



New York
**21st Century Community
Learning Centers**

SOARING BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

Guidebook for 21st CCLC Peer Reviewers

New York State Education Department
Peer Review Process
Round 7
Updated November 2016

Foreword

This Guidebook is meant to assist you, the reviewer, in understanding the peer review process and your responsibilities as a reviewer. It also provides important guidelines for reviewing the applications.

Instructions for Reviewers

Dear Reviewer,

Thank you for your willingness to review 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) proposals for New York State's 2017 - 2022 Round 7 funding competition. The New York State Education Department (SED), as well as the grant applicants are depending on you to read each of the proposals carefully, score fairly, and maintain confidentiality throughout the peer review process. Below is a list of items you will find in your reviewer's packet, with instructions and guidance about how to use each form. This year's peer review will be completed electronically through an online portal called FluidReview.

Peer Reviewer Agreement: The Peer Reviewer Agreement outlines the terms and conditions of the agreement between you, the peer reviewer, and SED. Please read the Agreement carefully. You will be required to complete, sign and return the Peer Reviewer Agreement before beginning to read and score applications.

Statement of Confidentiality: Please read the Statement of Confidentiality carefully. You will be required to complete, sign and return the confidentiality form before beginning to read and score applications.

Statement Regarding Conflict of Interest: Please read the Conflict of Interest Form carefully. In FluidReview, you will receive a list of proposals that you have been assigned to review. You will be required to complete, sign and return the conflict of interest form for the applications you have been assigned. At the end of each proposal, you will also be required to confirm that you have no conflict of interest regarding that specific application. If you have a conflict with any proposal based on the Conflict of Interest form, you must contact SED immediately.

NYS Guidebook for Peer Reviewers: The Reviewer Guidebook contains background information about ESSA Title IV Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers, eligibility, program requirements, technical information, evaluation criteria for reviewers and an overview of the review process. *Please read this document in its entirety prior to reviewing any proposals.*

Demographic Perspectives from Around the State: Information has been gathered from existing programs around New York State to help reviewers get a sense of demographics, culture, challenges and benefits from many points of view. Depending on what geographical area you are reviewing and/or if your proposals are from a school district or a community organization, take some time to review information that may pertain to that particular region.

Scoring Rubric: The Scoring Rubric contains the scoring rubric with explanatory information on what constitutes a very good, good, fair or weak score for each element of the proposal. This document will be very helpful in discerning the difference between levels of quality.

A sample Scoring Rubric is included in this guidebook. The actual Rubric will be completed online in FluidReview. You will receive an email that contains your FluidReview login information.

All application components are included on the files provided to you. However, when evaluating the application, your review should only be based on the Program Narrative, the Partnership Agreements and the FS-10 and Composite Budget Forms. You should also review the Program Summary Form, Participating Schools Form, and/or Partnering Agencies Form for context.

You do not need to check for the required signatures. Some applications will show scanned signatures while others won't show any. SED will verify that the required original signatures are received.

Helpful Links: The following links may help round out your knowledge about the 21st Century application process and the ten essential elements of successful programming.

- Link to the RFP: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/2017-2022-21st-cclc/home.html>. The posting also includes the Technical Assistance Webinar for Applicants and the questions received from the applicants with SED's responses. This webinar was made available to all potential applicants during the competition.
- Link to the Quality Self-Assessment Tool: <http://www.nysan.org/userfiles/file/nysan/>. Each 21st Century program is to conduct this self-assessment two times each year.

Contacting SED: We understand that you may need SED guidance in order to move forward in reviewing a proposal (e.g., allowable activities, budget discrepancies, formatting issues). SED staff will be available to answer questions each weekday, between 9 am and 4 pm. Email 21CRFP@nysed.gov or call 518-486-6090, and please ask for Elizabeth Whipple, Carri Manchester or Raffaele Iorio.

Please check your email frequently. SED will forward any questions received along with the answers to all reviewers, as well as any clarifying information that may be of help to all reviewers.

