

# The Practical Social-Emotional Competence Assessments Work Group (AWG)

## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

### Social-Emotional Assessment Design Challenge

The Practical Social-Emotional Competence Assessments Work Group (AWG) is seeking submissions of innovative direct assessments of social-emotional skills for its Social-Emotional Assessment Design Challenge. By mounting this effort, the AWG aims to stimulate the development and adoption of social-emotional assessments that support effective instruction and positive student development.

Selected proposals will receive a cash prize of up to \$5,000. Winners will also receive public recognition (featured pieces in blogs, websites, and other media outlets) and inclusion in a professional network dedicated to advancing SE assessment.

We anticipate submissions from educators in the field, from assessment development professionals, from game designers, and from others in the field of education or social-emotional learning. We will accept (and encourage) applications from collaborative teams that include educators and researchers.

A proposal narrative and assessment prototype **are due April 20, 2017 by 11:59 p.m. ET.**

#### **Eligibility**

To be eligible to apply for the Design Challenge, you must have designed or developed a direct assessment of social-emotional learning. Direct assessment of these skills includes all forms of assessment in which social-emotional learning is measured from *a child's performance on a challenging task*. This includes, but is not limited to naturalistic technology-enhanced simulations, performance tasks, game-based data, and live structured social simulations. Direct assessment is distinct from other forms of assessment, such as observations, student self-report, or teacher or parent ratings of students' skills.

Submissions may reflect very early work in assessment development or more fully developed assessment systems. All submissions should reflect an innovative direct assessment system designed to measure social-emotional competencies.

Ultimately, we are interested in identifying innovative direct assessments of SEL that span pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade. For this design challenge, however, no one submission is expected to cover the entire age range. Instead, we encourage submissions to focus on one or more of the following developmental levels: pre-K through early elementary (roughly pre-K to grade 2), upper elementary (roughly grades 3 to 5), middle school (grades 6 to 8), or high school (grades 9 to 12).

## Application requirements

Submissions should include two elements:

- 1) A proposal narrative (up to 5 pages single spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins)
- 2) Either the assessment measure and, if available, a scoring manual, or an assessment prototype sample. The assessment prototype sample may be in the form of an appendix with sample items, a YouTube video clip demonstrating the assessment, or any other easily accessible form that gives reviewers a clear perspective on what the assessment will look like for children and teachers.

## Review and notification process

All submissions will go through two rounds of reviews. The first review will be conducted by program staff. Proposals that do not fit the general requirements or guidelines of the request for submissions will not be reviewed further. Proposals that pass the first round of reviews will be reviewed by at least two experts in the field. Six proposers who submit measures meeting a minimum set of criteria will receive awards. Winners will be notified in late Spring of 2017.

## About the Assessments Work Group

The *Establishing Practical Social-Emotional Competence Assessments of Preschool to High School Students* project has assembled an Assessment Work Group, the “AWG,” to lead a three-year, collaborative effort focused on high-quality and practical SE assessment. The AWG is a multidisciplinary collaborative of leading researchers and practitioners in the fields of PreK-12 education, assessment, social and emotional learning (SEL), and related fields. In this multiyear effort, members of the work group collaborate to make key advancements in student social and emotional (SE) competence assessment. The work group is managed and staffed by CASEL, in close partnership with California’s CORE Districts, Transforming Education, RAND, and Harvard University.

The members of the design challenge subgroup are: Noah Bookman (CORE Districts), Clark McKown (Rush University), Jim Pellegrino (University of Illinois at Chicago), Dave Calhoun (Fresno Unified School District), Ben Hayes (Washoe County School District), Robert Jagers (University of Michigan), Ray Pecheone (Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity), Jean Wing (Oakland Unified School District), Laura Davidson (Washoe County School District), and Brian Stecher (RAND). See <http://www.casel.org/assessment-work-group/> for more information.

**Questions?** Please contact Lindsay Read, Manager of Research, CASEL, [lread@casel.org](mailto:lread@casel.org), with any questions about the Call for Submissions or the submission process.

## Appendix A. Submission Information

Please respond to the following questions using this [online submission form](#).

