



FY 2025 Grant Review Panel Orientation

Grant Review Guidance (Texas Reads)

As a grant reviewer for the 2025 competitive grant applications for the Texas State Library & Archives Commission (TSLAC), you are invited to submit your review in the TSLAC grant management system (GMS) at <https://grants.tsl.texas.gov>.

If you are new to the system, an invitation to activate your account will be e-mailed to you. If you have already activated your account, you already have the required access.

Questions you may have regarding the grant review process

1. *Can I review applications submitted in the same grant category in which my library applied?*

No. If your library submitted an application to TSLAC for consideration, you cannot serve as a reviewer for that grant category. Be proactive and work with your library staff ahead of time to decide in which grant program you will submit an application.

Reviewers must sign and submit the conflict-of-interest statement before reviewing the applications. If there are any conflicts, as a reviewer, you must inform TSLAC.

Conflict of Interest statement:

A conflict of interest is any real or apparent interest in the outcome of a grant application. No reviewer who is associated with an applicant or who stands to benefit financially, professionally, or personally from an application will serve on the review panel for the grant program in which the application is submitted for that grant cycle. Any reviewer who is associated with a potential applicant in the respective category or who has a potential conflict of interest must inform their organization and TSLAC. A reviewer may choose to recuse himself/herself from reviewing any application.

2. *What is the deadline for completing my reviews?*

You have until the beginning of your GRP meeting on **May 20th at 9:30 AM** to complete the initial review of your assigned applications. This means that your scores need to have been submitted by this time to be able to discuss the applications in the review panel meeting.

3. *What has been done so far in the grant application review process?*

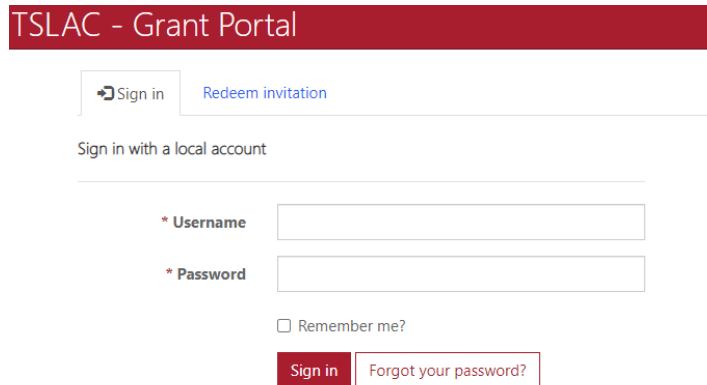
TSLAC staff members have reviewed the applications for technical issues such as applicant eligibility and eligibility of costs. If there were concerns or issues, staff members sent the comments to the applicants for clarification or correction. The applicant responses have been received and are included as TSLAC feedback in the application.

4. How do I review the applications?

All proposal scoring and evaluation will be done electronically through the TSLAC grant management system, GMS, at <https://grants.tsl.texas.gov>. You will be able to select your own username and password.

