



NATIONAL  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
RESOURCE CENTER

# SEA SE Grantee Symposium – Day 2

*A Two-Day Workshop on Grants Administration for SEA State Entity Grantees*

September 1, 2021 | Virtual

[charterschoolcenter.ed.gov](https://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov)

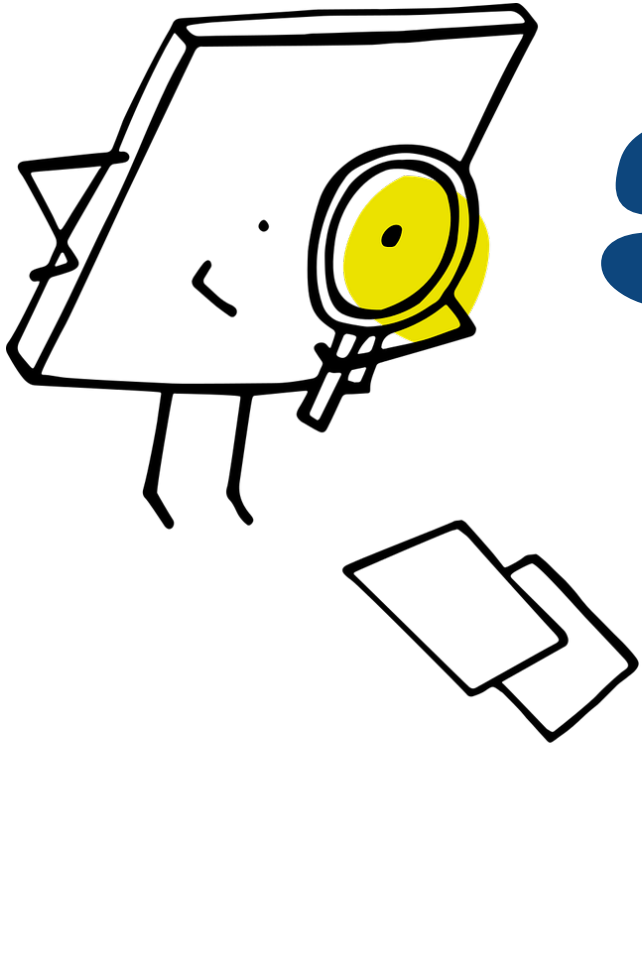
# About the NCSRC

The National Charter School Resource Center (NCSRC) provides technical assistance to federal grantees and resources supporting charter sector stakeholders. NCSRC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) and managed by Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG) in partnership with WestEd.



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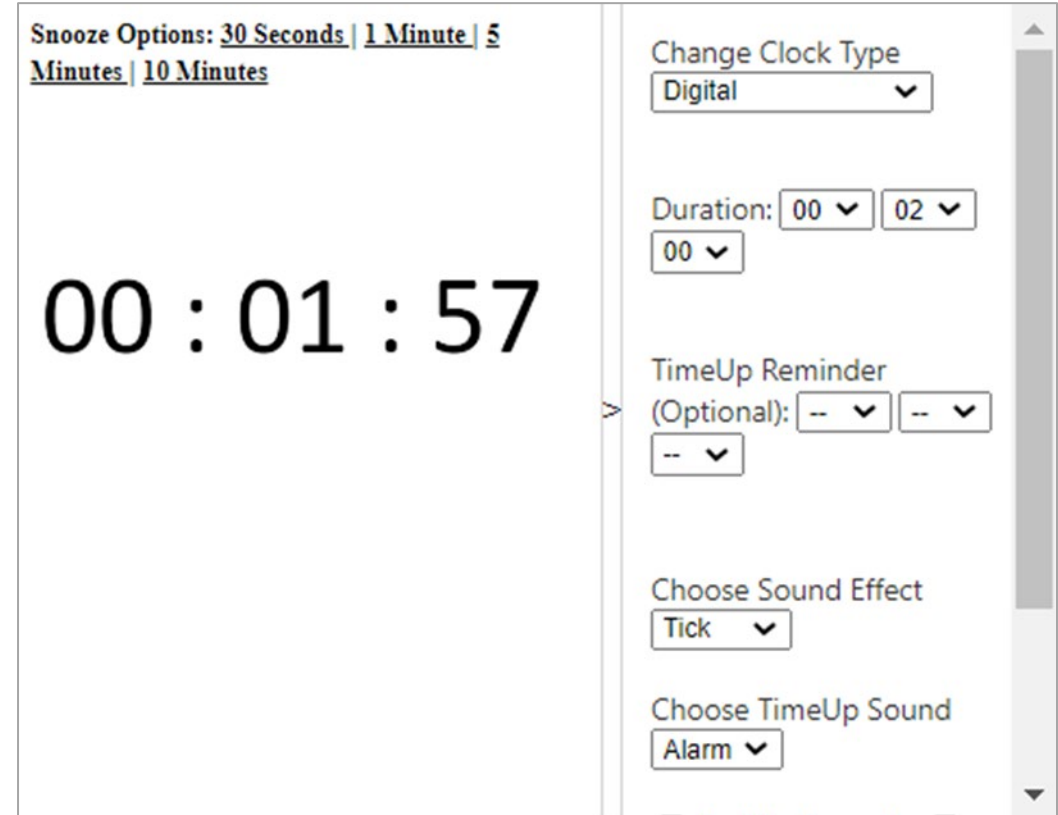