### 1. Narrative Proposal (75 points)

#### **Significance of the Proposed Assessment** (40 points)

- 1) How is the assessment clearly and compellingly innovative? (5 points)
- 2) Does the assessment use a direct assessment approach in a way that is clearly described, well-justified, and likely to yield useful and interesting assessment data? (10 points)
- 3) Are the goals of the assessment clear and compelling? (5 points)
- 4) How is the assessment system useful, demonstrating ease of use and a strong potential to encourage effective teaching and learning? (5 points)
- 5) Does the assessment system have clear potential to scale? (10 points)
- 6) Does the assessment system have the capacity to report data back to users? (5 points)

#### **Assessment Description** (35 points)

- 7) Does the application clearly and convincingly make the case for the developmental appropriateness of the submission? (10 points)
- 8) Does the application clearly and convincingly make the case for the cultural appropriateness of the submission? (10 points)
- 9) Does the assessment have a high likelihood of being engaging and meaningful to students, including providing them with feedback that will help them become better learners? (5 points)
- 10) Does the application include either evidence of strong technical properties, such as reliability, validity, and measurement equivalence (for developed assessment systems) or a clear and compelling vision for establishing those measurement properties (for new or emerging assessments)? (10 points)

### 2. Assessment Prototype (25 points)

- 11) Does the assessment prototype clearly communicate how the assessment will look and operate for teachers and students, including how it is scored? (10 points)
- 12) Does the assessment prototype demonstrate clearly that the assessment has the characteristics described in the proposal narrative? (15 points)

## Appendix B. Submission Guidelines and Scoring

Social-emotional learning encompasses a broad range of skills and behaviors. For this design challenge, we are seeking assessment systems that measure one or more of the following skill areas: (a) intrapersonal skills (e.g., self-management/self-control/self-regulation, beliefs/mindsets/attitudes) and (b) interpersonal skills (e.g., social awareness, perspective taking). We recognize that there are other components of social-emotional learning. We selected these three areas because there is great interest in their potential to enhance student success in school and life.

The proposal narrative and prototype sample will be awarded up to 100 points, according to the following rubric:

### 1. Narrative Proposal (75 points)

#### Significance of the Proposed Assessment (40 points)

##### 1) Assessment is clearly and compellingly innovative (5 points)

Examples of innovative assessments could be those with a track record of assessment in other domains such as achievement testing, but that have not been used for assessing SEL, or assessments that use a known methodology with a novel element that substantially enhances the usefulness and feasibility of the assessment.

Innovation may also refer to the use of digital technology to deliver, score, or otherwise enable SEL assessment in ways that would not be possible without that technology. Some of the ways digital technology may enhance assessment are by making it scalable, by automating scoring and feedback, and by enhancing student engagement. Submissions are not required to be digital, but all submissions should have the potential to be deployed at scale.

##### 2) Assessment uses a direct assessment approach in a way that is clearly described, well-justified, and likely to yield useful and interesting assessment data (10 points)

The design challenge welcomes submissions that use **direct assessment** strategies to measure social-emotional skills. Skills are individual student skills, and do not include the classroom climate or teacher social-emotional practices. Direct assessment of these skills includes all forms of assessment in which social-emotional learning is measured from a child's performance on a challenging task. This includes, but is not limited to naturalistic technology-enhanced simulations, performance tasks, game-based data, and escape room tasks. Direct assessment is distinct from other forms of assessment, such as observations, student self-report, or teacher or parent ratings of students' skills, which are not eligible.

**3) The goals of the assessment are clear and compelling (5 points)**

Assessment can be undertaken for many different purposes. Assessment data can be gathered to inform instruction (formative assessment), to evaluate year-end performance (summative assessment), or to evaluate program impacts (program evaluation). There are undoubtedly many other purposes for which assessments can be undertaken.

The form and properties of an assessment should be appropriate for its intended purpose. For example, tests designed for high-stakes accountability should privilege very high standards of psychometric rigor and standardization over other qualities. In contrast, formative assessments, used more frequently and informally, may privilege a close connection between the assessment and the instructional unit over psychometric rigor. The best assessments have design properties that are a very good fit with the intended use.

To that end, all applicants should articulate the goal of assessment and the contexts and its intended uses. Furthermore, they should detail the ways in which the submitted assessment design is appropriate for those use cases. Finally, applicants should describe the uses, if any, for which their assessment design would be inappropriate.

**4) The assessment system is useful, demonstrating ease of use and a strong potential to encourage effective teaching and learning (5 points)**

One element of usefulness is *ease of use*. The very best submissions will require few specialized materials or equipment, little assessment expertise, and little or no additional forms of training or expertise. The best submissions will include assessment content and strategies that are engaging to students.

