteria
- Participating in the panel discussions
- Finalizing the Individual Reviewer Worksheets
- Completing the Close Out Process

Links to essential reference tools, and other specific SIF materials and resources can be found on the CNCS Reviewer Resource Website. <http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>

**NOTE:** If you have any questions or suggestions about this Handbook or any of the training materials, please email [PeerReviewers@cns.gov](mailto:PeerReviewers@cns.gov). Emails to this address are received by GARP support staff and every effort is made to respond within one business day.



## 2.0 CNCS GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

CNCS is a federal agency created to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering; it has become the nation’s largest grant-making agency supporting national and community service programs and volunteerism. CNCS engages more than five million Americans who volunteer to meet local needs and improve communities through a wide array of service opportunities. Additional information on CNCS and its programs is available online at [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov).

### 2.1 THE CNCS GRANT MAKING PROCESS

CNCS has established a multi-step grant-making process from the appropriation of funds and awarding grants, through monitoring activities, to close out. A summary of this process is presented in Figure 1, *The Life Cycle of Competitive Grants*.

Figure 1: The Life Cycle of Competitive Grants



For the Social Innovation Fund competitions: CNCS utilizes a multi-stage review process to assess applications, which includes the involvement of External Reviewers (Reviewers) and CNCS (Internal) Staff. An External Review, consisting of individual reviews and panel discussions, is conducted for each eligible application. Based on the results from the External Review, an Internal Staff Review is conducted for applications that meet the criteria to advance in the review process and is further detailed in subsequent sections of this Handbook and the corresponding orientation sessions. The **Assess Applications** step is where you, as a Reviewer, are contributing to CNCS grant process.

**Required Training:**  
 "Orientation I  
 Welcome to CNCS"



## 2.2 THE GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

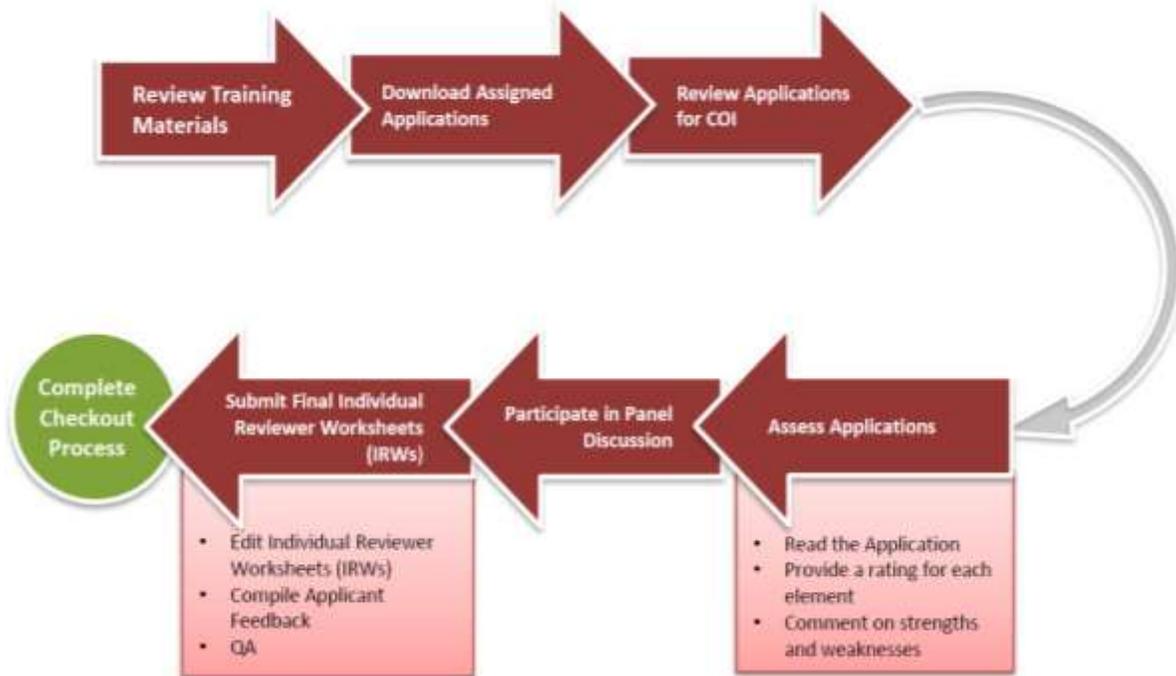
### 2.2.1 The External Review Process

The use of Reviewers in evaluating grant applications submitted to CNCS for funding is established in CNCS’ statute and regulations. This is achieved through the External Review process. The purpose of this review process is to identify the highest-quality applications based on the Selection Criteria published in the Notice of Federal Funding Availability (*Notice*) that are established in CNCS regulations and applicable statutes. CNCS carefully chooses Review Participants for their expertise and ability to objectively assess the quality of proposed projects. Review Participants are not making judgments or determinations on whether applications should be funded, but are providing an assessment of the quality of particular aspects of the applications for CNCS. CNCS Staff will make all funding decisions and utilize expert review results as input to help inform those decisions.

**NOTE:** Review Participants are **NOT** making judgments or determinations on whether applications should be *funded* but are providing an **assessment of the quality** of particular aspects of the applications for CNCS.

CNCS has developed a process for conducting the External Review of grant applications, which is depicted in Figure 2, *The External Review Process*. Each step is briefly described below. An in-depth discussion of these steps and your activities in the expert review process is provided in subsequent sections of this Handbook.