# SCAVENGER HUNT

## Find one of the following items to share:

1. Your favorite book.
2. Your favorite photo.
3. An item you are embarrassed to have in your home or office.



## Day 2 Speakers



Jennifer Todd  
Ashley Gardner  
Nora Kern



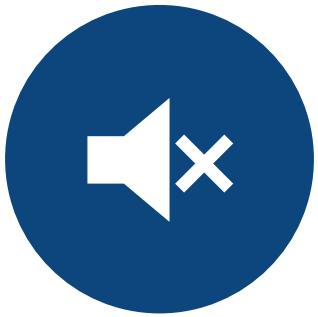
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Sharon Herpin, Ed.D.  
Robin Chait  
Kelly Wynveen

**And... YOU!**



# Norms



Remember to mute yourself



Utilize the chat for questions and comments



Actively participate in discussions



Respond to the survey



*The main session is being recorded. By participating, you are consenting to be recorded. Breakout room discussions will not be recorded.*

# Agenda

## Day One – August 25

- 2-2:10 p.m. Welcome/Overview
- 2:10-3:20 p.m. Subgrantee Monitoring
- 3:20-3:30 p.m. Q&A/Closing Thoughts

## Day Two – September 1

- 2-2:10 p.m. Welcome/Overview
- 2:10-3:20 p.m. Peer Review
- 3:20-3:30 p.m. Q&A/Closing Thoughts