A second element of usefulness is that the assessment *encourages effective teaching and learning*. We are particularly interested in submissions that provide easily interpretable information that can be immediately used to guide instruction. The strongest assessment submissions will also provide students with information about their own strengths and needs to promote self-knowledge and the learning process.

**5) The assessment system has clear potential to scale (10 points)**

We seek submissions of assessment designs, prototypes and fully developed assessment systems that have clear potential to be administered at scale, by which we mean that it would be feasible and cost-effective to administer to a large number of students.

**6) The assessment system has the capacity to report data back to users (5 points)**

We seek submissions that have considered how data will be reported back to, and used by, the users.

## **Assessment Description (35 points)**

### **7) The applicant clearly and convincingly makes the case for the developmental appropriateness of the submission (10 points)**

Applicants should explain how their assessment system fits the developmental stage for which it was designed, and how assessment methodology or content might have to be altered to assess this same content area at different age ranges. We encourage submissions to focus on one of the following developmental levels: pre-K through early elementary (roughly pre-K to grade 2), upper elementary (roughly grades 3 to 5), middle school (grades 6 to 8) or high school (grades 9 to 12). We welcome submissions focused on any of these age ranges

### **8) The application clearly and convincingly makes the case for the cultural appropriateness of the submission (10 points)**

It is critical that social-emotional learning assessments, like all assessments be appropriate for children from a range of cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. At the most surface level, this means that the assessment is accessible and usable by students from a wide range of backgrounds. It also means that the content of the assessment should reflect the diversity of students for which it is designed. For example, illustrations including people should be created with the diversity of student body in mind. Finally, the best assessments will have technical properties that demonstrate their equivalence across groups using the conventions of classical test theory and item response theory.

Nevertheless, all applications should address what features, if any, of the submitted assessment's design ensure its broad cultural appropriateness. In addition, when appropriate, applicants are encouraged to describe how they would go about empirically establishing the equivalence of their assessments across important groupings.

### **9) The assessment has a high likelihood of being engaging and meaningful to students, including providing them with feedback that will help them become better learners (5 points)**

Taking the assessment itself provides an educational experience that's of value or the assessments results, when shared with students, can help them gain a greater understanding of themselves in a way that will benefit their long-term success.

### **10) The applicant has shared either evidence of strong technical properties, such as reliability, validity, and measurement equivalence (for developed assessment systems) or a clear and compelling vision for establishing those measurement properties (for new or emerging assessments) (10 points)**

Reliability (or consistency of measurement), validity (the appropriateness of the assessment for its intended purpose), and measurement equivalence (the appropriateness of the measure for different groups of people) are foundational properties of all good assessment systems. We recognize the challenge, expertise, and cost of establishing the psychometric properties of assessments, including the cultural equivalence of assessments. Furthermore, we recognize that new or emerging assessment efforts that may otherwise be an outstanding fit for this competition may not yet have much or any evidence of the technical qualities of the assessment.

Therefore, we expect that applicants will present evidence of the technical qualities of their submission consistent with the stage of their assessment's development. For new or emerging assessment systems, the expectation of evidence will be low. However, in these cases, applicants should describe their plans for establishing the technical qualities of the assessment system. For more established assessments, we expect applicants to present evidence of the assessment system's reliability and validity, and, to the extent that it is available, measurement equivalence.

## 2. Assessment Prototype (25 points)

- 11) Clearly communicates how the assessment will look and operate for teachers and students, including how it is scored (10 points)
- 12) Demonstrates clearly that the assessment has the characteristics described in the proposal narrative (15 points)

## Appendix C. Intellectual Property

While it is not a part of the criteria for selection, we wish to encourage the open exchange of ideas and continued innovation based on submissions. At the same time, we recognize the potential for some submissions to be successful in the marketplace and therefore to include proprietary intellectual property. To support the exchange of ideas, we ask that applicants adhere to a Creative Commons License condition. The most open of those licenses, the Attribution license, allows users to use and modify work so long as they give credit for the original work (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). Another option, for those whose submissions are currently or may become commercialized, is a noncommercial license, which includes the requirements of the Attribution license, but also restricts users to non-commercial uses (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>). Please indicate in your application which form of licensing you prefer should you be awarded a design challenge prize.