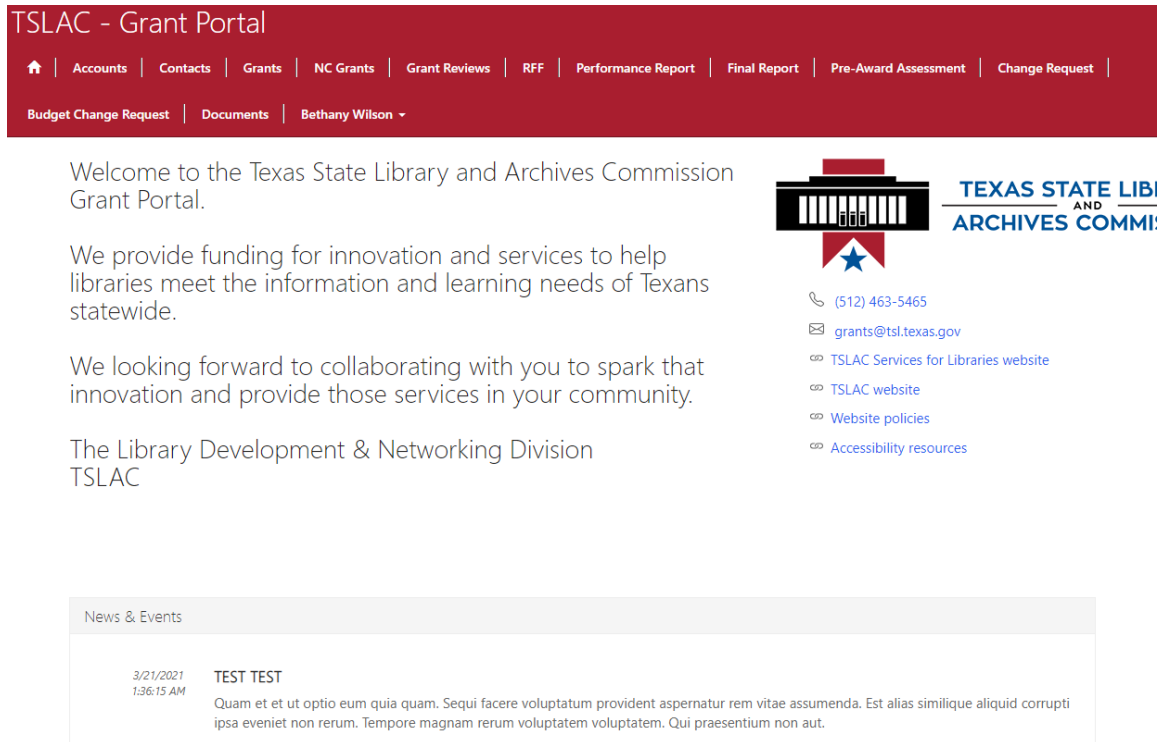
In addition to GMS access, you will need a copy of the program guidelines for the grant program you are reviewing. The Grants Team will send you a copy of the guidelines, or you can access them on the grants website here: <https://www.tsl.texas.gov/ldn/grants/programs>

Follow these steps to find your assigned reviews:



The screenshot shows the 'TSLAC - Grant Portal' sign-in interface. At the top, there are two buttons: 'Sign in' and 'Redeem invitation'. Below this, the text 'Sign in with a local account' is displayed. The form includes two input fields: '* Username' and '* Password'. A checkbox labeled 'Remember me?' is positioned below the password field. At the bottom of the form, there are two buttons: 'Sign in' and 'Forgot your password?'.

Fig. 1. GMS home page



The screenshot displays the full TSLAC - Grant Portal home page. The header features a navigation menu with links: Home, Accounts, Contacts, Grants, NC Grants, Grant Reviews, RFF, Performance Report, Final Report, Pre-Award Assessment, and Change Request. Below the menu, the user's name 'Bethany Wilson' is shown. The main content area contains a welcome message: 'Welcome to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission Grant Portal. We provide funding for innovation and services to help libraries meet the information and learning needs of Texans statewide. We looking forward to collaborating with you to spark that innovation and provide those services in your community. The Library Development & Networking Division TSLAC'. To the right is the Texas State Library and Archives Commission logo and contact information: (512) 463-5465, grants@tsl.texas.gov, and links to TSLAC Services for Libraries website, TSLAC website, Website policies, and Accessibility resources. At the bottom, there is a 'News & Events' section with a post titled 'TEST TEST' dated 3/21/2021 at 1:36:15 AM.

Fig. 2. GMS landing page



Fig. 3. GMS task tiles

As a reviewer, you have access to the following tasks

- Accounts – identifying information about your organization
- Contacts – organization employees with access to GMS
- Grant Reviews – grant reviews assigned to you as a reviewer
- Documents – TSLAC grant notices and forms

After familiarizing yourself with the website, read through the grant notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) or program guidelines for the program for which you are a reviewer. You will score the applications using the scoring rubric included in that document.

To begin the grant review process, click **Grant Reviews** in the red task bar. Once selected, all proposals awaiting review will be listed.