# Meeting Objective and Purpose



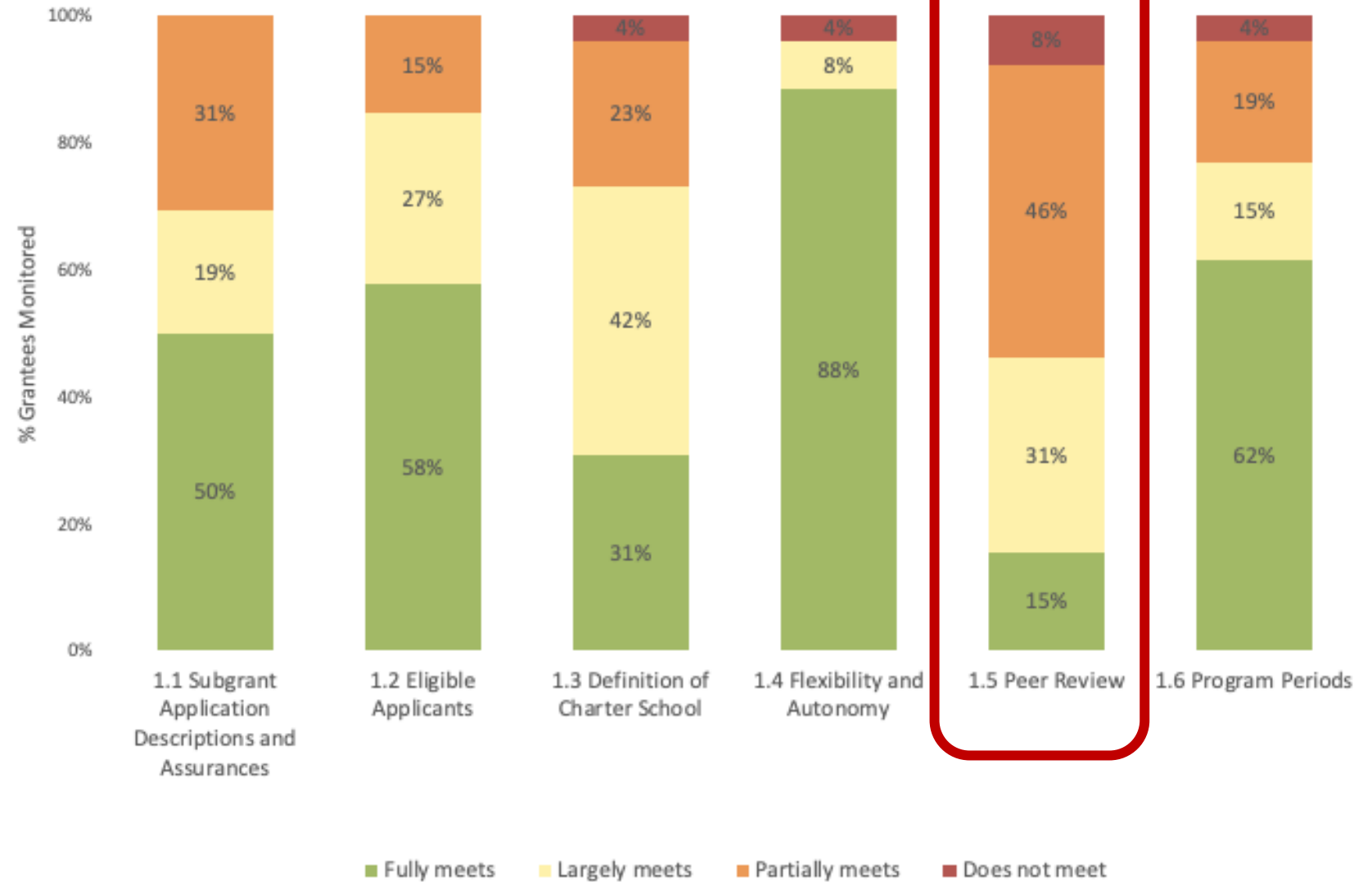
**Purpose:** Bring together grantees for technical assistance and community building



**Objective:** Provide direct technical assistance to SEA SE grantees in areas of high need to ensure grantees are effective stewards of CSP funding

# Subgrant Application and Award Process

- 22 of 26 grantees (85%) were not in compliance with the requirements of indicator 1.5. All grantees were using some form of peer review to review and select subgrant applicants, but *not all grantees used a high-quality review process.*





