Program Narrative Guide: Practicum Programs

In the program narrative section of the application, applicants respond to a series of questions to provide the rationale for the proposed program, outline instructional goals, describe program activities, and justify the personnel charged with implementing the program. Responses to the program narrative questions should include concrete and realistic plans for the design and implementation of the program goals and should be guided by a solid understanding of the STARTALK Principles for Effective Teaching and Learning, the World-Readiness Standards for Language Learning, the NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements, and the Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning Framework.

STARTALK practicum programs provide teachers opportunities to plan and implement key concepts in a direct teaching experience in a student program. Teacher participants will implement their new learning while teaching in a linked STARTALK student program.

Proposals for a practicum program must respond to two sets of narrative questions: one for the initial teacher training portion of their program, and one for the practicum experience in the student program. The questions below provide hints and directions based on the review criteria used by proposal reviewers to rate applications in order to determine recommendations for funding. Applicants are advised to review the criteria while preparing the program narrative section of their proposal. Please be aware that each narrative question response has a 3,000-character limit. That is an average of 500 words. Applicants will not be able to enter responses that exceed the character limit in SOPHIE. Examples provided are not intended to be exhaustive but guide the applicant’s own development of their proposal.

PRACTICUM PROGRAM: Teacher Training

This set of questions asks applicants to develop the teacher training that will prepare teacher participants to teach in a linked student program.

Practicum Teacher Training: Participants

Questions in this section ask applicants to describe participants in the program, their backgrounds, and how the program will ensure that every teacher is able to grow as a result of their participation.

1. Describe the participants you are hoping to enroll in your program, including their qualifications, background knowledge, needs, etc.
   
   - Identify who the participants will be (language, certification status, geographical area, affiliation with a school/district, etc.)
   - Describe the steps you will take to ensure that participants have the necessary backgrounds (pre-service teachers, new teachers, heritage school teachers, teacher leaders, previous STARTALK experience, etc.) for this type of program
   - For returning programs: Describe how the learning experiences for returning participants will be modified and how participants will benefit from participating again (different performance assessments, different TELL criteria or STARTALK Principle, etc.)
2. What structures do you have in place that will address the different backgrounds and experiences that your participants bring to the program? How will your program allow for all participants to grow professionally as a result of their participation?

- Describe an extensive application process that allows the program to identify participants’ backgrounds (teaching background, current strengths, and professional goals) and how the information will be used to adapt program activities (e.g. TELL self-assessment, pre-program survey, interview, teaching demonstration video, etc.)
- Describe specific activities that will allow the program to differentiate based on participant background and experience (e.g. multiple tracks for participants, assignment grouping, choice boards, etc.)

**Practicum Teacher Training: Reflection**

This section only applies to applicants who were previously funded. How will recommendations from previous programs be addressed?

3. Explain how you will address the challenges and recommendations provided in your most recent site visit report. These recommendations will be pre-populated and refer to narrative questions 5 and 6 in the site visit report. If you cannot address a recommendation, provide a reason.

- List modifications to the program in response to each recommendation
- Ensure program modifications are meaningful and indicate a program’s intent to grow and improve
- Justify or provide rationale for recommendations that are not addressed

**Practicum Teacher Training: Goals for Teacher Participants**

This section asks applicants to outline the overall focus of the program and identify learning goals that will guide the development of the program curricula once approved for funding. What are the major learning outcomes of the program?

4. Identify up to two (2) TELL criteria from the Learning Experience domain and up to two (2) additional TELL criteria that will provide feedback based on evidence of student learning.

- You will be able to select up to four items from a list of TELL criteria. Review the TELL framework prior to completing this section of the proposal.

**Practicum Teacher Training: Assessment for Teacher Participants**

This section asks applicants to identify how participant growth will be measured, documented, and collected throughout the program. How will participants’ growth in the program be measured?

5. Describe the evidence you will collect to show that each participant has met the major goals of the program. Include examples for each of the representative TELL criteria statements addressed by your program.

   **Practicum Program Tip:** Identify evidence you will collect during the teacher training AND during the practicum experience in a student program.

- Identify evidence that is appropriate for the program type, selected TELL criteria, and, when applicable, STARTALK principle and program length
- Describe how evidence will be collected from participants (e.g. online portfolio, recorded teaching demonstrations, etc.)
- Identify evidence that is realistic and meaningful for participants and enables them to transfer their learning into their own classrooms (e.g. developing learning plans, learning tools, etc.)
Practicum Teacher Training: Implementation

Questions in this section ask applicants to describe the different activities participants will engage in order to meet the program goals.