**Figure 2: The External Review Process**





- ◆ **Review Participant Training and Orientation Materials:** All Review Participants are required to review the training materials including this Handbook and a series of Orientation Sessions. This ensures that Review Participants are fully prepared for their role, in order to provide a meaningful review and standardized assessment of the applications.
- ◆ **Download Assigned Applications:** A set of applications is assigned to each panel and made available to Program and Evaluation Reviewers by download through eGrants, the Web-based system used by CNCS to support grant management and competitions. Each panel only has access to its assigned applications.
- ◆ **Review Applications for Conflicts of Interest (COI):** The first step in beginning your review of an application is to determine if there are any potential conflicts of interest. This must take place within the first day of receiving panel assignments, prior to delving into the technical content of the application in case recusals or reassignments are necessary.
- ◆ **Assess Applications:** Each Reviewer conducts a detailed individual review of each assigned application according to the Selection Criteria specified by CNCS. The individual review includes reading the application, providing a rating for each element, and commenting on strengths and weaknesses. Each Reviewer prepares a draft Individual Reviewer Worksheet (IRW) documenting his/her assessment of each application and submits the IRW to the Panel Coordinator, Program Officer Liaison and Editor for review and feedback. Reviewers consider the feedback and make necessary modifications to revise the draft IRW in preparation for the panel discussions. After the panel discussions, Reviewers may return to their IRWs to amend their comments and ratings to ensure that they reflect their conclusive assessment (*See Edit IRWs*).
- ◆ **Participate in Panel Discussion:** Reviewers participate in a discussion with their panel for each assigned application to share thoughts and discuss their assessments. Each panel has an assigned Panel Coordinator who will help prepare the Reviewers for the discussions, facilitate the discussions, and take relevant notes of the discussion (including agreement and disagreement), to prepare a Panel Discussion Report (PDR) for each application. While consensus is not a requirement of the panel discussion, Reviewers are asked to listen and consider the assessments and findings of fellow panel members. The Panel Coordinator will guide the panel to discuss only the relevant aspects of the application in their assessment, consider the areas of agreement and disagreement, and ensure that each Reviewer is addressing only relevant aspects of the application in his/her assessment.
- ◆ **Edit IRWs:** After the Panel Discussion, Reviewers have the opportunity to return to their IRWs to amend their comments and ratings to ensure that they reflect their conclusive assessment.
- ◆ **Compile Applicant Feedback Summary:** Each Reviewer will complete the Applicant Feedback Summary section and provide factual and constructive summary comments on his/her assessment of the applications.
  - Applicant Feedback Summary should not contain any direct suggestions or recommendations for improvement, and should only address the quality of the information that was in the application (as required by the Selection Criteria).
  - Additionally, the summary comments for applicant feedback should come solely from a sampling of the comments in previous sections of the IRW—the feedback must focus on the most relevant comments from the IRW—the Strengths and Weaknesses that had the greatest impact on the selected Rating. It should not be new information or comments that did not respond to the Selection Criteria.

**High Quality IRWs SHOULD:**

- Only include comments that address SIF Selection Criteria
- Reflect writing that is clear and concise
- Ensure comments do not contradict each other
- Ensure comments are aligned with and support the rating selection for each section.
- Be free of spelling and grammar errors
- Contain no inflammatory language
- Include relevant Applicant Feedback Summary comments



- ◆ **Finalize and Submit IRWs:** Reviewers will re-examine their IRWs and proofread for grammar and other elements, before submitting the IRW; both Program and Evaluation Reviewers will submit their IRWs to their Panel Coordinators,
- ◆ **Complete Close Out Process:** Each Review Participant will complete a close out process including: providing feedback in the Review Process Evaluation, proper disposal of confidential review materials, and ensuring that you have satisfied all of the review requirements to receive your honorarium payment. CNCS will provide an email at the end of the review with clear information on what is required for the Close Out process.

## 2.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities

There are several important roles in the review process, and the general responsibilities, along with expectations and interactions are listed below. Please note that this Handbook provides detailed guidance on only the Reviewer role; a separate Panel Coordinator supplement is provided for Panel Coordinators.

### *Reviewer*

Reviewers evaluate applications according to the published Selection Criteria. Primary responsibilities include: completing high-quality IRWs, participating in panel discussions, and finalizing the assessment of an application on the IRWs after the panel discussion. There will be up to five Reviewers assigned to each panel.

Reviewers interact primarily with Panel Coordinators and are expected to be consistently responsive to their requests.

In addition to reviewing training and background materials, reporting any actual or potential conflict of interest, and complying with confidentiality expectations, Reviewers are held to a standard of producing **high quality IRWs**.

### *Panel Coordinator (PC)*

Each panel will have a Panel Coordinator whose primary responsibilities are to guide, support and monitor the work of the Reviewers assigned to his/her panel; manage panel logistics; provide feedback to Reviewers on their IRWs; and facilitate the panel discussions. The Panel Coordinator works in several capacities to ensure that Reviewers complete a thorough, non-biased review that aligns with the Selection Criteria. For each application, the Panel Coordinator should complete a Panel Discussion Report (PDR), and submit it [to](#) the GARP Liaison after each discussion.

As Review Participants, Panel Coordinators are expected to: review training and background materials, report any actual or potential conflicts of interest and comply with confidentiality expectations.

They also serve as the first point of contact by both their Reviewers and CNCS Staff regarding any concerns, or information for the panel—essentially serving as the primary liaison or link between CNCS Staff and the panel. Panel Coordinators interact with Reviewers and help resolve any conflicts among the panel members. If any panel anomalies arise, the Panel Coordinator should immediately notify the GARP Liaison who will determine next steps.

### *Grant Application Review Process (GARP) Liaison*

Each panel will be assigned a GARP Liaison who will answer all process-related questions and provide all administrative and logistic support to the panel. The GARP Liaison can provide assistance with obtaining applications and administrative forms (electronic versions), access to review resources, reminders throughout the process, and assistance with navigating in eGrants screens. The GARP Liaison is the point of contact (after the Panel Coordinator) for any immediate needs with review materials or any roadblocks encountered in participating in the review and completing the review process.



### *Program Officer Liaison (POL)*

Each panel will be assigned a Program Officer Liaison from CNCS whose main responsibility is to serve as a resource to the panel on programmatic elements. Interactions with the POL are primarily done through the Panel Coordinator. The POL can provide clarification or guidance on an aspect of the Selection Criteria that panel members may not understand, and can be consulted to clarify aspects of the SIF Selection Criteria.