# Key Elements of an Effective Peer Review Process

# Part I: Key Elements of Effective Peer Review Process



Selection process for peer reviewers



Criteria for assessing applications



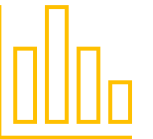
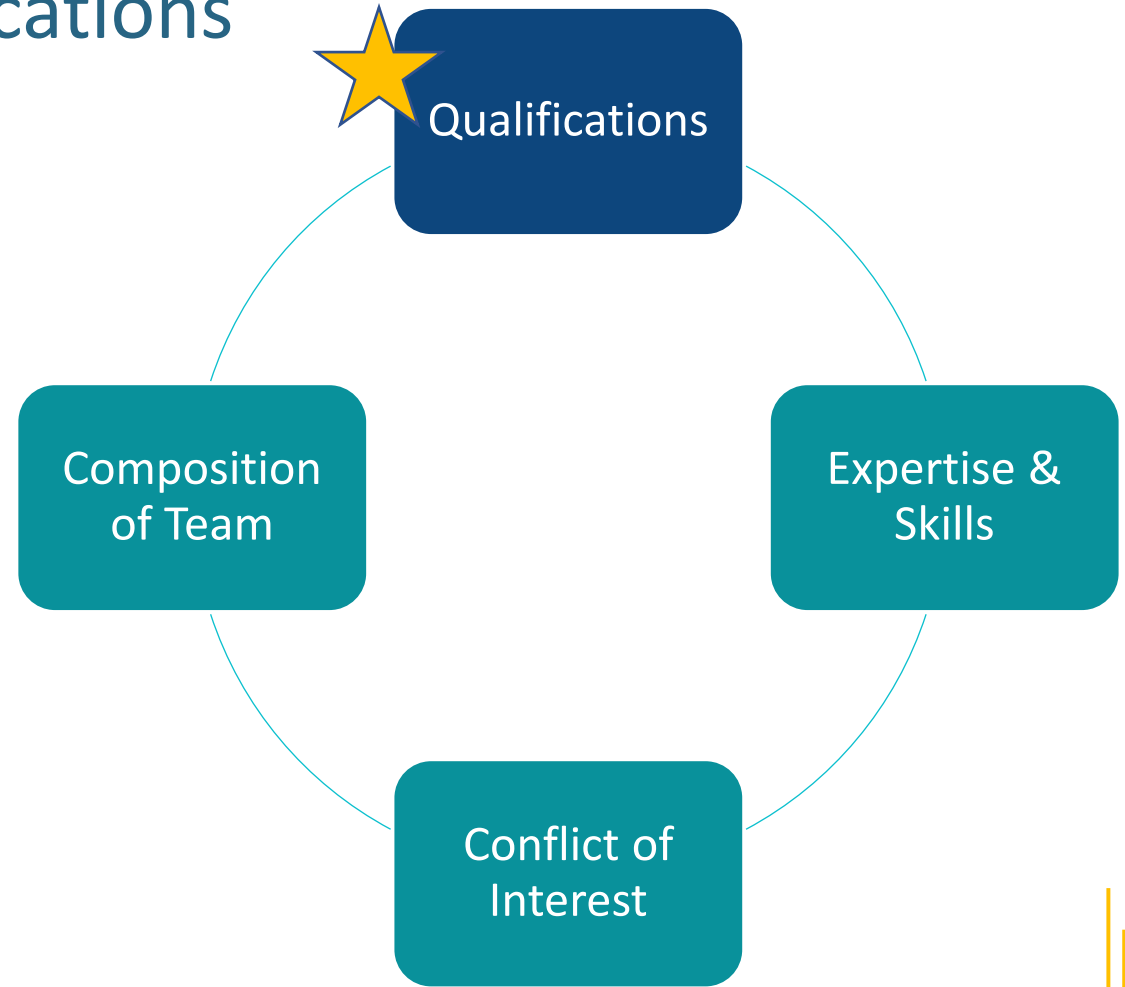
Process for guidance and training

# Who is a Peer Reviewer? – Qualifications

*Highly qualified individuals such as colleagues or peers with an in-depth knowledge of the subject area.*

What qualifications are needed to review applications?