6. **Describe the learning experiences you will design that will prepare participants to teach in a student program.**

- Describe a clear alignment between learning experiences that directly connect to the identified TELL criteria or STARTALK Principle and prepare participants to demonstrate the learning required by performance assessments.
- Describe a variety of learning experiences that will model research-based practices in language teaching and learning.
- Describe how learning experiences will actively engage the adult learner.
- Justify identified guest speakers and how they will contribute to the goals of the program.
- Describe how the program will use participant feedback and evidence of learning to refine learning experiences.

7. **How will participants apply their skills when working directly in the student program?**

- Describe the teaching opportunities of participants in the student program (type of opportunities, number of hours, class size, etc.).

8. **How will participants use evidence of student learning to reflect on the effectiveness of their instruction when teaching in the student program?**

   **Practicum Program Tip:** Include mentor teachers in your budget to facilitate this process.

- Describe processes that will be used for participants to receive meaningful feedback on their learning throughout the program (e.g. journal, exit slips, instructor meetings, reflection, etc.).
- Describe processes that will be used for participants to reflect on and apply feedback for continued growth (e.g. Catalyst, TELL feedback tools, observation protocols, etc.).
- Describe processes that will be used for participants to interact to provide feedback for and act on feedback from other participants (e.g. interactive journaling among peers and instructors, blogging, etc.).

9. **What is the intent of the online portion of your program? How will program goals be addressed by the online activities?** *Only for applicants who indicate their program will be partially or entirely online.*

- Describe a clear purpose for the online portion of the program (e.g. preparation for program, resource sharing, extension of program, etc.).
- Describe a clear connection between the learning goals for the online portion of the program and the learning goals for the on-site component (e.g. focus discussions, feedback on evidence submitted, viewing of classroom videos, etc.).
- Include multiple checks for learning in the online portion (e.g. adaptive format, selection of tasks based on feedback, etc.).
- Include online activities that allow participants to begin building a community prior to the on-site component (e.g. forum discussions, interactive chat boards, social media, etc.).

10. **What post-program activities will you offer to ensure that participants apply new knowledge and skills in their setting?**

   **Practicum Program Tip:** Include continuous coaching support for teacher participants.

- Describe in detail how participants will continue their professional growth after the program ends (e.g. fall follow-up workshops, graduate course enrollment, online module, etc.).
- Identify a process to monitor and support participants’ transfer of new knowledge and/or skills into their classrooms or other teaching contexts (e.g. online coaching, classroom visits, phone support, etc.).
Practicum Teacher Training: Personnel

Questions in this section ask applicants to provide information on the personnel who will be charged with implementing the proposal. The program director and instructional lead must be named at the time of application. Identify the major responsibilities tasked to that position within your program, and explain for each responsibility the previous qualifications, experience, and/or training of the identified person and how that qualifies them for that position.

For other roles, name as many other individuals as possible, providing the qualifications, experience, and/or training of the identified person. When an individual has not yet been identified, you may say TBD (to be determined) and outline the responsibilities and desired qualifications for the position. All roles identified in the budget must be listed in this section, and vice versa.

11. Program Director (required)
The program director (PD) is the leader of the program responsible for the overall administration of the program, however, often PDs also play a role in the instructional content development of the program. The program director is the main contact with STARTALK Central and the National Security Agency. The main responsibilities include:

- Overseeing all program activities
- Hiring and managing program staff
- Managing program recruitment
- Ensuring safety of participants
- Managing the program budget
- Ensuring completion of all grant requirements
- Remain on-site for duration of program

- Identify major responsibilities of the program director (staffing, budgeting, program evaluation, etc.).
- Connect the program director’s background and experience to the identified responsibilities (target language experience, experience with student populations, etc.).
- Ensure program director has knowledge of and experience with STARTALK programs.