The POL will follow up (as needed) with Panel Coordinators on areas that the panel may need to revisit, in panel discussions or assessments. All correspondence with POLs should be sent through Panel Coordinators and sent to [SIFApplication@cns.gov](mailto:SIFApplication@cns.gov) – **include your Panel # in the Subject Line of each email.**

### *Editor*

An Editor will be an external position to review and ensure the Individual Reviewer Worksheets (IRW) produced are solidly written documents. The Editor will review all of the IRWs assigned to their panels and will provide feedback to the Reviewers on how they could produce stronger or more easily understood documents. Each Reviewer will submit their IRW to the Panel Coordinator (PC), who in turn submits the IRW to the Editor for feedback. The PC will then work with Reviewer to address any feedback suggestions.

All correspondence with Editors should be sent through Panel Coordinator and sent to [PeerReviewers@cns.gov](mailto:PeerReviewers@cns.gov) – include your Panel # in the Subject Line of each email.

*Additional expectations for POL interactions will be provided to Panel Coordinators during the Panel Coordinator Check-In calls.*



### **3.0 PREPARING FOR THE 2015 SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW**

Prior to commencing the grant application review process, you must complete the training requirements and become familiar with key background material. The Notice of Federal Funding Availability (*Notice*) for the Social Innovation Fund governs the 2015 Social Innovation Fund grant competition (see Appendix B, *Links to Additional Reference Materials*). This document details the requirements and Selection Criteria that applicants use to write their applications, and that you will use to evaluate the applications. Your comprehensive understanding of these requirements and criteria documents is critical to a fair, successful and objective review.

In addition to reviewing training resources and background material, Review Participants must address Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality considerations. These topics are discussed in this section, as well as the key review forms and the Reviewer timeline.

#### **3.1 REVIEWER TIMELINE AND MILESTONES**

The Expert Review process (excluding training sessions and other preliminary steps) spans 15 calendar days. Reviewers should utilize the *Timeline and Milestones* document to develop their own planning timeline for completing all of the Reviewer responsibilities. This document can be found on the CNCS Reviewer Resource Website and specifies the dates and tasks of the Expert Review and the key milestones specific to the Reviewer role. Your Panel Coordinator will also establish specific dates and details of importance for your panel.

CNCS Reviewer Resource Website: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>

#### **3.2 KEY REVIEW FORMS**

Review Participants will be involved in the development of three documents that will document review results. A copy of each form is available on CNCS Reviewer Resource Web page.

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>

- The Individual Reviewer Worksheet, first completed in a Word document by Reviewers and sent to the Panel Coordinator, Program Officer Liaison, and Editor for feedback; final version is sent to the PC by Program and Evaluation Reviewers.
- The Panel Discussion Report, completed by the Panel Coordinator during the panel discussions; sent to GARP Liaison after the discussion.
- The Applicant Feedback Summary Report, generated by CNCS after the review ends, based on summary comments captured from the Reviewers' IRWs.

**Table 1: Synopsis of Review Forms**

	<b>Individual Reviewer Worksheet</b>	<b>Panel Discussion Report</b>	<b>Applicant Feedback Report</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To document a Reviewer's individual assessment of one application</li> <li>▪ To provide useful feedback to CNCS on the application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To document the panel's discussion of one application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To provide feedback to the applicant regarding salient aspects of their application</li> </ul>
<b>Audience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Panel Coordinator</li> <li>▪ Corporation staff</li> <li>▪ Public (potentially subject to FOIA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corporation staff, primarily the GARP Liaison</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Applicants</li> <li>▪ Public (forms for all selected applications will be posted online)</li> </ul>



	Individual Reviewer Worksheet	Panel Discussion Report	Applicant Feedback Report
<b>Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies strengths and weaknesses in an application</li> <li>Used by CNCS to assist in decision-making process</li> <li>Used by CNCS to develop the Applicant Feedback Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summarizes the areas of agreement and disagreement</li> <li>Describes any Panel Coordinator observations</li> <li>Used by CNCS to assist in decision-making process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used by applicants for insight on their proposal to assist in development of future applications</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments and Ratings on each element</li> <li>Selected comments for Applicant Feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Narrative comments on discussion points</li> <li>Panel Coordinator notes and observations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compiled comments from the Applicant Feedback section of each Reviewer's IRW</li> </ul>

### 3.3 ENSURING EQUITABLE REVIEWS

An essential goal of the CNCS review process is ensuring that each application submitted for funding consideration is considered and evaluated based on a fair and equitable process in the interest of transparency and integrity of the full grant process.

As you review the applications, you may notice a high level of diversity among SIF proposals. This is common and is encouraged and embraced in the SIF program, as SIF programs are not seen as standard, or cookie-cutter proposals. While a large number of applications may concentrate on one of the three CNCS Issue Areas: Youth Development, Economic Opportunity, and Healthy Futures, you may also notice that there is diversity in program models and designs, location, size, scope, organization type, and target populations. Understanding and expecting these differences will help you evaluate an applicant's proposed project in a fair and objective manner.

*This section corresponds with the last part of Orientation III or IV: Ensuring an Equitable Review*

#### Page limits for application narratives

Applications are limited to 45 double-spaced pages in the Narratives, including the Executive Summary and Cover Page, as the pages print out from eGrants. Reviewers will not consider material submitted over the page limit. This limit does not include the Budget Narrative and Performance Measures. Note that the Performance Measures are printed at the *end* of the application narrative—if your panel has an application that exceeds the 45 page limit, the Panel Coordinator should contact your GARP Liaison for a final determination and guidance. Review Participants must follow CNCS guidance as this is a matter of equity to all applicants.

#### 3.3.1 Conflict of Interest

For purposes of this review, a conflict of interest is any private interest, affiliation, or relationship which could potentially compromise a Review Participant's ability to impartially carry out official responsibilities. A conflict of interest can exist even if no unethical or improper act results from it.