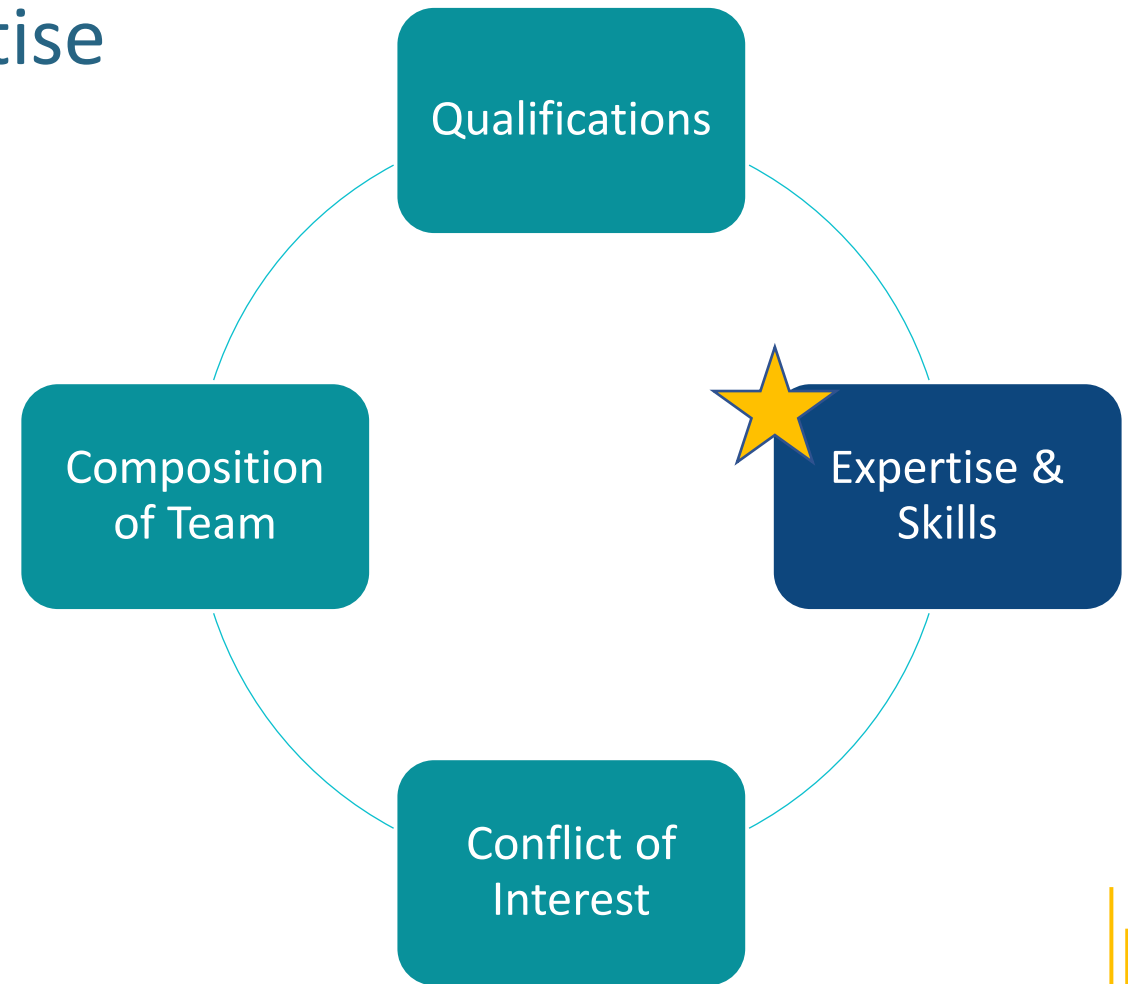
- There are no firm rules for qualifications for Peer Reviewers – articulate your own requirements.
- SE staff not associated with the grant are allowed to participate but cannot have conflicts of interest.



# Who is a Peer Reviewer? – Expertise

What expertise is needed to review applications?