12. Instructional Lead (required)
The instructional lead (IL) is the content and pedagogy lead for the program and supports the program director in the overall implementation of all activities. The main responsibilities include:

- Developing the curriculum
- Planning and implementing professional development for program staff
- Leading the facilitation of learning experiences for teacher participants
- Providing feedback to instructors

- Identify major responsibilities of the instructional lead (curriculum development, teacher coaching, etc.).
- Connect the instructional lead’s background and experience to the responsibilities (e.g. coaching experience, curriculum development experience, etc.).
- Ensure instructional lead has demonstrated expertise in current world language pedagogy and is knowledgeable about the STARTALK principles (significant experience in a proficiency-focused system, experience as instructor in a STARTALK student program, etc.).
- Ensure instructional lead has direct experience working in or strong knowledge of the US educational system (certified teacher, administrator in K–16 educational institution, etc.).
- Ensure instructional lead has significant experience working with adult learners and providing professional development.

13. Instructional Team

- Demonstrate how the additional personnel support the program (roles of instructors, roles of guest speakers, roles of technology specialists, etc.).
- Identify and name specific personnel whose qualifications prepare them for their roles.
Practicum Teacher Training: Summary

The program summary will be shared with the federal government if the proposal is funded. What important program features of the teacher training do you want the funders to know about?

14. Please write a program summary no longer than five sentences total, being sure to detail the program outcomes, the number of participants and their teaching levels, the number of instructional hours, and the duration of the program.

- Provide required information (outcomes, number of participants and their teaching levels, number of instructional hours, and the duration of the program)
- Provide a clear snapshot of the program
- Use no more than five sentences

PRACTICUM PROGRAM: Practicum Experience (Student Program)

This second set of program narrative questions applies to the student program in which teacher participants will receive their practicum experience.

Practicum Experience (Student Program): Participants

This section asks applicants to describe the participants in the student program that provides the practicum experience for teachers, their backgrounds, and how the program will ensure that every student has an opportunity to achieve the proposed outcomes of the program.

1. Describe the student participants you are hoping to enroll in your program, including their background knowledge, needs, etc. Be sure to address students’ language backgrounds, grade level(s), and prior STARTALK program participation.

- Use multiple descriptors to identify who the students will be (age, grade level, etc.).
- Describe the anticipated language backgrounds of the students (heritage students, returning students, etc.).
- Have a clear plan to assess students’ language proficiency, if necessary (application, writing sample, first day oral interview, etc.).
- Plan to recruit as diverse a cohort of students as possible (outreach via school counselor or teacher communication, etc.).
- For returning programs: Describe in detail how learning experiences for returning students will be modified (different performance assessments, different theme, etc.).

Practicum Experience (Student Program): Reflection

This section only applies to applicants who were previously funded. How will recommendations from previous programs be addressed?

2. Explain how you will address the challenges and recommendations provided in your most recent site visit report. These recommendations will be pre-populated and refer to narrative questions 5 and 6 in the site visit report. If you cannot address a recommendation, provide a reason.

- List adjustments to the program in response to each recommendation.
- Ensure program modifications are meaningful and indicate the program’s intent to grow and improve.
Justify or provide rationale for recommendations that are not addressed.

Practicum Experience (Student Program): Program Goals

Questions in this section ask applicants to outline the thematic focus that will guide the development of the program curriculum once approved for funding. What are the major learning outcomes for the program?

3. **Provide a brief overview of your program. What is the theme that will guide standards-based instruction and learning throughout the program? What will learners experience during the program? How will you connect culture, content, and language?**

   - Have a meaningful and age-appropriate theme that will engage students throughout the program.
   - Indicate how the theme will allow the program to meaningfully integrate culture, content, and language.
   - Describe major outcomes for students (i.e. what students will know and be able to do upon completion of the program).
   - Describe major learning experiences that are based on real-life situations and allow learners to engage with an authentic audience (native speakers in the community or online, etc.).

4. **Describe the process you will use to complete the required curriculum template and learning plans, and comment on how you will involve your instructional staff in this process.**

   **Practicum Program Tip:** This can become a major focus of the teacher training.

   - Identify a plan for completing the required curriculum. For returning programs: Include plans for using program surveys, site visit reports, and other data to make modifications for the current year.
   - Indicate a plan for providing time to design learning plans prior to the start of the program (instructors will meet virtually to design learning plans, instructors will be present prior to program start to design learning plans, etc.).
   - Describe in detail how instructors will work with the instructional lead to develop daily learning plans (learning plan training, feedback on learning plans, ongoing virtual collaboration and feedback, etc.).