Foreword	2
Instructions for Reviewers	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
I. INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION PROCESS	6
A. Background	6
B. Statutory Basis	6
C. ESSA & 21st CCLC Programming During the School Day	7
D. Eligibility	7
E. Definitions	8
F. Program Requirements	9
G. Competitive Priorities	9
II. PEER REVIEW TECHNICAL INFORMATION	11
A. Introduction	11
B. Peer Reviewer Agreement	
C. Confidentiality	11
D. Conflict of Interest	11
E. Debriefing Process for Applicants	12
III. GETTING STARTED	13
IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA, DEMOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES, & THE SCORING RUBRIC	14
A. Evaluation Criteria	14
B. Demographic Perspectives	15
C. Scoring Rubric	15
V. THE REVIEW PROCESS	15
A. SED Responsibilities	15
B. Reviewer’s Responsibilities	16
C. Formatting Requirements	17
D. Analysis of Applications	17
E. Writing Comments	18
VI. AFTER THE REVIEW	18
<u>Other Required Reading</u>	
1. RFP#: GC17-001, 2017-2022 21 st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Application	
2. Questions and Answers prepared for potential applicants	
3. Demographic Perspectives	
4. Scoring Rubric	

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION PROCESS

A. Background

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) supports after-school programs and other extended learning opportunities (before-school, weekends, summers, etc.) for students and their families. Its fundamental goal is to provide a comprehensive array of programs and services through collaboration between schools and community partners. By providing academic enrichment and positive youth development opportunities to students, as well as family engagement, literacy and other educational opportunities for families of these students, these programs can make a significant contribution to closing the achievement gap in our neediest schools.

The U.S. Department of Education strongly encourages a peer review of applications to help ensure that proposed projects are worthwhile and that the review process is objective, fair and impartial. Your reviews are the foundation of higher level State Education Department (SED) funding decisions. Because of your efforts, a select number of high quality applications will be funded for a period of five years. The Guidebook for 21st CCLC Program Application Reviewers is intended to improve the quality of application reviews and make your task easier by clarifying your responsibilities and sharpening your review skills.

B. Statutory Basis of the 21st Century Program

The 21st Century Community Learning Centers program is authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015*. Its purpose is to provide opportunities for communities to establish or expand activities in community learning centers that:

1. provide opportunities for academic enrichment, including providing tutorial services to help students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, to meet the challenging State academic standards;
2. offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, such as youth development activities, service learning, nutrition and health education, drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs, arts, music, physical fitness and wellness programs, technology education programs, financial literacy programs, environmental literacy programs, mathematics, science, career and technical programs, internship or apprenticeship programs, and other ties to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students; and
3. offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children's education, including opportunities for literacy and related educational development.

A Community Learning Center must be located in a safe and easily accessible facility. The applicant must address how students will travel safely to and from the center and home.

C. ESSA & 21st CCLC Programming During the School Day:

Multiple program options may be used by recipients of 21st CCLC funding, including; before school, after school, weekends, holidays or summer recess. Under the requirements of ESSA, program funds may also be used to expand learning time to provide activities within the school day in schools implementing an expanded learning time program that provides students with at least 300 additional program hours per year before, during, or after the traditional school day, week or year. Expanded learning includes the time that a school expands its normal school day, week, or year to provide additional instruction or educational programs for all students beyond the State-mandated requirements for the minimum number of hours in a school day, days in a school week, or days or weeks in a school year. Applicants requesting use of 21st CCLC funds during the mandatory school day must demonstrate that the expanded learning program of the school(s) served, inclusive of the proposed 21st CCLC program, will provide students at least 300 additional program hours per year before, during, or after the traditional school day. (See Participating Schools Form.)

For the purposes of this RFP, the “traditional” school year is defined as 900 hours of instruction (typically 180 days x 5 hours per day) per year at the elementary level through grade 6, and 990 hours of instruction (180 days x 5.5 hours per day) in grades 7-12.

For the purposes of this RFP, the “mandatory” school day, week or year is defined as the hours of attendance that all students enrolled in the school are required to be present for.

Peer Reviewers are not responsible for ensuring compliance with this requirement. SED staff will verify hours for all applicants requesting use of funds during the school day.

D. Eligibility

Any public or private organization is eligible to apply for 21st CCLC funding. This includes public school districts, BOCES, charter schools, private schools, nonprofit agencies, city or county government agencies, faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education, Indian tribes or tribal organizations, and for-profit corporations.

All programs must be implemented through a partnership that includes at least one (1) local educational agency receiving funds under part A of title I and at least one (1) BOCES, nonprofit agency, city or county government agency, faith-based organization, institution of higher education, Indian tribe or tribal organization, or for-profit corporation with a demonstrated

record of success in designing and implementing before school, after school, summer learning, or expanded learning time activities.