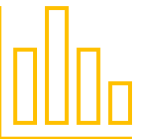
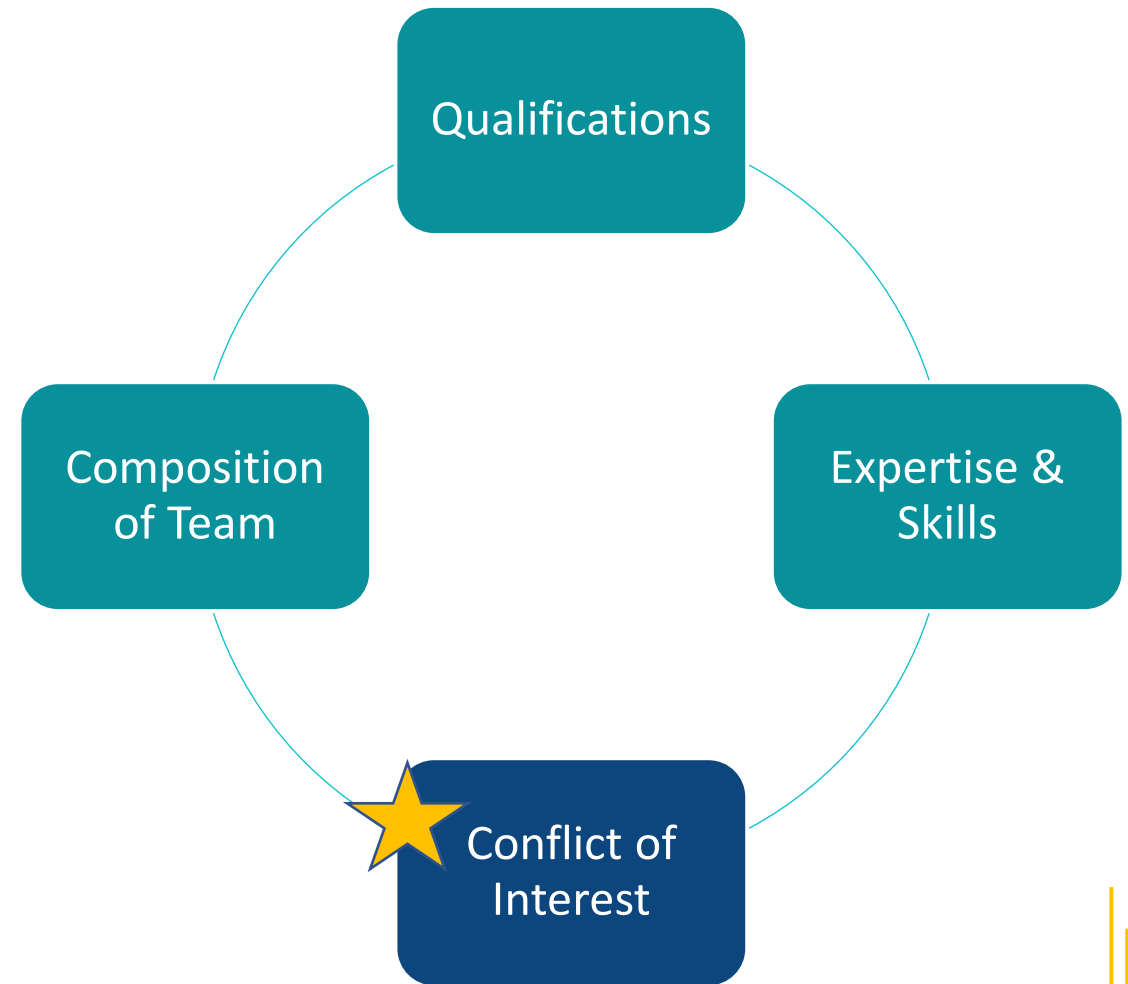
- Background in education
- Charter knowledge
- Financial, operational, or governance expertise
- Expertise in SpEd, ELL, etc.
- Grants management expertise



# Who is a Peer Reviewer? – COI

What qualifies as a conflict of interest?

- Possible, apparent, and/or actual conflicts of interest must be avoided
- Former or current employee of applicant, consultant, or advisor
- Any financial interest
- Personal relationships that would impair ability to impartially review an application
- May benefit reviewer in some way from an applicant receiving a grant