Review Name	Grant Application	Grant Program	Reviewer	Applicant Organization (Grant Application)	Initial Review Complete	Final Review Complete	Total Weighted Score	State Fiscal Year (Grant Application)	Created On
1144 by Bethany Wilson	478-T1702 - Sammie buys a cell phone	Special Projects Test	Bethany Wilson	Irving Public Library	No	No	0	S2017	4/1/2021 4:05 PM
1143 by Bethany Wilson	478-T1704 - 478-T1704 - 478-T1704 - Sammie gets a new friend	Special Projects Test	Bethany Wilson	Irving Public Library	No	No	0	S2017	4/1/2021 4:05 PM
1140 by Bethany Wilson	478-T1705 - Sammie learns to fly	Special Projects Test	Bethany Wilson	Irving Public Library	No	No	0	S2017	4/1/2021 4:05 PM
1149 by Bethany Wilson	Jose Testing...	Special Projects Test	Bethany Wilson	Irving Public Library	No	No	0	S2017	4/1/2021 4:05 PM

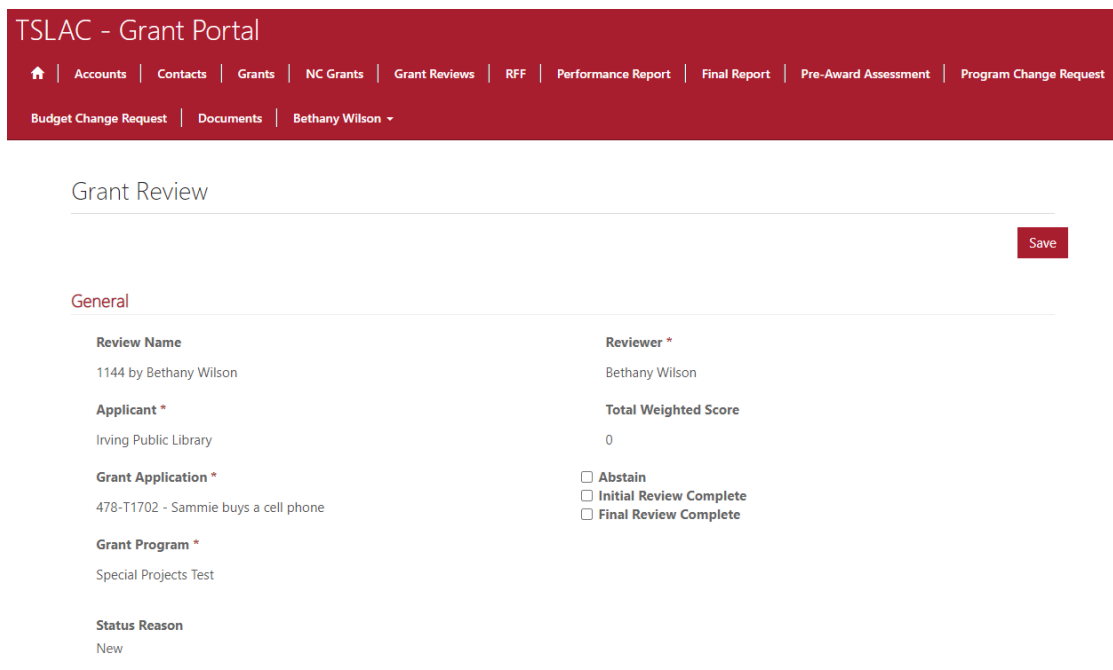
Fig. 4. Grant review list

Select the desired grant review name.

Please review and score the applications based on the criteria provided in the grant NOFO/program guidelines. Consider each application on its individual merits and score accordingly. You should also take into consideration how closely the proposed project aligns with program purposes and the effective use of limited funds.

TSLAC has confirmed that all required documents have been submitted for these proposals.

Please include comments (good and bad) on all evaluation forms for the benefit of the applicants. The comments will be shared with the applicants after the review process is completed.



The screenshot shows the TSLAC Grant Portal interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Accounts, Contacts, Grants, NC Grants, Grant Reviews, RFF, Performance Report, Final Report, Pre-Award Assessment, and Program Change Request. Below this, there is a sub-navigation bar with links for Budget Change Request, Documents, and Bethany Wilson. The main content area is titled "Grant Review" and contains a "Save" button. Under the "General" section, the form displays the following information:

Review Name 1144 by Bethany Wilson	Reviewer * Bethany Wilson
Applicant * Irving Public Library	Total Weighted Score 0
Grant Application * 478-T1702 - Sammie buys a cell phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Review Complete <input type="checkbox"/> Final Review Complete
Grant Program * Special Projects Test	
Status Reason New	

Fig. 5. Review form – General information

Total Weighted Score — total score calculated from criteria based on weights

Abstain — If you are associated with an applicant or application or stand to benefit directly from an application, you will not be allowed to serve on the review panel reviewing the application in question. See the Conflict-of-Interest Statement for more information.