5. **Describe the professional development activities you plan to implement to prepare your staff prior to and during the program.**

   **Practicum Program Tip:** Consider the professional development needs of the mentor teachers.

   - Identify a way to assess the needs of the instructors before the program begins (via survey, virtual interview, application essay, etc.).
   - Describe a detailed professional development plan for before the program begins (formal dedicated time is scheduled, topics of professional learning are indicated, etc.).
   - Indicate how the approved curriculum, as well as other STARTALK resources, will be used to guide the professional development (refer to specific documents, connect resources and professional learning outcomes, etc.).
   - Describe a plan that includes reflection, feedback, and mentoring of instructors during the program (schedule includes time for group debrief and/or teacher feedback, etc.).
Practicum Experience (Student Program): Assessment

This section asks applicants to identify how student participant growth will be measured, documented, and collected throughout the program.

6. **Describe at least one sample performance assessment for interpersonal speaking/presentational speaking or writing for one group of learners who will be participants in your program.**

   - Describe a task that is appropriate for the mode of communication identified.
   - Describe a task that reflects real-life situations or situations that students might encounter in the target culture.
   - Describe a task that is appropriate for the proficiency level of the students (level-appropriate prompt, level-appropriate task, etc.).
   - Describe a task that is aligned with the theme of the program (information exchanged is based on a topic related to the theme, purpose for the task connects to the theme, etc.).
   - Describe a task that allows students to produce unrehearsed language (there is potential for learners to respond in meaningful ways, not pre-written role-playing, etc.).

Student Practicum Experience: Implementation

Question in this section ask applicants to describe the different learning experiences they will design that will allow participants to meet the program goals.

7. **Describe the learning experiences you will design that will allow participants to acquire new knowledge and skills using the interpretive mode of communication. Include examples that are specific to your program theme.**

   - Describe learning experiences that allow students to understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics (recognizing key vocabulary, noticing important forms, deriving meaning to restate or summarize, etc.).
   - Provide details on the purpose of the interpretive mode learning experiences (vocabulary acquisition, use of authentic and age-appropriate materials, variety of checks for understanding, development of students’ literacy skills, etc.).

8. **Describe the opportunities participants will have to apply new knowledge and skills through the interpersonal mode of communication. Include examples that are specific to your program theme.**

   - Describe learning experiences that allow students to interact and negotiate meaning in spoken, signed, or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions (student-to-student communication with both students asking and answering questions, information gap activities, interviews, etc.).
   - Provide details on the purpose of the interpersonal mode learning experiences (application of new knowledge and skills by completing an age-appropriate task, exchange of information around the contextual theme of the program at the targeted proficiency level, etc.).

9. **Describe the opportunities participants will have to apply new knowledge and skills through the presentational mode of communication. Include examples that are specific to your program theme.**

   - Describe learning experiences that allow students to present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences (introductions, short speeches, blog posts, mini-presentations, etc.).
   - Provide details on the purpose of the presentational mode learning experiences (application of new knowledge and skills by completing an age-appropriate task, information or opinion sharing around the contextual theme of the program at the targeted proficiency level, etc.).
10. How will the online portion of your program support the face-to-face learning experiences and how will you measure/know that your participants have been successful? (Blended programs only)

- Describe the purpose of the online portion of the program (preparation for program, extension of program, etc.).
- Describe the connection between the learning goals for the online portion of the program and the learning goals for the on-site component.
- Describe learning activities that allow students to acquire language online while still applying the STARTALK-endorsed principles (meaningful tasks, demonstration of comprehension in the target language, opportunities for speaking in the target language, etc.).
- Include multiple checks for learning in the online portion (adaptive format, selection of tasks based on feedback, etc.).
- Describe how all students will benefit from the online portion of the program (learning goal complements or extends learning for face-to-face, etc.).

11. Describe the typical daily schedule for a participant. How will this schedule provide a blend of different types of activities and learning experiences throughout the day?

- Schedule different learning activities that will engage students in a variety of ways (provide cultural, linguistic, and social engagement purposes for each segment of the day, etc.).
- Identify activities that require the use of the target language (integration of language use at lunch, integration of language use during cultural activities, etc.).
- Identify activities that allow the program to integrate content, culture, and language.
- Plan a schedule that is appropriate to the age of the students and includes times for breaks and meals as needed (later/earlier start time, shorter/longer or more frequent/less frequent breaks, lunch routines, etc.).
- If applicable: Justify the purpose and language learning goals for field trips and how the trips support the theme and overall program goals.