Each Review Participant must review, sign, and submit a **Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Form** prior to the application review (available via the Reviewer Resource Webpage). Because of the unique nature of the review process and the sensitivity of the information being reviewed, **CNCS determines the potential for both direct (actual) and indirect (perceived) conflicts of interest as defined below.**



- ◆ A direct conflict of interest – often through personal involvement, connection to, or benefit from an application submitted to CNCS
- ◆ An indirect conflict of interest – through various forms of affiliation, personally or professionally, with an applicant institution

Prior to reviewing any applications, Reviewers must inform CNCS of any potential conflicts of interest. If a Reviewer becomes aware of a potential conflict once the Review Process has begun, they are required to alert CNCS staff immediately and provide relevant information to assist in the determination. CNCS staff will review the information, make a determination as to whether there is a conflict, and notify the individual of what steps, if any, need to be taken. It is possible, depending on the circumstances, that an individual will not be able to serve as a Reviewer or Panel Coordinator for this competition if a conflict of interest exists.

When examining conflicts of interest, a Reviewer should also consider the following people's interests as their own: a spouse, domestic partner, or civil union partner; a minor child or dependent; and a relative living in your immediate household. Examples of potential conflicting affiliations or relationships are listed below, as well as in the **Confidentiality & Conflict of Interest Form**.

- ◆ A reviewer's personal submission of an application to CNCS
- ◆ An affiliation with an applicant institution
- ◆ A relationship with someone who has personal interest in the proposal or other application

Each Review Participant must complete a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statement (COI Form) for the applications they are assigned to review. This is found on the Reviewer Resource webpage. (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>). Because of the unique nature of the review process and the sensitivity of the information through the review, **CNCS determines the potential for both Direct (actual) and Indirect (perceived) conflicts of interest as defined below.**

### 3.3.2 Bias

Bias is a preference or inclination that may inhibit impartial judgment or objectivity. One's bias is not limited to a negative judgment, or dislike of an application; it is more often found in favor, or an unfounded positive preference of an applicant or an aspect of an application.

Often, individuals are unaware of having a bias, and it may be flagged by another Review Participant, based on a comment made during discussion, or a consistent inflation or deflation of an assessment. Biases are often rooted in opinions and past experiences, something that Reviewers may need to balance when considering the information provided in the application. Utilizing one's opinion in some ways, but not in others can be difficult to separate especially as it is likely that a positive inclination or preference may be founded in a passion and excitement about a program. It is important that Reviewers are open to reconsideration should the issue of potential bias come to light. Panel Coordinators must also be objective, and may address a concern of bias with panel members if something were to arise.

To avoid the insertion of bias, all Reviewers are asked to base their assessments solely on the facts and assertions contained in the application; return to re-assess an application, if needed; eliminate

#### Addressing Conflicts of Interest:

- ◆ Before you review any grant applications, you must tell CNCS about any possible Conflicts of Interest or even the appearance of a Conflict of Interest.
- ◆ The duty to disclose potential Conflicts of Interest is an ongoing duty. If a Conflict of Interest or the appearance of a Conflict of Interest arises during the course of your participation, you must tell CNCS.
- ◆ If you have any questions or think a conflict may exist, immediately contact your Panel Coordinator and GARP Liaison.
- ◆ CNCS staff will review the information, make a determination as to whether there is a conflict, and notify you of what steps, if any, need to be taken.



consideration of outside sources or information; and exercise consideration and respect throughout the review.

### 3.3.3 Confidentiality

During the External Review process, Review Participants have access to information that is not available to the public. This establishes special professional and ethical responsibilities to maintain the confidentiality of that information. Review Participants may use the information provided about applicants only during the review process and in discussions with fellow review participants and CNCS staff. Review Participants may not use information provided during this review for personal benefit or to make it available for the benefit of any other individual or organization.

Review Participants may maintain archival hardcopy or electronic copies after the completion of the review. If archival copies are kept, they must be maintained in a manner consistent with the confidentiality obligations. Otherwise, the information must be disposed of in a manner consistent with the confidentiality obligations.

The names of other Review Participants must not be disclosed to applicants or anyone else. However, consistent with agency policy, CNCS reserves the right to publish the names of External Reviewers who completed the review process. Additionally, to the extent allowed by law, CNCS will not disclose Review Participant's association with any specific applications or review forms.

Details regarding confidentiality obligations are provided and discussed in the *Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Statement for Review Participants* (on the Reviewer Resource Website <http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>).



## **4.0 REVIEWING THE 2015 SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND APPLICATIONS**

The 2015 Social Innovation Fund Grant Application Review Process (GARP) is based on a non-consensus model – meaning you do not need to reach consensus regarding the assessment of an application. Different perspectives and opinions are acceptable and welcomed.

Two types of expert review will take place simultaneously: a Program Review and an Evaluation Review. Reviewers have been assigned to one type or another based on their expertise. If you are unsure which review you are participating in, please contact your Panel Coordinator or GARP Liaison. Below you will find the description of the Program and Evaluation Reviews. Please only focus on the one for which you are participating in.

Each Program Reviewer is assigned to a panel consisting of up to three Reviewers and a Panel Coordinator. Each Evaluation Reviewer is assigned to a panel consisting of up to three Reviewers and a Panel Coordinator. Both types of review panels will be assigned between four and six applications, which are reviewed individually by each Reviewer and then discussed collectively by the entire panel. Generally, the applications are reviewed and discussed in two sets.

### **PROGRAM REVIEW**

Reviewers will read each application, focusing on the quality of the applicant’s response in most of the Program Design section and all of the Organizational Capability and Cost Effectiveness/Budget Adequacy sections.

### **EVALUATION REVIEW**

Reviewers will read each application, focusing on the quality of the applicant’s response in the Proposal for Evaluation in the Program Design category. Make note that you will need to read the whole application, since applicants may have addressed the Selection Criteria in another section of the application as well.