To be eligible for this grant, at least 2/3 of the students an applicant is proposing to serve must attend:

1. schools eligible for schoolwide programs under Title I, Section 1114 of the Every Student Succeeds Act, and the families of these students, or
2. schools with at least 40 percent of students eligible for free or reduced priced lunch; and the families of these students.

For the purposes of this RFP, “local educational agencies” are defined as public schools and districts, private schools, and charter schools.

Section 4204(i)(1) of ESSA requires that competitive priority be given to applications that propose to target services to students who attend schools that

- are implementing comprehensive support and improvement activities or targeted support and improvement activities under ESSA section 1111(d), or other schools determined by the local educational agency to be in need of intervention and support to improve student academic achievement and other outcomes; and
- enroll students who may be at risk for academic failure, dropping out of school, involvement in criminal or delinquent activities, or who lack strong positive role models; and
- the families of those students.

Peer Reviewers are not responsible for confirming eligibility to apply. SED staff will verify eligibility prior to assigning applications to reviewers.

E. Definitions

Local Education Agency or LEA is usually synonymous with a school district. It is an entity defined under State law as being legally responsible for providing public education to elementary and secondary students. For the purposes of the 21st CCLC RFP, “local educational agencies” are defined as public schools and districts, private schools, and charter schools.

Community-Based Organization or CBO is a public or private nonprofit organization of demonstrated effectiveness that (a) is representative of a community or significant segments of the community; and (b) provides educational or related services to individuals in the community.

BEDS Codes – Each school building in New York State has its own unique identifying number code (assigned by the State Education Department) that is used for data reporting, payments, etc. BEDS stands for Basic Educational Data System. The BEDS code for each school is to be included on the Participating Schools Form

Indirect Costs are costs of activities that benefit more than one program or objective and, therefore cannot be readily assigned to only one specific program or objective. Indirect costs are generally classified under functional categories such as general maintenance and operation expenses, general office and administration expenses, general overhead expenses and other allowable general expenses.

Purchased Services is the budget category for services to be provided by an organization or individual that cannot be provided by the applicant. Examples include transportation, instruction for an activity and the independent evaluator. Applicants are required to provide a minimum level of direct service of 15%, therefore up to 85% of grant funds could be used for Purchased Services. The applicant must have an active role in the implementation of all aspects of the program. The NYSED Consortium Policy for State and Federal Discretionary Grant Programs further defines the required active role of the applicant. The policy can be found in the RFP.

F. Program Description

Proposed programs should address the objectives described in Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. Specifically, the program design should link a cohesive, inter-related set of program activities and content designed to complement one another and align with the school day. Activities and content should support goals and objectives designed to address the identified needs of the students and their families, and include opportunities for youth development and enrichment through hands-on project-based activities, service learning, and other experiences not typically offered in the traditional classroom setting. Include key elements of the program design that are innovative or unique to the program's mission and goals and are core to the program's overall design.

A comprehensive overview of the program is available in the RFP, pp 11-12

G. Competitive Priorities

3 priority points will be awarded to applications that will primarily serve students who attend a school (i.e., public school, private school or charter school) that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- **Priority Schools, including Struggling and Persistently Struggling Schools:** The Department identified Priority Schools based on the following factors, as defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver guidance:
 - Schools based on the achievement of all student groups in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the state's differentiated recognition, accountability and support system and are not making progress as defined by New York's progress filters. The school also has shown a lack of progress for the all student groups over a number of years.
 - Secondary schools with a Graduation Rate less than 60 percent for a number of years and not making progress, as defined by New York's progress filters.
- **Focus Schools:** The Department identified Focus Schools based on the following factors, as defined in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver guidance:
 - Schools with the lowest achievement of subgroups in terms of proficiency on the statewide assessments that are part of the state's differentiated recognition, accountability and support system and are not making progress as defined by New York's progress filters.
 - High schools with the lowest Graduation Rate for subgroups that are not making progress as defined by New York's progress filters.
- **High Need Rural Schools:** The need/resource capacity index is a measure of a district's ability to meet the needs of its students with local resources based on a ratio of the estimated poverty percentage to the Combined Wealth Ratio of the District. High Need Rural districts are at or above the 70th percentile and have: 1) fewer than 50 students per square mile; or 2) fewer than 100 students per square mile and an enrollment of less than 2,500. Any school located in a High Need Rural district is eligible for priority points.
- **Persistently Dangerous Schools:** Applicants will qualify for priority points if they appear on the 2016-17 Persistently Dangerous List using Violent and Disruptive Incident Reports (VADIR) data.
- **Limited English Proficiency Student Percentage:** Applicants will qualify for priority points if the respective three-year average Limited English Proficiency student percentage per student enrollment of the school(s) served is equal to or greater than 5%.