# Who is a Peer Reviewer? – Creating Teams

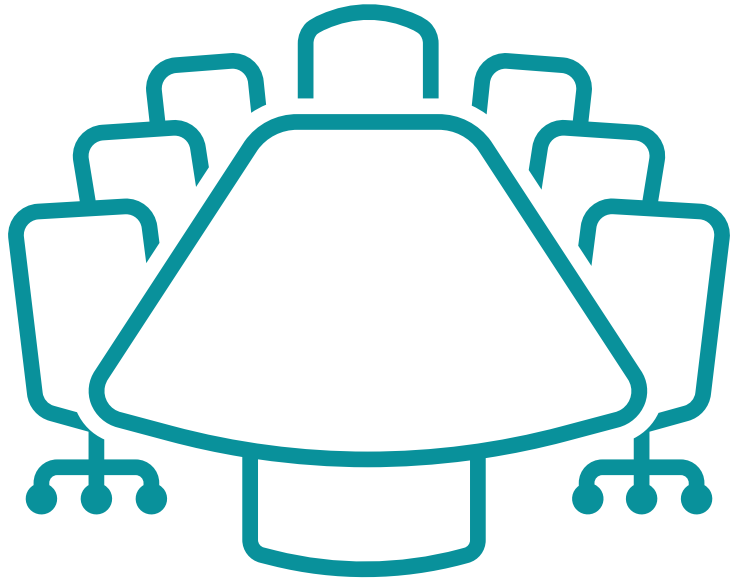
When creating review teams, consider:

- How many reviewers are needed per application?
- What skills are needed across reviewers?
- What specific knowledge might be needed based on the application?
- Does your peer review plan adhere to what was proposed in the original application?





# Questions to Consider in Identifying and Recruiting Peer Reviewers



- Are you compensating external reviewers?
- How do you keep a running list of potential reviewers throughout the year?
- How are you publicizing the opportunity to be a peer reviewer?
- What documents are you requiring peer reviewers to submit?
- Do you have a documented plan for your peer review process?

# Criteria for Assessing Applications



Develop criteria for assessing applications and determining awards



Develop a rubric for reviewers to use in assessing applications



Ensure reviewers are grounding decisions in the rubric and criteria provided

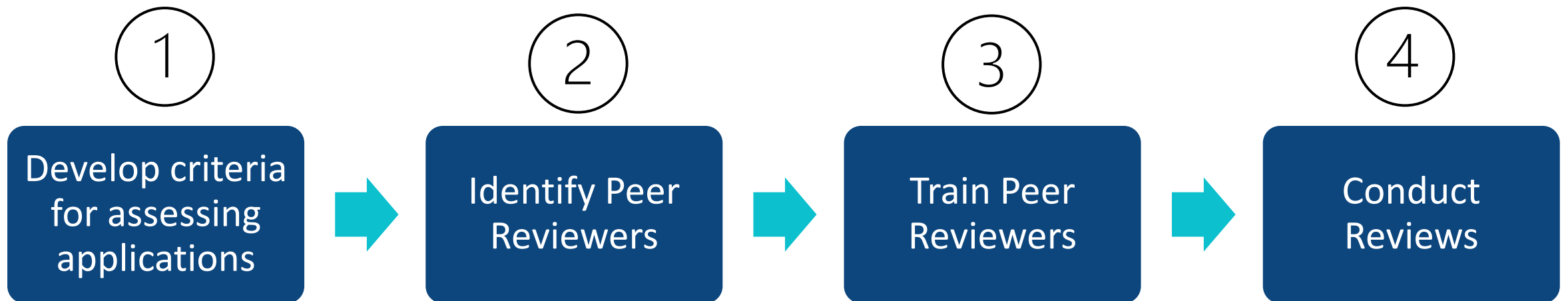
# Example Rubric

<b>Section A: Executive Summary</b>					
Briefly introduce the reader to your school, including a summary of your school’s vision & mission, organizational structure, educational program, community need, and expected outcomes. What does this school want to accomplish, and why is that important to the community you intend to serve? How your school will ensure all students are ready for college and/or living-wage jobs? Identify the grant project goals and begin to explain how they will support your planning and implementation of the school. Also, describe who is planning this school.					
<b>Selection Criteria</b>	<b>Minimally Addresses or does not meet criteria</b> <i>(information significantly incomplete or not provided)</i>	<b>Meets some, but not all, identified criteria</b> <i>(requires additional clarification)</i>	<b>Addresses criteria but did not provide thorough detail</b> <i>(adequate response, but not thoroughly developed response)</i>	<b>Meets All Criteria with thorough detail</b> <i>(clear, concise, and well thought out response)</i>	<b>Total</b>
1) Proposal clearly explains why this school should open at this time and in the geographic area and community in which it is planned for the school to serve, including the following: a. Identifies the needs of the community you plan to serve in terms of demographics, the range of educational options currently available, and range of performance outcomes typically seen.	0	2	3	4	