## **4.1 THE 2015 SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **PROGRAM REVIEW**

You will be evaluating each application based on the elements for each category and subcategory of Selection Criteria (see the Resource Reviewer Website):

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>

#### **Required Online Training:**



**Orientation 3 “Understanding the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Program Review Selection Criteria”**

### **PROGRAM DESIGN: *Rationale and Approach (10%)***

- ◆ In determining the quality of an application, please assess the following criteria:
- ◆ The applicant’s approach as either a geographically- or issue-based Social Innovation Fund (as described in Section A.1: Purpose of Social Innovation Fund Funding), including the target community or geographies that they will serve and the Social Innovation Fund issue area(s) on which your programming will focus.
- ◆ Whether the applicant has made a persuasive case, using statistical information, that has identified a critical social problem in the target geographical area(s).
- ◆ Whether the applicant demonstrates that solutions currently being implemented to address the selected social problem in the target geographical area(s) have not been proven to be effective, are not achieving outcomes at scale, or are too slow to respond.
- ◆ Whether the applicant presents a clear, logical theory of change that outlines their investment approach and the specific measurable outcomes that will be achieved through their proposed



program. The applicant should convey an intentional approach to solving community problems through their subrecipient investments and clearly explain:

1. the types of organizations they will invest in and why; and
  2. the value-added activities, including technical assistance or other services, they will provide to their subrecipients in order to align them with the theory of change and achieve the desired outcomes.
- ◆ The applicant's description of the programming strategy (A or B above) they plan to utilize and why it's the most appropriate for them to achieve their goals
    - **Strategy A:** The case the applicant made that appropriate, evidence-based solutions exist to address the identified social problem in the target geography (ies).
    - **Strategy B:** The case the applicant made that the solution(s) they propose to implement is: innovative (as defined in Section A.1: Purpose of Social Innovation Fund Funding), appropriate for the social problem identified, aligned with their theory of change, and is likely to produce the desired outcomes.
  - ◆ If the applicant is applying for renewed funding of a currently funded SIF project: whether the proposed activities will further increase knowledge about intervention.
  - ◆ If the applicant is a current recipient of, or are under consideration for, other federal funding: how the proposed SIF project is distinct from, or will supplement rather than duplicate, other federally funded projects. They should specify the other federal funding sources.

### ***Proposal for Subrecipient Selection (15%)***

In determining the quality of an application, please assess the following criteria:

- ◆ The applicant's profile of the type of subrecipient organization they hope to fund and how it aligns with the rationale and approach described above.
- ◆ Whether the applicant provides a clear and comprehensive plan for carrying out a competitive subrecipient selection process, that includes:
  - the estimated number of subawards that will be made;
  - the estimated range of subaward amounts;
  - the criteria that will be used to determine prospective subrecipients' fit with their theory of change or successfully contribute to its outcome measures;
  - a general timeline or timeframe outlining when stages of the selection process would be completed. Note: Depending on the strategy being utilized, the subrecipient selection and award process must be completed within **six to eight** months of the award.
- ◆ Whether the applicant presents a selection process that has a high likelihood of identifying high-performing subrecipients (as defined in Section A.1: Purpose of Social Innovation Fund Funding), with the capacity and ability to implement all aspects of a Social Innovation Fund grant.
- ◆ The applicant's capacity to successfully implement their proposed subaward selection process, including demonstrated experience selecting and awarding competitive grants to nonprofits.
  - Strategy A:** How they will attract and select solutions that are innovative as defined in (as defined in Section A.1: Purpose of Social Innovation Fund Funding).
  - Strategy B:** How they will select subrecipients who are well-suited to implement the pre-defined intervention.
- ◆ How the applicant will assess subrecipient applicants for readiness and capacity to implement program growth as a part of their participation in the Social Innovation Fund.



- ◆ How the applicant will allocate awards so that larger sums are given to those subrecipients with higher levels of evidence to support the growth of their program impact.

### *Proposal for Growing Subrecipient Impact (15%)*

In determining the quality of the application, please assess the following criteria:

- ◆ The applicant capacity to support subrecipient growth including relevant examples of successful past efforts to support growth through replication or expansion and a description of adequate resources to support successful subrecipient growth as proposed.
- ◆ The applicant theory or approach to growing effective subrecipient program models in alignment with their overall theory of change.
- ◆ The characteristics the applicant will use to assess subrecipient capacity for growth and their description of how evidence of effectiveness will be used to determine when or how a program is well-situated for growth.
- ◆ How the applicant will support subrecipient growth through technical assistance, data systems or other resources and help subrecipients plan for strategic and effective growth that results in long-term sustainability for the expanded program beyond the three to five year SIF grant period.

### **ORGANIZATIONAL CAPABILITY: *Organizational Background and Staff Capacity (5%)***

In determining the quality of an application, please assess the following criteria:

- ◆ Whether the applicant makes a compelling case for your ability to successfully support the approach and outcomes that you propose, including a description of your track record and resources.
- ◆ The applicant's experience, accomplishments and outcomes operating and overseeing programs in the selected issue area(s) of activity.
- ◆ The applicant's experience and capacity to collect and analyze data required for evaluation, continuous improvement, compliance and other purposes.
- ◆ The applicant's current organizational budget, the percentage of the budget this award would represent, and the implications for their organization.
- ◆ The experience, qualifications and capacity of staff and contractors to effectively implement the proposed program. Discuss the involvement of management, board members, etc.
- ◆ The applicant's ability to develop the necessary systems to maintain a grant program compliant with federal grant requirements, including a description of how they will ensure compliance with CNCS National Service Criminal History Check requirements. For reference, please see Section F.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.
- ◆ The applicant's commitment to long-term relationships with subrecipients, including how short- and long-term goals will be established.

### ***Subrecipient Support, Monitoring and Oversight (10%)***

In determining the quality of an application, please assess the following criteria:

- ◆ The applicant's prior experience setting and implementing goals with recipients.
- ◆ The applicant's experience evaluating the performance of grant recipients for outcome-focused initiatives.
- ◆ The technical assistance and other services that the applicant will provide to subrecipients to support their success in achieving the applicant's proposed outcomes.
- ◆ The applicant's plan for building subrecipient capacity to develop compliant federal grants management systems.
- ◆ The applicant's plan for building subrecipient capacity to achieve scaling, evaluation and other key program goals.
- ◆ The applicant's plan for developing subrecipient performance measurement systems and your description of how they will use these to monitor and improve subrecipient performance.



