

Teaching and Learning Innovation Awards Scoring and Evaluation Rubric

Applications for the Teaching and Learning Innovation Awards are screened through this evaluation criteria. The most exceptional candidates from each [Member jurisdiction](#) are recommended by the Review Committee, with final approval by the Smarter Balanced Executive Director.

The total possible points for each section are noted in the tables below. Each upload should be submitted as separate PDFs.

Document Formatting Requirements

- **Paper (Page) Size:** No larger than standard letter paper size (8 ½" x 11")
- **Margins:** At least one-half inch margins (½") — top, bottom, left, and right — for each page
- **Font Type:** Arial font for readability needs for the largest audience
- **Font Size:** 12 points
- **Line Spacing:** 1.5 line spaced
- **Text Color:** Black to ensure high contrast so it is legible to the largest audience
- **Charts:** Require figure explanations
- **Tables:** Require table explanations

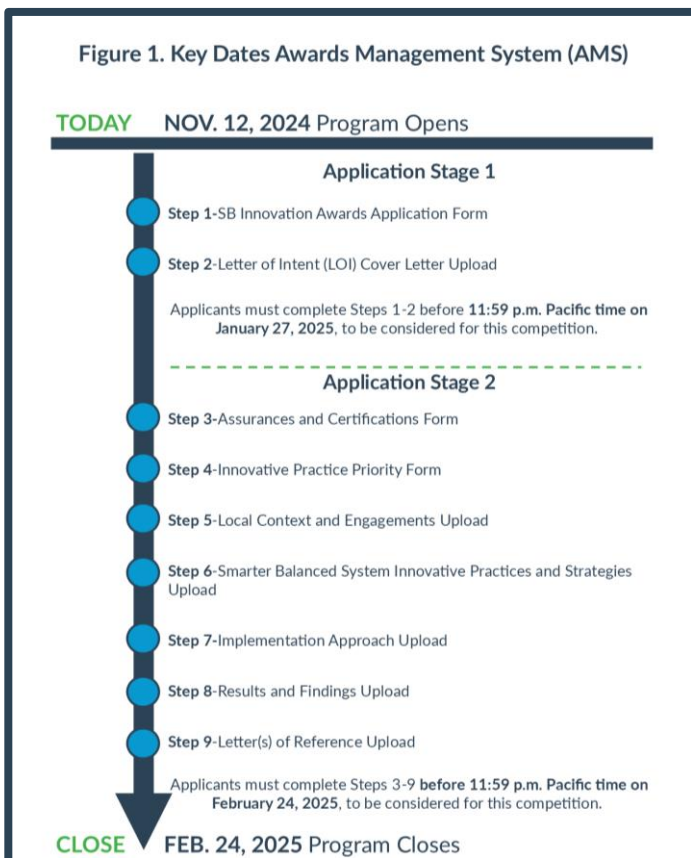


Figure 1 on the left is the **Key Dates** image that shows the timeline and tasks to complete in the application.

These tasks are further described along with each requirement and any restrictions.

Please read the instructions for each step carefully to make sure the requirements for scoring and the application are met.

Each eligible proposal will be scored on a rating of 0–100 in accordance with the rubric and guidelines in the tables below.

Before you can begin the application as described below in the two tables, you will be asked to confirm your public school district’s eligibility to participate in the program.

Please answer the two eligibility questions when prompted to do so, and if eligible, continue to the program to complete [Application Stage 1](#) and [Application Stage 2](#).

Application Stage 1

Applicants must complete Steps 1-2 before **11:59 p.m. Pacific time on January 27, 2025**, to be considered for this competition.

Application Actions	Application Requirements
Embedded Form (Pass/Fail)	Step 1-SB Innovation Awards Application Form Applicants will be asked to answer eight questions in the embedded form for this task.
Upload PDF (Pass/Fail)	Step 2-Letter of Intent (LOI) Cover Letter Upload <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information in the LOI enables Smarter Balanced staff to plan and prepare for the volume of applications that may be received by Smarter Balanced Member jurisdictions (California, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Michigan, Nevada, Oregon, South Dakota, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Washington). The LOI further helps Smarter Balanced staff identify the required expertise and commitment needed from the Review Committee and to ensure sufficient reviewers are available to handle the anticipated number of applications. All interested applicants need to submit an LOI, even if they later decide that they will not submit an application. The LOI is not binding and does not commit the applicant to the subsequent application process. <p>The LOI Cover Letter should include the following content (but is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I-Interest in the Teaching and Learning Innovation Awards Program: Your interest in the Teaching and Learning Innovation Awards Program. II-Demonstrated History Using Resources from the Smarter Balanced Assessment System: Your demonstrated history, experience, expertise in using resources from the Smarter Balanced Assessment System and how this shaped the initiative. III-The Value and Impact the Innovative Initiative Will Likely Have: The perceived value and impact your innovative initiative will have. <p>Page Limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum Number of Pages: Upload cannot exceed two pages <p>Page and Formatting Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LOI Cover Letter

