

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

RFA # GD0—SACSO—14

District of Columbia

Office of the State Superintendent of Education



FFY2013 SOAR Act Grants to Non-profit Third-Party Organizations/Charter Support Organizations

RFA Release Date

January 3, 2014

Intent to Apply Deadline (Mandatory)

January 14, 2014

Pre-Application Conference (Mandatory)

January 14, 2014

Application Submission Deadline

January 31, 2014

Table of Contents

Checklist for Application	3
1. General Information	4
1.1 Introduction	4
1.2 Purpose of Grant Funds	4
1.3 Source of Funding	4
1.4 Requirement of Funding	5
1.5 Funds Available and Funding Period	5
1.6 Eligibility	5
1.7 Permissible Use of Funds	5
2. Schedule	6
2.1 RFA Release	6
2.2 Pre-Application Conference	6
2.3 Intent to Apply	6
2.4 Contact Person(s)	6
2.5 Applications Due	6
2.6 Updates	7
2.7 Awards Announcement	7
3. Application	7
3.1 Application Content	7
4. Scoring	7
4.1 Review Panel	7

Checklist for Application

FFY 2013 SOAR Act Non-profit Third-Party and Charter Support Organization Grant

- The applicant submitted the Intent to Apply form by January 14, 2014.
- The applicant attended the mandatory pre-application conference. Please see Section 2 in Request for Application (RFA).
- The applicant has responded to all sections of the Request for Application (“RFA”) and the application contains all the information and appendices requested. Please see Section 3 for more detail, as well as Application workbook.
 - Tab 1 – Directions
 - Tab 2 – Contact Info
 - Tab 3 – Comprehensive Data
 - Tab 4 – Needs Assessment & Narrative
 - Tab 5 – Detailed Expenditure Summary
 - Tab 6 – Budget Summary
 - Tab 7 – Logic Models
 - Tab 8 – Appendices
 - Tab 9 – Intent to Apply Form
 - Tab 10 – Assurances
- The applicant has made certain the application adheres to the direction and criteria of each section of this RFA.
- The applicant has submitted:
 - One (1) electronic copy in Excel format, and
 - One (1) signed PDF copy of the signature page, both emailed to opcsfs.funding@dc.gov.

Applications received via email at or after 5:01 p.m. EST, on Friday, January 31, 2014, will not be reviewed. Any additions or deletions to an application will not be accepted after the deadline of 5:00 p.m. No hard copies of the application will be accepted at OSSE.

Request for Application
RFA # GDO-SACSO-14

Section 1: General Information

1.1 Introduction

The Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support, within the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), is soliciting applications from non-profit District of Columbia third parties and charter support organizations for grants to impact the overall charter sector and have a direct and rapid effect on overall charter achievement.

1.2 Purpose of Funds

The purpose of SOAR Act funding is to address the two impact areas within Elementary and Secondary Education:

- 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 for:

- **Grants to Non-profit Third-Party and Charter Support Organizations**
 - Successful projects will have a direct and rapid impact on overall charter school academic achievement or on the achievement of historically under-performing subgroups.
 - Applicants will partner with three 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.
 - Priority points will be given to applicants that partner with LEAs designated as “Focus” or “Priority” per the ESEA Flexibility Waiver.
 - The organization will detail a plan to improve the quality in developing or improving the capacity of teachers, school leaders, or school boards as well as design activities that impacts student proficiency rates (whether school-wide or for one or more historically-disadvantage subgroup) for at least three LEAs.

Funds will support efforts to make a rapid impact on academic achievement within schools or for subpopulations of students within schools.

1.3 Source of Funding

The United States Department of Education, through 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).

1.4 Requirement of Funding

The most important 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). Pursuant to the SOAR Act, 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 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 a year, 2013-2016. Please be advised that noncompliance of the charter school or any partnering entity with the terms and conditions stated in the SOAR Act requirements acceptance document may result in the withholding of further federal grant funds administered by OSSE.

1.5 Funds Available and Funding Period

A total of \$2,350,000 (up to \$100,000 per award) is available for awards through this RFA.

The duration of this grant is for a period of two (2) years from the grant award date.

1.6 Eligibility

Eligible 3rd Party Organizations /Charter Support Organizations:

- Must be a non-profit organization with experience in successfully working with the charter school sector; and
- Have the capacity to serve at least three (3) or more LEAs within DC and their underserved special populations, and/or engages underperforming "Priority" and "Focus" schools.

1.7 Permissible Use of Funds

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

- 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;
- Align with and support the principles outlined in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver;
- Support projects that address needs identified in the partnering LEA's Needs Assessment;
- 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 expenditures are allowable and meet the intent of the purposes of this RFA.

Additional guidance about standards for determining costs for federal grants is available from Office of Management and Budget (OMB) at:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a087/a087-all.html#attb>.

Section 2: Schedule

2.1 RFA Release

The release date of the RFA is January 3, 2014. 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:

- Third Party Grants – January 14, 2014, 2:00–3:00pm, 8th Floor, Room 806A

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 signer, via email to opcsfs.funding@dc.gov by 5:00pm on January 14, 2014. **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 staffs are the authorized contact persons for the grant program:

- John Savage, Program Analyst, john.savage@dc.gov.
- Faida Fuller, Acting Director, Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support, faida.fuller@dc.gov.

2.5 Applications Due

Applications are due January 31, 2014 by 5:00pm and must be emailed to opcsfs.funding@dc.gov. Please use the following naming convention in the subject line: Organization Name_Grant Category.

(Example: ABC Organization_3rd Party).

2.6 Updates

Information and updates regarding the grant competitions will be emailed to those that submitted an Intent to Apply form(s) and attend the mandatory Pre-Application Conference(s)

2.7 Awards Announcement

Awards will be announced via email and the OSSE website on **February 21, 2014**. OPCSFS will disseminate award letters and grant award notifications within 7-14 days after the awards announcement.

Section 3: Application

3.1 Application Content

The Application includes the following tabs:

- Tab 1 – Directions
- Tab 2 – Contact Information
- Tab 3 – Comprehensive Data
 - Project Data
 - Academic Data
- Tab 4 – Needs Assessment & Narrative
 - Comprehensive Needs Assessment
 - Summary Project Description
 - Theory of Action
 - Alignment to the District’s ESEA Flexibility Waiver
- Tab 5 – Detailed Expenditure Summary
- Tab 6 – Budget Summary
- Tab 7 – Logic Models
- Tab 8 – Appendices
 - Collaboration Letters
 - Completed Logic Models
 - Signed Assurances
 - W-9 Form for any entity not currently in the DC vendor system
- Tab 9 – Intent to Apply Form
- Tab 10 – Assurances

Section 4: Scoring

4.1 Review Panel

All grants within this RFA are competitive. A review panel for all categories will be convened to review, score, and rank each applicant’s application. The review panel will be composed of

neutral, qualified, professional individuals who have been selected for their unique related experiences. Upon completion of its review, the panel shall make recommendations for awards based on the scoring rubric(s). OPCSFS will make the final decisions.