- ◆ How the applicant will monitor subrecipients for compliance and for progress towards goals.

### ***Strategy for Sustainability (5%)***

In determining the quality of an application, please assess the following criteria:

- ◆ Has the applicant demonstrated commitment to continue the investment priorities articulated in this application beyond the life of the award?
- ◆ Does the applicant have a strategy for ensuring that subrecipients are positioned to continue evaluation and sustain program growth beyond the award lifecycle?

### ***COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (15%)***

In determining the quality of an application, please assess the following criteria:

#### ***Budget Justification***

- ◆ Whether the budget the applicant proposes is reasonable and sufficient to successfully support program activities, including subrecipient selection, evaluation, program growth, and subrecipient support and oversight.
- ◆ Whether the budget is aligned with the application narrative and provides an adequate explanation for expenses.
- ◆ (If applicable) Whether the applicant makes a compelling case for higher program costs due to an intention to make subawards in areas that are significantly philanthropically underserved.

#### ***Capacity to Raise Match***

- ◆ The applicant's prior experience achieving significant non-federal fundraising goals.
- ◆ The applicant's description of match already raised or committed.
- ◆ The applicant's plan for securing the total one-to-one non-federal cash match requirement.
- ◆ The applicant's capacity and plan for assisting subrecipients to secure their required match.

## **EVALUATION REVIEW**

You will be evaluating each application based on the elements for the Use of Evidence category and Selection Criteria (see the Evaluation Review *Individual Reviewer Worksheet* on the Reviewer Resource Website):

### **PROGRAM DESIGN**

#### ***Proposal for Evaluation (30%)***

In determining the quality please assess the following criteria:

#### **Required Online Training:**



**Orientation 4 "Understanding the 2015 Social Innovation Fund Evaluation Review Selection Criteria"**

- ◆ Applicant's capacity to ensure successful evaluation(s) of their portfolio as demonstrated by:
  - Experience in managing and supporting evaluations of past funded program models;
  - Experience influencing and supporting recipients to use evidence to improve program performance;
  - Demonstrated ability to apply evidence/evaluation results to decision-making and investment strategies;
  - Staff or contractor ability to ensure successful evaluation of their subrecipients' program models.
- ◆ The quality of the applicant's plan to assess subrecipient applicants for readiness and capacity to implement a rigorous evaluation plan that would achieve moderate or strong levels of evidence over a three to five year period.



- ◆ The adequacy of the applicant’s plan to assess needs for and provide technical assistance to subrecipients as they design, implement, and monitor evaluations of their program models, including a description of the role of staff and contractors.
  - Strategy A:** Whether the applicant presented a reasonable plan for assessing the evidence level of the solutions being proposed by prospective subrecipients. or
  - Strategy B:** Whether the applicant’s evaluation strategy is likely to result in funded program models achieving at least moderate levels of evidence over a three to five year grant period.
- ◆ The applicant’s description of how their budget will support the cost of reasonable evaluation activities that will meet the Social Innovation Fund evaluation requirements.
  - Strategy A:** Whether the applicant made the case that there are existing program models that align with their rationale and approach with at least preliminary levels of effectiveness and the potential to achieve at least moderate levels of evidence of effectiveness during their Social Innovation Fund grant period of three to five years.
  - Strategy B:** Whether the applicant proposed solution(s) has at least a preliminary level of evidence and has the potential to increase its level of evidence under the Social Innovation Fund, and achieve at least a moderate level of evidence of effectiveness. (See definitions in Section A.4.d). Have they cited the research that supports their assessment?

If the applicant is applying to more rigorously evaluate a previously funded Social Innovation Fund project: whether the evaluation strategy is likely to result in an increased level of evidence.

#### 4.1.1 Consideration of the Performance Measures during Expert Review

Each applicant’s Performance Measures are included at the end of their 424 Narrative. The content from the Performance Measures should not be considered in making assessments of the application.

Reviewers should **not** consider, assess, or comment on the structure of the Performance Measures, or the quality of the measures themselves. Performance Measures were not required for this competition.

### 4.2 CONDUCTING THE INDIVIDUAL REVIEW

Reviewers will read each application, focusing on the quality of the applicant’s response in the Selection Criteria.

Reviewers will then assess the application, highlighting the application’s significant strengths and weaknesses relative to the Selection Criteria for each section, and assign a rating to each section.



Significant Strengths	Significant Weaknesses
Shows that the applicant has clearly demonstrated both an understanding of, and the ability to address, a key issue in program implementation or management	Criteria is either unaddressed or addressed so poorly that it causes concern about the applicant’s ability to successfully implement the proposed project

#### 4.2.1 Reading the Applications

The applications that you will be evaluating are generally reviewed in two groups and it is important to read the applications in the order that your panel will discuss them. Your goal is to focus on assessing how well the applicant has addressed the established Selection Criteria described in the *Notice*. Your assigned applications will be made available in eGrants for Program and Evaluation Reviewers: April 2, 2015

Do not feel as if you have to produce one or more “highly-rated” applications. Although applicants are competing against each other, **Reviewers should consider the application’s significant strengths and weaknesses when measured against the Selection Criteria, NOT measured against other**



**applications.** The goal for Reviewers when reading an application is to seek out information in the application that enables you to answer the following questions:

- ◆ Does the application address the Selection Criteria?
  - If yes, to what degree and what is the quality/feasibility of what is proposed?
  - If not, what is lacking or unclear?

#### 4.2.2 Completing the Individual Reviewer Worksheet (IRW)

All Reviewers must complete an IRW for each application assigned to their panel. There are four components to the IRW:

1. **Rating** the application based on each specific element,
2. Providing **comments** on strengths and weaknesses for each element
3. Adding the **Total Score**
4. (at the conclusion) Selecting comments to be included in the **Applicant Feedback Summary**.

