

Date: August 17, 2026

Subject: Request for Peer Reviewers for the Arizona 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Grant Competition

As part of the Arizona Department of Education's (ADE) responsibilities under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program is seeking qualified professionals to serve as peer reviewers for the upcoming competitive grant competition. Federal law requires the use of a rigorous peer review process that includes reviewers with expertise in community learning centers, afterschool programs, youth development, child development, and education.

This message serves as an official request for individuals with relevant experience and expertise to apply to participate in the Arizona 21st CCLC peer review process as stated in *(Section 4201(b)(5)(B)(i))*. Peer reviewers play a critical role in ensuring that grant applications are evaluated fairly, objectively, and consistently according to established program requirements and scoring criteria. Federal statute requires that 21st CCLC applications be reviewed through a peer review process conducted by individuals with appropriate content expertise.

ADE is seeking professionals with experience in one or more of the following areas:

- K-12 education
- School leadership and administration
- Analyzing, Development and Implementing Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)
- Afterschool and summer learning programs
- Youth development
- Family and community engagement
- Community-based organizations
- Higher education
- Program evaluation and continuous improvement
- Grant writing, grant management, or grant review

Selected reviewers will be responsible for participating in reviewer training, independently reviewing and scoring assigned grant applications, providing objective written feedback, and participating in consensus scoring activities. Reviewers must maintain confidentiality and comply with all conflict-of-interest requirements throughout the review process. These responsibilities are consistent with national 21st CCLC peer review practices.

Pursuant to Title IV, Part B of ESEA, individuals who are applicants, representatives of applicants, or otherwise involved in the current Arizona 21st CCLC grant competition are not

eligible to serve as peer reviewers. Reviewers must disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest prior to participating in the review process.

Selected reviewers who successfully complete all required review activities will receive a stipend for their service. Individuals chosen to participate will receive detailed information regarding reviewer training, review timelines, expectations, scoring procedures, and compensation. Serving as a peer reviewer offers a unique professional development opportunity to strengthen grant review and evaluation skills while gaining exposure to innovative afterschool, summer learning, and expanded learning program models that support student success. Additional notifications and recruitment materials will be distributed through ADE communication channels and shared with educational, community, and youth-serving organizations throughout Arizona. Please consider serving in this important role or sharing this opportunity with qualified colleagues.

If you are interested in becoming a peer reviewer, please email your cover letter and resume to the 21st CCLC Inbox at 21stcclcinbox@azed.gov then please complete the peer reviewer interest form at: [Arizona Peer Review Application for FY27 - Cycle 22 - Cohort 2](#) - Applications will only be reviewed of those who submit a cover letter and resume to the 21st CCLC Team. *Those individuals who currently serve in an Arizona 21st CCLC Program or an Arizona district that serves 21st CCLC programs or have or are involved with writing Arizona grant applications or those that have served as an employee at the Arizona Department of Education in the last 5 years are not eligible to apply.*

If you have questions regarding the peer reviewer process, qualifications, or application requirements, please contact the 21st CCLC team by email at 21stCCLCInbox@azed.gov or by phone at 602-364-1958.

Thank you for your continued commitment to supporting high-quality learning opportunities for Arizona students, families, and communities.

Arizona Department of Education
21st Century Community Learning Centers Program