Application Stage 2

Applicants must complete Steps 3-9 before **11:59 p.m. Pacific time on February 24, 2025**, to be considered for this competition. Applications may include external links, but all permissions/citations must be included as required in the [Requirements and Eligibility](#) section and the [Assurances](#) section. External resources will not be considered in the scoring process.

Application Actions/Total Possible Points	Application Requirements
Embedded Form (Pass/Fail)	Step 3-Assurances and Certifications Form Applicants will be asked to answer four questions in the embedded form for this task.
Embedded Form 5 pts This is the “Why”	Step 4-Innovative Practice Priority Form (Up to 5 Points) Smarter Balanced will award up to an additional 5 points to an application, depending on how well the application aligns with the selected Award Priorities . Applicants will be asked to answer seven questions in the embedded form for this task. Maximum Number of Words: 200 Scoring Criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Evidence (4-5 pts) • Moderate Evidence (2-3 pts) • Limited Evidence (0-1 pt)
Upload PDF 20 pts This is the “Who” and “Where”	Step 5-Local Context and Engagements Upload (Up to 20 Points) Smarter Balanced values applications that demonstrate a deep understanding of local needs and engage with the community. The Review Committee will award up to 20 points based on how well the application meets these criteria. Local context is important information to share with the Review Committee so that they can understand how this strategy is tailored to fit the needs of the students and the public school district. Within this upload, the applicant should ensure the following areas are addressed to receive full points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The narrative should describe the primary focus group that the innovation strategy was intended to support. • The narrative should cover the primary grade(s) or grade range in which this approach was designed for. • The narrative should clearly detail if the strategy is specific to a subject area(s) such as mathematics or if it is applicable across multiple subject areas. For the Review Committee to understand the impact, it's important to also clearly describe the number of students who were served and/or the number of teachers who were involved or served with this approach.

Application Actions/Total Possible Points	Application Requirements
<p>Step 5 Continued</p>	<p>Page Limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum Number of Pages: Upload cannot exceed five pages <p>Scoring Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Evidence (16-20 pts) Moderate Evidence (8-15 pts) Limited Evidence (0-7 pts) <p>Page and Formatting Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Context and Engagements
<p>Upload PDF</p> <p>20 pts</p> <p>This is the “What”</p>	<p>Step 6-Smarter Balanced System Innovative Practices and Strategies Upload (Up to 20 Points)</p> <p>Smarter Balanced values applications that demonstrate ingenuity and novel ways in using Smarter Balanced resources to support local teaching and learning needs. Smarter Balanced will award up to 20 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets the request.</p> <p>Within this upload, the applicant should ensure the following areas are addressed to receive full points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The narrative should detail what the innovation is and how it is a unique body of work using Smarter Balanced assessment components. The narrative should be clear about what is new or novel with this approach and how it can benefit other public school districts. The narrative should be specific about how the strategy uses Smarter Balanced resources and what instructional or other approaches are necessary to achieve the selected Award Priorities. <p>Page Limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum Number of Pages: Upload cannot exceed five pages <p>Scoring Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Evidence (16-20 pts) Moderate Evidence (8-15 pts) Limited Evidence (0-7 pts) <p>Page and Formatting Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smarter Balanced System Innovative Practices and Strategies