How to complete the Individual Review Worksheet:

1. Complete draft IRW
2. Submit to Panel Coordinator (PC) for review
3. Receive feedback from PC and address/incorporate prior to Panel Discussion
4. Revise the IRW based on any clarifications or changes from the Panel Discussion
5. Submit the IRW to the PC, who sends it to the Program Officer Liaison (POL) and the Editor
6. Receive feedback from the POL and Editor through your PC and address/incorporate prior to sending to your PC for approval.

In the IRW, you will evaluate the extent to which the application meets each of the elements specified in the *Notice*. Each element will be rated as *Excellent*, *Good*, *Fair* or *Inadequate*. Specific definitions for each rating are provided in the Review Rubric (see the *Review Rubric* on the Reviewer Resource Website). Your assessment is based on your evaluation of the quality of the applicant's response to the Selection Criteria when reading the application.

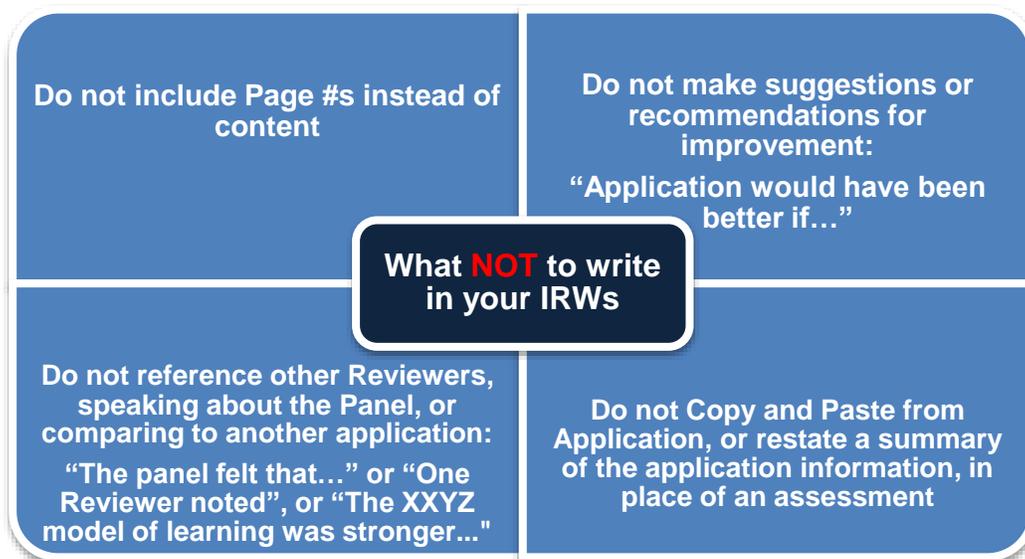
For each application you review, your Applicant Feedback Summary comments will:

- ◆ Capture your summary assessment of the application's significant strengths and weaknesses (not every noted strength and weakness should be included in the Applicant Feedback Summary section)
- ◆ Provide a basis for the Ratings that you assign to the application's elements
- ◆ Be provided to CNCS Staff and the applicant for useful feedback

See the ***Program and Evaluation Sample IRWs*** on the Reviewer Resource Website.

Although you may identify many strengths and weaknesses as you review each application, you are not expected to list each one – only the **significant** ones (see the ***Writing Meaningful Comments: Guidance and Examples*** resource on the Reviewer Resource Website).

It is important to keep in mind when reviewing the applications, what types of information you should NOT assess or comment on (see the: ***IRW Guidance Document*** and ***Reviewer Tips*** for more information on the Reviewer Resource Website):



In completing your IRWs, if you are concerned that you did not understand something in the application, do not presume to know what the applicant meant to say or tried to say. Instead, assess the application based on what you did understand; anything that is unclear can be addressed during the panel discussion (or *noted as unclear* in the IRW comments). Similarly, you should exercise caution about how you reference information that was in other parts of the application. Because applicants might often include information in another narrative section that speaks directly to the Selection Criteria you are focusing on, you **should** note the information that was addressed in another section and it should be considered. You **should not**, however, comment on the structure of the Performance Measures.

**Note:** You do not need to achieve consensus among Reviewers. It is, however, understood that Reviewers will consider each other's opinions and perspectives, and determine what refinements or amendments can be made to their IRW comments rating to reflect their final assessment.

### 4.3 PARTICIPATING IN PANEL DISCUSSIONS

After the individual reviews for each group of applications have been completed, the panels will convene by conference call to discuss each application within that group. The purpose of the panel discussion is to share thoughts and discuss each Reviewer's assessment of the application based on the Selection Criteria. While consensus is not a requirement of the panel discussion, Reviewers are asked to engage in discussion about the Criteria and consider the assessments and findings of fellow panel members. The discussion should cover each of the relevant elements of the application, and explore the points of agreement and disagreement among Reviewer IRWs.

After a panel discussion has been completed for all assigned applications, each Reviewer revises and finalizes his/her IRWs to reflect any changes to the original assessment. The Panel Coordinator will complete a Panel Discussion Report for each application and share the draft with the panel's GARP Liaison for review and comment.

#### 4.3.1 Tips for Productive Panel Discussions

During the panel discussion, all Reviewers and the Panel Coordinator will participate on the conference call. The average time for discussion is expected to be no more than 45 minutes per application. Panels will engage in discussion focused on the comments, assessments and ratings resulting from the individual reviews. The panel discussion should be well rounded and focused on a discussion of the quality of the application based on the Selection Criteria—the **discussion should not revolve solely around the areas where panel members provided differing ratings** for a section.



Reviewers may agree, disagree, clarify individual assessments and misunderstandings, and ask questions while collectively discussing an application. Based on these discussions, you may come to view aspects of the application differently than you did during the individual review. Preparedness, tact, patience and conscious participation are just some of the ways you can assist in the process of assessing applications, and in making your panel discussions meaningful.