Applications will not receive additional points if they appear on multiple lists.

Note: If an application proposes to serve students in more than one school, at least 2/3 of the students served must attend a school on one of the competition priority lists above to be eligible for priority points.

Peer Reviewers are not responsible for confirming eligibility for priority points.

II. PEER REVIEW TECHNICAL INFORMATION

A. Introduction

The New York State Education Department receives applications in confidence and protects the confidentiality of their contents. Every effort is also made to avoid any situation that would present a conflict of interest for a reader. Abuse of confidentiality and undetected conflict of interest undermines the entire review process. Please read this section carefully. You will be required to sign a statement of confidentiality prior to beginning the review. If you have concerns regarding any application you may be assigned to read, you are responsible for reporting this matter to the 21st Century program staff immediately.

B. Confidentiality

The entire grant review process is confidential. You may not discuss an application or your written comments or scores with anyone else before, during, or after your review. Do not, under any circumstances, contact an applicant to obtain further information.

Reviewers' comments are also confidential. To further ensure confidentiality, reviewers will be assigned a reviewer code in FluidReview that will appear on all review forms in lieu of their name.

Applicants may request a debriefing letter that summarizes reviewer comments; however, review forms are not provided to applicants. A list of reviewers' names may be furnished; however, if requested.

C. Conflict of Interest

The 21st CCLC Program staff attempt to eliminate any situation that would present a conflict of interest for a peer reviewer.

Pursuant to ESSA, Title IV, Part B, Peer reviewers may not include any applicant, or representative of an applicant, that has submitted an application for the current application period.

NYSED will not permit any individual to review applications if the individual is employed or contracted by an agency acting as Lead Applicant in a proposal, or is employed or contracted by an agency acting as a partner in a proposal.

If you fall into either of the categories above, contact 21CRFP@nysed.gov immediately following this webinar.

All New York reviewers will be assigned to review proposals outside of their geographic area (New York City, Big 4 Cities or Rest of State). All reviewers must sign a statement of “no conflict” prior to beginning the peer review process.

When you receive the list of the applications being assigned to you, please review it carefully. Review assignments may be changed if necessary. Circumstances that could be called a conflict of interest may or may not exclude you from serving as a reviewer. If, at any time, you think you may have a conflict of interest, contact 21st Century program staff immediately.

Conflicts of interest may arise if:

- An application has been submitted for this competition in which you, your spouse, or an immediate family member will benefit financially from grant funds (if awarded).
- You, your spouse, or an immediate family member are affiliated with an organization that submitted an application, but you will not benefit financially from that application.
- An applicant named you as a consultant in an application with or without your prior knowledge.
- A situation exists that may be perceived as a conflict, such as reviewing proposals from your region of the State, reviewing proposals in which a family member (other than your spouse or an immediate family member) stands to benefit financially, reviewing proposals from an organization or individual with whom you were previously employed or are currently negotiating employment, etc.

D. Debriefing Process for Applicants

All applicants may request a debriefing within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving notice of non-award from NYSED. If requested, a summary of the strengths and areas for improvement of the application will be provided to the applicant within fifteen (15) business days.

Therefore, as you write comments, be aware that your comments on the Scoring Rubric will be sent to the applicants and may be sent to the general public. Even though your name is removed when comments are made public, you must exercise care when writing comments. It is important that your comments are *clear, well justified*, and that they reflect *a thorough review of the entire application based on the selection criteria* governing this application.

III. GETTING STARTED

Each Peer Reviewer will receive an email through FluidReview that contains your login information.

The applications you receive for review will contain the items listed below. ***The items in gray are not to be reviewed. The documents in black should be reviewed. The documents with an asterisk will form the basis of your review.*** Each task in FluidReview in which applicants must upload a document will allow only one document. While we have requested that applicants scan and upload these documents as a single file, some applicants may use the upload documents feature to accomplish this task. If you find a task is missing required documentation, please check for additional uploaded documents.