If you feel that you cannot objectively review an application for other reasons, please check "Abstain." During our grant review panel meetings in May, we will save these proposals for the end of the meeting and ask you to abstain from the formal discussion.

Initial Review Complete — indicates to TSLAC that you have completed your initial review. If this is not selected by a certain point, or if no review activity is detected, TSLAC will conclude that there may be some difficulty in completing the review. All initial reviews for proposals assigned to you should be completed before the grant review panel meeting in early April.

Final Review Complete — indicates to TSLAC that you have completed your final review and that your scores and comments are final. Once submitted, your scores are locked.

Criterion 1

Criterion

Needs Assessment: Describe why the program is needed, the program goals and the audience. Describe the greater community to be served using demographic statistics, library records, or surveys to support these statements. Email or mail letters of cooperation demonstrating commitment to the project from agencies involved. See Guidelines.

Answer

hijkl

TSLAC Feedback

—

Criterion 01 Comment

01 Points

15

01 Eval Score

0

01 Weighted Score

0

Fig. 6. Review form – Criterion review

Using the scoring rubric included in the program guidelines, score each criterion according to how well the answer meets the rubric. See example below.

Each criterion is scored on a 0-5 scale with the total criterion score being weighted. The maximum score for each application is 100 points.

Project Scoring Total in Six Areas: 100 points		
<p>Relevance and appropriateness of the project design and activities to the goals and purpose of the Texas Reads grant program will be considered in the scoring of all criteria. Members of the Texas Reads Grant Review Panel may score each criterion as follows:</p> <p>0-1 points: Project does not meet the goals and purposes of the Texas Reads grant program. 2-3 points: Project partially meets the goals and purposes of the Texas Reads grant program. 4-5 points: Project is a clear fit for the goals and purposes of the Texas Reads grant program.</p>		
1. Needs Assessment (Points: Raw score = 5 max, weight = 4; Final score = 20 max)		
<p>Describe why the program is needed in the community. Address the program goals and audience. Describe the greater community to be served using demographic statistics, library records, or surveys to support these statements.</p>		
0-1 points	2-3 points	4-5 points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides no evidence of need for program in community. Program goals and audience are not defined. Does not describe needs assessment process and/or how need was determined (i.e., no description of community served, demographic statistics, library records or evidence or surveys). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides partial/some evidence of need for program in community. Program goals and audience are defined but show little to no connection to description of community need. Needs assessment process seems vague and incompletely describes how stated need was determined. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides clear and convincing evidence of need for program in community. Program goals and audience are clearly connected to description of community need. Clearly describes needs assessment process including how stated need was determined (e.g., statistics, records, surveys).

Fig. 7. Scoring rubric

Budget

Expected Program Income

dsfasdfasdf

Grant Fund

Other Funds

Total Costs

Salaries/Wages/Benefits

\$0.00

\$4,566.00

\$4,566.00

Description Salaries/Wages/Benefits

ghjk

Fig. 8. Review form – Budget

When you complete your scoring, check the **Initial Review Complete** or **Final Review Complete** box (top of page), and click the **SAVE** button at the top or bottom of the screen.