### *Helpful Tips on How to be an Effective Panel Member*

- #1: Review and be familiar with the *Notice*, the Selection Criteria, the Reviewer Rubric and other relevant documents.
- #2: Allow your Panel Coordinator to lead. Panel Coordinators have different styles and will assert themselves in different ways and at different times. Recognize the importance of the PC role and respect it.
- #3: Have both the application and your completed IRW in front of you for each discussion.
- #4: Ask others to explain or clarify their positions and be an active listener. Do not be afraid to ask questions.
- #5: Focus on the content of what is being said and not the person.
- #6: Participate actively in the discussion, using supporting evidence from the application for your points.
- #7: Be receptive to opposing viewpoints and put your emotions aside.
- #8: Answer other panel members' questions and challenges cordially and diplomatically.
- #9: Expect to return to your IRW and make revisions on several occasions before finalizing the review product.



#### 4.4 SUBMITTING FINAL IRWs

After the panel discussions are completed, revisit your IRWs and make any appropriate amendments to your comments or ratings to reflect your conclusive assessment. Then complete the Applicant Feedback Summary portion of the IRW. Send it to your Panel Coordinator to get feedback from your Program Officer Liaison and the Editor. Once your Program Officer Liaison and Editor have provided feedback, your Panel Coordinator will work with you to have approved finished IRWs.

The overall score from each Reviewer's IRW for an application will be averaged by CNCS to represent the overall panel score for that application.

#### 4.5 COMPLETING THE CLOSE OUT PROCESS

After all review materials are final, all Reviewers and Panel Coordinators will complete their individual close outs. Your close out is completed when you have:

- ◆ Ensured that all IRWs are complete by:
  - Reviewing IRWs for improper language
  - Completing Applicant Feedback Summary
  - Ensuring Ratings are correctly added for a proper Overall Score
  - Sending an approved final version to your PC,
  - Completed and submitted your 2015 Social Innovation Fund Expert Review Process Evaluation. You will receive the URL for the evaluation form after the review has ended.

CNCS will confirm that each Review Participant has satisfied the requirements of the review, as described in the Participation Agreement. Honoraria checks will be paid to each Review Participant electronically via direct deposit within 30 days after you receive confirmation from CNCS that you have satisfactorily completed all requirements stated in the Participation Agreement. **Please consult the Participation Agreement and the information covered in the Orientation Sessions for conditions that may prevent you from receiving part or all of your honorarium payment.**

**Thank you for being a Review Participant in the  
2015 Social Innovation Fund Review!**



Corporation for  
**NATIONAL &  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE**



## **APPENDICES**



## APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

An **eligible partnership** is a formal relationship between an existing grantmaking institution (as defined above) and either an additional grantmaking institution, a State Commission on National and Community Service, or a chief executive officer of a unit of general local government where the partner organizations will share responsibilities under the award.

An approach is **evidence informed** if it refers to interventions that have a preliminary level of evidence of effectiveness per Section *I.D.4. Evidence and Evaluation* of the *Notice*. An approach is evidence based if it has a moderate or strong level of effectiveness per Section *I.D.4. Evidence and Evaluation* of the *Notice*.

**Preliminary evidence** means evidence that is based on a reasonable hypothesis supported by credible research findings.

**Moderate evidence** means evidence from previous studies on the program, the designs of which can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity) but have limited generalizability (i.e., moderate external validity).

**Strong evidence** means evidence from previous studies on the program, the designs of which can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity), and that, in total, include enough of the range of participants and settings to support scaling up to the state, regional, or national level (i.e., studies with high external validity).

**High-performing** refers to nonprofit organizations that are well-run and financially healthy with capable leadership, clear goals and clear objectives; that diligently collect quality data and use this data to understand which of their efforts work and which do not; and that use this knowledge to make adjustments to their approach to continuously improve.

### Low-income communities:

- A population of individuals or households being served by a subrecipient on the basis of having a household income that is 200 percent or less of the applicable federal poverty guideline, or
- Either a population of individuals or households, or a specific local geographic area, with specific measurable indicators that correlate to low-income status, such as, but not exclusive to, K-12 students qualifying for free- or reduced-lunch, long-term unemployment, risk of homelessness, low school achievement, persistent hunger, or serious mental illness.

**Promising interventions** refers to a model at a specific stage of development that, at a minimum, must have at least preliminary evidence of effectiveness as defined in the *Notice*.

### Scaling

Within the SIF framework, we refer to two types of scaling: **scaling the delivery** of the model by serving more of the original population, and **scaling the applicability** of the model by testing if the intervention continues to be effective for additional populations or geographic areas.

### “Significantly philanthropically underserved” communities

CNCS considers applicants to be serving significantly philanthropically underserved communities if they support subrecipients that carry out activities in low-income communities



that have considerably less than the average number of active philanthropic institutions or investments as similarly populated communities in their state or region.

An approach is “**transformative**” if it not only produces strong impact (as defined in the *Notice*), but also:

- (1) presents a new solution or novel adaptation or application of a solution to a critical local or national challenge where existing solutions or interventions have not been proven to be effective, are not achieving outcomes at scale, or are too slow to respond,
- (2) has the potential (as evidenced by data) to affect how the same challenge is addressed in other communities,
- (3) addresses more than one critical community challenge concurrently, and/or
- (4) produces significant cost savings through gains in efficiency.



## **APPENDIX B: LINKS TO ADDITIONAL REFERENCE MATERIALS**

### **CNCS**

[www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)

### **CNCS Reviewer Resource Website – Social Innovation Fund 2015**

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/SIFReviewerResourcePage>

### **eGrants**

<https://egrants.cns.gov/espan/main/login.jsp>

### **Email for general assistance and response within 24 hours**

[PeerReviewers@cns.gov](mailto:PeerReviewers@cns.gov)

### **Email for Program Officer Liaisons**

[SIFApplication@cns.gov](mailto:SIFApplication@cns.gov)

### **Email for Editor**

[PeerReviewers@cns.gov](mailto:PeerReviewers@cns.gov)

### **Notice of Federal Funding Availability (*Notice*)**

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2015%20SIF%20NOFA%20FINAL%201.20.15.pdf>