- Mandatory Notice of Intent
- Application Cover Page
- Payee Information Form/NYSED Substitute W-9 Form (if required)
- Program Summary Form
- Participating Schools Form
- Private School Consultation Form
- Partnering Agencies Form
- Program Sites Form
- ***Program Narrative**
- ***Composite Budget**
- ***FS-10 Budget (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018)**
- ***Partnership Agreement(s)**
- School-Age Child Care (SACC) License (optional)
- M/WBE Documents Package
- Proof of Workers Compensation Coverage (if required)
- Proof of Disability Benefits Coverage (if required)
- Mailed Application Package

Important Note: Applicants were directed **not** to submit supplementary materials such as letters of support, videos, publications, press clippings, testimonial letters, etc. because they will **not** be reviewed. Any that are included in the application package should not be reviewed and/or included in scoring considerations.

IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA, DEMOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVES, SCORING GUIDELINES AND THE TECHNICAL REVIEW FORM

A. Evaluation Criteria

The Program Narrative (not to exceed 25 pages) should respond to each of the sections listed below.

1. Executive Summary – not to exceed 2 pages (1 points)
2. Need for Project (8 points)
3. Key Elements of Program Design (20 points)
4. Use of Time (10 points)
5. Program Management (16 points)
6. Quality of Program Evaluation (10 points)
7. Organizational Leadership and Quality of the Management Plan (15 points)
8. Adequacy of Resources (20 points)

Each section has a maximum point value and contains specific evaluation criteria that have individual point values. You will determine the number of points to be awarded to each of the criteria, signifying Very Good, Good, Fair or Weak.

Very Good	Specific and comprehensive. Complete, detailed, and clearly articulated information as to how the criteria are met. They will include well-conceived and thoroughly developed ideas.
Good	General but sufficient detail. Adequate information as to how the criteria are met, but some areas are not fully explained and/or questions remain. Some minor inconsistencies and weaknesses.
Fair	Imprecise and non-specific. Limited information is provided about approach and strategies. Lacks focus and detail.
Weak	Does not meet the criteria, fails to provide information, provides inaccurate information, or provides information that requires substantial clarification as to how the criteria are met.
Missing	Question is not addressed.

As a reviewer, you are responsible for using only the evaluation criteria on the Application Scoring Evaluation Rubric to guide your rating of the applications. *Sometimes the applicant will incorporate the response to one of the criteria in a different section. It is appropriate for the reviewer to evaluate and credit that information even though it is not in the expected section.*

B. Demographic Perspectives

Appendix 1 contains demographic perspectives that may be reflected in the applications. These perspectives are intended to provide a sense of the communities that are to be served by the 21st Century program. Perspectives pertain to rural communities; the Big Four Cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers; Long Island; and an overview of the structure and organization of the New York City Department of Education

C. Scoring Rubric

The Application Scoring Rubric is included as Appendix 2 in the RFP. If you prefer, you may print copies and refer to this as you prepare your reviews; however, all reviews must be entered online in the FluidReview system. As you evaluate an application you will provide comments and numerical scores for each of the evaluation criteria.

The review forms identify all criteria for each section. Reviewers must provide comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the applicant's response for each section. The reviewer determines numerical scores reflective of those strengths and weaknesses.

The numerical scores you assign to an application's response to the selection criteria must be consistent with the comments you write. Comments and scores should reflect the same overall assessment. You should never pair a negative comment with a positive score, or vice versa.

Be sure to check your scores to make sure that you have entered them correctly.

V. THE REVIEW PROCESS

A. State Education Department Responsibilities

The State Education Department is responsible for identifying projects that best address the specific educational needs targeted by legislation. The responsibilities of the 21st Century Program staff who administer the peer review process include the following:

- Receive applications and verify eligibility and priority status of each
- Recruit and select peer reviewers
- Assign applications to reviewers
- Provide informational materials to prepare the reviewers for their responsibilities
- Provide technical assistance to the reviewers
- Verify final scores and recommend applications for funding
- Approve budgets and assist in the preparation of grants and grant contracts.