Application Actions/Total Possible Points	Application Requirements
<p>Upload PDF</p> <p>20 pts</p> <p>This is the “When” and “How”</p>	<p>Step 7-Implementation Approach Upload (Up to 20 Points)</p> <p>Smarter Balanced values applications that are replicable and scalable. The Review Committee will review applications with keen interest that clearly describe the approach that was used including detailed requirements that other educators could use to effectively implement this strategy. Smarter Balanced will award up to 20 points to an application, depending on how well the application meets these implementation criteria.</p> <p>Within this upload, the applicant should ensure the following areas are addressed to receive full points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The narrative should be specific about how many stakeholder groups were involved in the initiative. • The narrative should be specific about what training, professional learning, technical assistance, support and/or resources were necessary and which groups had roles to implement this strategy. • The narrative should also be clear on the timeline to serve as a model for other public school districts. For example, how much time was spent on training? • The narrative should be clear on whether there were deliberate checkpoints to monitor progress or feedback throughout the initiative. For example, were there lessons learned or debriefs at certain milestones? How and when was feedback used to support the initiative? <p>Page Limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum Number of Pages: Upload cannot exceed five pages <p>Scoring Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Evidence (16-20 pts) • Moderate Evidence (8-15 pts) • Limited Evidence (0-7 pts) <p>Page and Formatting Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation Approach
<p>Upload PDF</p> <p>20 pts</p>	<p>Step 8-Results and Findings Upload (Up to 20 Points)</p> <p>Smarter Balanced values applications that are data-driven. Smarter Balanced will award up to 20 points to an application, depending on how well the application’s data describes the effective use and decision-making (or evidence-building process) to support the innovative practice(s). The evaluation of success needs to be grounded in evidence and submitted as part of this application. The application should describe how data was elicited and analyzed to design and refine the initiative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charts should indicate the number of students or respondents (i.e., the count or n-size associated with data). • Data should align with the values submitted in the application form for Step 4-Innovative Practice Priority Form.

Application Actions/Total Possible Points	Application Requirements
<p>Step 8 Continued</p>	<p>Page Limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum Number of Pages: Upload cannot exceed five pages <p>Scoring Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Evidence (16-20 pts) Moderate Evidence (8-15 pts) Limited Evidence (0-7 pts) <p>Page and Formatting Example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results and Findings
<p>Upload PDF</p> <p>(Pass/Fail)</p>	<p>Step 9-Reference Letters Upload</p> <p>For this task, applicants must submit a maximum of three reference letters. One requirement of the reference letter upload is that one letter is from the Authorized Representative at the public school district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reference letters must include the contact information for the person supplying the reference. Contact information includes full name, email, and phone along with a description of signatory’s affiliation with the reference (e.g., role/title). Note: this contact information can be supplied as part of the signature. <p>Authorized Representative Reference Letter Requirement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One reference letter must be from the District’s Authorized Representative. This Authorized Representative letter ensures that the application is allowable for the public school district to receive funds and that the public school district is able to manage the spending of the funds in accordance with the program requirements. Typically, the Authorized Representative role is filled by a District Superintendent or someone with similar fiscal management responsibilities who can assist the district in responding to grants and audits. <p>Examples of Other Reference Letter Signatories Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letters from the State Department of Education, State Board of Public Education, Local Cooperatives, etc. who can address the state or local impact. Letters can be from students, parents/caregivers, and/or anyone who can speak to the value of the program. Letters can also be from school personnel (e.g., teachers, principals, superintendents, etc.) who can describe their experience and role in the initiative. <p>Page Limit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum Number of Pages: Upload cannot exceed two pages

Application Actions/Total Possible Points	Application Requirements
<p>No Action by Applicant</p> <p>Assigned by Review Committee</p> <p>15 pts</p>	<p>Overall Submission Quality (Up to 15 Points)</p> <p>Smarter Balanced values applications that are coherent, well-organized, and effectively convey their message. Up to 15 points will be awarded based on the overall narrative quality of the application. There is no upload for this section of the rubric.</p> <p>Scoring Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong Evidence (11-15 pts) • Moderate Evidence (6-10 pts) • Limited Evidence (0-5 pts)
<p>100 pts</p>	<p>A score of 100 is the highest possible score and is applicable when requirements are fully addressed in the proposal and describe practices that are likely to be effective.</p>

How to Register

Use the [registration link](#) to create an account or read through the process in this step-by-step guide, "[Registration Instructions](#)."

Need the Application in Another Format?

If you would like to view the application as a PDF, here is the [printer-friendly version](#). You can use this resource to see the application questions in advance and to make plans on how to address each task within the application. Please note that all applicants must submit their applications through the [Awards Management System \(AMS\)](#) — no other submission options will be supported.

General Questions?

If you have questions, please email sb@smarterbalanced.org.

Note: [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) will be maintained with the latest questions to benefit applicants with their proposals and program understanding, but the submission of questions does not constitute an implied extension to the posted timeline. There will not be a date extension based on the submission of questions.