TSLAC - Grant Portal

Home | Accounts | Contacts | Grants | NC Grants | Grant Reviews | RFF | Performance Report | Final Report | Pre-Award Assessment | Program Change Request | Budget Change Request | Documents | Bethany Wilson

Grant Review

Save

General

Review Name 1144 by Bethany Wilson	Reviewer * Bethany Wilson
Applicant * Irving Public Library	Total Weighted Score 0
Grant Application * 478-T1702 - Sammie buys a cell phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Review Complete <input type="checkbox"/> Final Review Complete
Grant Program * Special Projects Test	
Status Reason New	

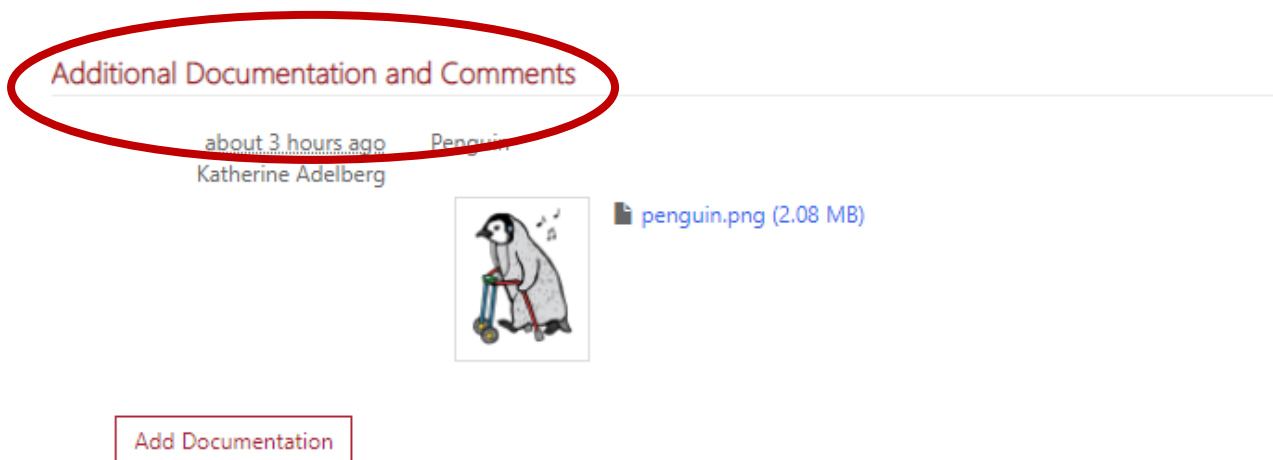
Once saved, the total weighted score will calculate and appear at the top of the review page.

General

Review Name 1149 by Bethany Wilson	Reviewer * Bethany Wilson
Applicant * Irving Public Library	Total Weighted Score 72
Grant Application * Jose Testing...	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstain <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial Review Complete <input type="checkbox"/> Final Review Complete
Grant Program * Special Projects Test	
Status Reason New	

5. If an application references an “attached” document, can I view that document?

Yes, you will be able to view the documents submitted by the applicants. All submitted documents are located at the bottom of the application page under “Notes.”



6. Can I change my scores once submitted?

Yes. You will be able to change your scores up to and including at the April meeting. If you will not be able to attend the meeting, select the “Final Review Complete” check box and save your review. TSLAC will then lock your scores, at which point you will not be able to change your scores.

7. What happens during the Review Panel meeting?

During your meeting, we will discuss each application and allow you another opportunity to confirm or change your score for each application. Reviewers will ‘finalize’ their scores in GMS after the meeting. *Each reviewer must score each application* unless he or she has abstained from scoring any applications.

8. What’s next?

After the meeting, you have an opportunity to amend your scores before clicking the **Final Review** button in GMS. Once all reviews are complete, TSLAC staff will revise comments/feedback as needed and compile totals for each applicant. Staff will send respective comments, along with the scores and funding recommendations, to applicants. Each applicant will have an opportunity to appeal the decision. If there are no appeals or nothing changes during the appeal process, we will then take the funding recommendations to the Texas State Library and Archives Commission meeting for their Commission approval. If there are no objections to the recommendations, all will be approved to go forward. The next step will be to issue award letters and grant contracts to the new subrecipients.

9. *Is there anything I need to keep in mind?*

- **Proposals can be accessed up to and during the final meeting.** Please plan accordingly to submit your initial scores by the beginning of the meeting.
- **Please do not contact the applicants directly.** The Grants Team is your resource for answers to any questions.
- **Each grant application is to be reviewed on its own merit; all submitted material may be considered.**
- **All applications and comments are confidential until the awards are announced.** Reviewer comments will be shared with the respective applicants, but the names of the reviewers will not.
- **Email** if you have any questions while reviewing the grants.

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