B. Reviewer's Responsibilities

Each application will be reviewed by two reviewers. Reviewers are selected by the 21st Century Program on the basis of their general and specialized experience in a program area. Reviewers are expected to draw upon their expertise in evaluating applications according to the scoring criteria included in the application package. The reviewer is the primary source of objective assessment and bears a large responsibility for making an accurate evaluation.

Reviewers are expected to:

- Become familiar with the RFP and the Questions and Answers prepared for potential applicants: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/funding/2017-2022-21st-cclc/home.html>.
- Study and review preparation materials provided by SED.
- Participate in Webinar training on November 16, 2016.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Report any conflict of interest.
- Contact SED immediately if you discover that the application has not been formatted properly, the narrative is too long, or other potential problems arise.
- Provide a specific and well-documented qualitative evaluation of each application.
- Evaluate each application individually against the selection criteria.
- Do not evaluate one application against another.
- Prepare constructive strength and concern comments on the evaluation rubric.
- Ensure that all scores are accurately entered.

Planning Your Time: Before you start your review, consider the number of applications you must review and the amount of time allotted for your review. Then, decide how much time you can spend on each application. Some applications may require more time, others less; establishing a maximum number of hours for review will ensure each application receives sufficient attention.

Reading Tips

- Read with a purpose.
- Focus on information related to the criteria.
- Skim over nonessential information.
- Concentrate on key words/phrases.
- Read critically.
- Read quickly.
- Take notes, if necessary.
- Relax and clear your mind of personal concerns.
- Minimize distractions.

C. Formatting Requirements

Formatting errors will result in considerable penalties - e.g., the proposal will not be reviewed in its entirety or the proposal will be rejected. The following requirements were included the RFP.

- The Program Narrative cannot exceed 25 double-spaced pages, paginated, using one-inch margins and Times New Roman or Arial standard font in 12-point.
- The allowed 25 pages includes the Executive Summary and “Template for Goals and Objectives Based on 21st Century Community Learning Centers Performance Indicators.” The Template for Goals and Objectives may be single spaced in Times New Roman or Arial standard font in 12-point type using one-inch margins.
- Charts can be used ONLY to display numerical data or activity schedules. Charts may be single spaced but must be in Times New Roman or Arial standard font in 12-point type using one-inch margins.
- Other types of charts are not allowed. Charts cannot be used for narrative purposes.
- The 25 pages do not include the Budget (FS-10), the Composite Budget, or Partnership Agreement(s)

Please contact 21st Century program staff immediately if you have serious concerns about the formatting of an application.

D. Analysis of Applications

Every application will respond to the evaluation criteria to some degree. Your task is first to locate the relevant response and then to analyze the quality of that response. Your analysis should be an objective appraisal that focuses on *how well* the application responds to the selection criteria.

Guidelines:

- The applicant’s intentions should be clear and specific, not obscured by meaningless jargon.
- The ideas presented should flow logically.
- The application should provide a complete response to the selection criteria.
- The activities outlined in the different sections of the application must be consistent with each other.
- The activities proposed by the applicant should be consistent with current, accepted knowledge and ideas in that field.

- Formatting requirements should have been followed.

E. Writing Comments

Your comments should focus on the strengths and additional concerns and questions of an application's response *to the evaluation criteria*.

Thorough evaluations of an applicant's responses to the selection criteria are very important. Comments should not simply describe what the application says. Comments must evaluate the application content concisely, clearly, and comprehensively. Be sure to differentiate comments based on fact from those based on professional judgment.

Guidelines:

- Be specific.
- Evaluate rather than simply describe.
- Document your evaluation.
- Be tactful.
- Use complete sentences.
- Use proper grammar and spelling.

VI. After the Review

- The 21st CCLC Program staff receives the reviewers' evaluations, and verifies their adequacy. Fundable programs (those that receive a score of at least 75 points) are then separated by geographic pool (New York City, the "Big Four" cities of Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers or the Rest of the State) and ranked by score. 21st Century program staff prepare written funding recommendations for approval by the Department.
- Upon approval, the 21st Century program office notifies successful applicants and announces the awards.
- Funding begins July 1, 2017 for a period of five years.
- The 21st CCLC Program provides a debriefing letter to all applicants who request a summary of the strengths and areas for improvement of the application. In addition, applicants may receive a list of all the reviewers' names; however, evaluations are not attributed to specific reviewers.
- The 21st CCLC Program staff monitors the programs throughout the five-year funding period.