

External vs. Internal Evaluators

Query – 09.17.2007

<p>Query: For those of you that use external evaluators, is evaluation still part of the review process? That is, do applicants still write about and receive points for their evaluation section or do they just say "the evaluator will do it." Do applicants generally meet with the evaluator before they submit?</p>	
<p>From: Nevada</p>	
<p>Responses:</p>	
Oklahoma	<p>The external evaluator and internal evaluator are two different positions. There are 15 points (of a possible 110) for "Evaluation Plan." Five points for three questions. The external evaluator is selected through a bid process and is not chosen until after the grants are awarded, therefore they do not meet with the external evaluator before they submit as that would taint the "low bid" process. Grant writers could meet with the internal evaluator to determine what the best method of meeting the evaluation requirements.</p>
Utah	<p>My RFP includes a section on how the proposal intends to evaluate the project and how the PI will know that goals are reached. Thus, there must be evidence in the final report on the learning outcomes, etc.</p>
Wisconsin	<p>In Wisconsin I have been requiring proposers to select their own outside evaluators. I am currently rethinking that approach and am exploring some alternatives.</p>
Arizona	<p>Jeff, here's the language we have incorporated into our RFP regarding the preparation of the evaluation section of the proposal. In Arizona, we've gone to a system of "pre-qualifying" a list of expert education evaluators, then assigning them to the funded projects after the project awards have been finalized. The project teams of course need to contract directly with the external evaluators, but we retain control of the quality of the evaluators; we work with them collectively as a team; and they consider themselves accountable to us, not the project teams (which is as it should be). The first task of the assigned evaluator is to work with the project team to finalize the evaluation plan. This includes, for each team, developing a detailed Logic Model, which includes (a) what is going to be evaluated, and (b) how. (A process I'm hoping to present at the next ITQ get-together.) The evaluator also helps nail down the sources and methodologies for collecting specific baseline data and otherwise works through the detailed evaluation plan.</p>
Puerto Rico	<p>We used to have the external evaluation plan submitted in the proposal and it was part of the review process. We don't do that any more. Now we have a group of external evaluators from which awarded projects select one who will work with the partnership to design the evaluation plan of the project including outcomes assessment of students' academic achievement.</p>
Illinois	<p>In Illinois, we require the use of an External Evaluator. Applicants do receive points as part of the review criteria on the quality of their evaluation plan. Applicants do meet with their evaluator before they submit and RFP. Evaluation plans must be approved by Board staff before any payments are made to the partnership. We are doing something a little bit different this year in Illinois. Evaluators will have a dual role.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their primary role will be to function as evaluators for particular projects. • Each evaluator will also be asked to take on a second role: that of

	<p>collaborating with the other evaluators to share ideas, procedures, instruments, and outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initially the collaboration will be aimed at improving the individual evaluations. ○ It will also be the first step in building an overall statewide evaluation and analysis team (SWEAT). This “meta-evaluation” will assess the effectiveness of the grant program, including the Board’s administration of the program.
<p>South Carolina</p>	<p>Yes, evaluation is a major part of our review process. We expect the applicants to have identified an external evaluator (outside of the institution) and an evaluation plan to be submitted along with the proposal. Our strongest proposals are those where the evaluator is part of the proposal from the beginning. Very few of the project are awarded funding without an identified evaluator and a strong evaluation plan.</p>
<p>Nebraska</p>	<p>For those of you that use external evaluators, is evaluation still part of the review process? YES Do applicants still write about and receive points for their evaluation section? YES Do applicants generally meet with the evaluator before they submit? YES</p>