SEA Grantee:  
Colorado Department of Education  
[2020 RFA](#)

# Process for Guidance and Training

- Training should include
  - In-depth review of rubric used for evaluation
  - Norming on review criteria
  - Practice!



# Review Day: Things to Consider



Are reviewers asked to score applications individually before the review day?



Will your review be conducted in-person or virtually?



Are you utilizing cut scores or are applications ranked?



What are the cut scores for funding? How was this cut score determined?



How will a reviewer who cannot or will not complete a review be handled?



Do you have a process for appeals?

# Peer Review Plan Elements Checklist



To help guide you with ensuring your plan for peer reviews has all elements documented, we have developed a checklist. Use this checklist to help ensure all aspects of your peer review plan are included.

# Check List Review

Yes/No/NA	Contractor Support
	Intention to use peer review logistical contractor
	Roles and responsibilities of contractor
	Expected timelines for contractor deliverables

Yes/No	Panel Information
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	The review team’s schedule for the review of applications, including how many days will be needed for the review process and how applications will be discussed
	The size of the panels and, if known, the number of panels and reviewers
	A description of how applications will be assigned to panels

Yes/No	Peer Reviewers
--------	----------------

	Standards/evaluation criteria for recruiting/selecting reviewers (including whether SE staff will serve as peer reviewers)
	Reasonable accommodations for reviewers with disabilities, where applicable
	Description of reviewer training that addresses scoring expectations
	Procedures for independent review before any group panel discussion occurs
	Procedures that will be used to replace a reviewer in situations where the reviewer is either unable or unwilling to perform his or her job
	A copy of the scoring forms

# Check List Review

Yes/No	Funding Decisions
	How applications will be selected for funding, including criteria for determining awards and whether applications will be ranked or if a cut score will be used
	How applications will be handled if two or more receive the same score

Yes/No	Conflict of Interest
	A procedure to have each reviewer check applications prior to beginning the review, to identify conflicts of interest
	A description of how conflicts of interest will be minimized and resolved
	Additional conflict waivers that might be requested
	Steps to address factors that might affect objectivity, or an explanation that these factors do not apply
Yes/No	Panel Operation
	Criteria program officials will use to determine when to solicit discussion of an application or a group of applications
	Procedures for scoring applications
	Procedures that will be used to ensure a high-quality peer review, including determining/addressing wide variation in scores
Yes/No	Transparency
	Process to be transparent to applicants and the public regarding the standards/evaluation criteria, scoring process, and how funding determinations are made



## Let's Discuss: Peer Review Plan Example – Scoring Process



What are the strengths of this plan?



What are the areas that need to be improved?

## Part II: Common Challenges with Peer Reviewers



What do you do if you can't identify enough peer reviewers?



What other processes or procedures might you have in place if scores appear to be inconsistent within or across teams?



What are common issues that have come up during a review process? How did you deal with these issues?



## **Additional Questions Related to Peer Review**

# Quick Reflection:

## Pick **One** Question & Respond In The Chat!

- 1) Name one new thing you learned during the event.
- 2) Acknowledge a peer for their contributions to the discussion.
- 3) Describe a good idea you heard today.
- 4) Share how you will apply what you learned today.

How did we do?



## How can you contact NCSRC?



[charterschoolcenter.ed.gov](http://charterschoolcenter.ed.gov)



[contact-us@charterschoolcenter.org](mailto:contact-us@charterschoolcenter.org)



# Closing Thoughts from CSP

## Day 2



**THANK YOU!**