Practicum Experience (Student Program): Residential Program

Question in this section apply only to applicants planning to offer housing for participants. How will offering a residential program enhance the learning of the participants?

12. Please explain your rationale for offering a residential program. How will the evening and weekend activities contribute to the overall learning of the students?

- Justify in detail the rationale for a residential program (target students will not be able to participate, geographic location of program warrants a residential program, etc.).
- Describe in detail how the evening and weekend activities will expand language learning experiences for residential students (one-on-one conversations, group conversation time, individual and group tutorial sessions, cultural extension activities, cultural field trips, etc.).
- Identify a variety of age-appropriate social and extracurricular activities for residential students (game night, team sports events, etc.).

13. Provide a specific plan for how the program will ensure the safety and security of students when they are not involved in structured activities. Comment on the housing arrangements and the plans for adult supervision throughout the program.

- Outline a well-detailed and structured plan for supervision of students during the day, in the evenings, and on weekends (identified staff staying in the residence hall, activity, etc.).
- Describe in detail the housing arrangements for students.
Questions in this section ask applicants to provide information on the personnel who will be charged with implementing the proposed program. The program director and instructional lead must be named at the time of application. Identify the major responsibilities tasked to that position within your program, and explain for each responsibility the previous qualifications, experience, and/or training of the identified person and how that qualifies them for that position.

For other roles, name as many other individuals as possible, providing the qualifications, experience, and/or training of the identified person. When an individual has not yet been identified, you may say TBD (to be determined) and outline the responsibilities and desired qualifications for the position. All roles identified in the budget must be listed in this section, and vice versa.

14. Program Director (required)
The program director (PD) is the leader of the program responsible for the overall administration of the program, however, often PDs also play a role in the instructional content development of the program. The program director is the main contact with STARTALK Central and the National Security Agency. The main responsibilities include:

- Overseeing all program activities
- Hiring and managing program staff
- Managing program recruitment
- Ensuring safety of participants
- Managing the program budget
- Ensuring completion of all grant requirements
- Coordinating learning plan development
- Remaining on-site for duration of program

Practicum Program Tip: This could be the same program director as for the teacher training.

- Identify major responsibilities of the program director (staffing, budgeting, program evaluation, etc.).
- Connect the program director’s background and experience to the identified responsibilities (target language experience, experience with student populations, etc.).
- Ensure program director has knowledge of and experience with STARTALK programs.

15. Instructional Lead (required)
The instructional lead (IL) is the content and pedagogy lead for the program and supports the program director in the overall implementation of the all activities. The main responsibilities include:

- Developing the curriculum
- Planning and implementing professional development for program staff
- Leading the learning plan development
- Providing feedback to instructors

Practicum Program Tip: This could be the same program director as for the teacher training.

- Identify major responsibilities of the instructional lead (curriculum development, learning plan development, teacher coaching, etc.).
- Connect the instructional lead’s background and experience to the responsibilities (e.g. coaching experience, curriculum development experience, etc.).
- Ensure instructional lead has demonstrated expertise in current world language pedagogy and is knowledgeable about the STARTALK principles (significant experience in a proficiency-focused system, experience as instructor in a STARTALK student program, etc.).
- Ensure instructional lead has direct experience working in or strong knowledge of the US educational system (certified teacher, administrator in K–16 educational institution, etc.).
- Ensure instructional lead has significant experience working with the targeted student populations.
16. Instructional Team: Additional personnel including instructors for the student program, mentor teachers, consultants, guest speakers, and presenters (if applicable).

**Practicum Program Tip:** Participants in the teacher training program become part of the instructional team for the practicum experience.

- Demonstrate how the additional personnel support the program (roles of instructors, roles of guest speakers, roles of technology specialists, etc.).
- Identify and name specific personnel whose qualifications prepare them for their roles.

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**Practicum Experience (Student Program): Summary**

The program summary will be shared with the federal government if the proposal is funded. What important program features do you want the funders to know about?

17. Please write a program summary no longer than five sentences total, being sure to detail the program outcomes, the number of participants and their proficiency levels, the number of instructional hours, and the duration of the program.

- Provide required information (outcomes, number of participants and their proficiency levels, number of instructional hours, and the duration of the program).
- Provide a clear snapshot of the program.
- Use no more than five sentences.