

NEWS

For Immediate Release

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Naturalization Trial Test Redesign Technical Assistance Group (TAG) Experts

September 12, 2023 (Alexandria, VA) – Following the award of a federal contract in April to facilitate a review of the United States Naturalization Trial Test, TESOL International Association completed an extensive national search for subject matter experts to comprise Naturalization Trial Test Redesign Technical Assistance Groups (TAG) in Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) and Civics.

The assembled TAG collectively represents expertise in the areas of Civics, American history, adult English as a second language, linguistics, African American immigration and diaspora and African American history, Latin American history and immigration, women’s history, indigenous history, psychometrics, public-facing Civics and democracy curriculum development, education, and engagement, and test design. The TAG also represents regional diversity (north, south, east, west and central United States); ethnic and linguistic diversity, including naturalized citizens and speakers of English as an additional language; and a wide representation of institutions and roles, including professors of institutions of higher education, citizenship test preparation teachers in community-based organizations (CBOs), test developers, museum educators, and experts from leading non-profit organizations in the field.

“TESOL was honored to bring together such a distinguished group of dedicated subject matter experts to serve on the technical advisory group,” noted Sarah Sahr, head of education and events for TESOL. “The diversity of this group allowed for robust recommendations to be made to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.”

The TAG is charged to review the test questions for content and linguistic complexity and to review the test design for accessibility and validity and make recommendations on the proposed Naturalization Trial Tests to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The TAG first completed a preliminary review of the test questions, images, prompts, and rubrics, and has made initial recommendations aimed at reducing barriers for individuals with low literacy and developing English levels. Participants in the trial test, to be administered in community-based organizations (CBOs), will take a multiple-choice civics test and a picture-based speaking test. CBOs offer citizenship and adult ESL classes, often serving populations with low literacy. This initial trial will provide data on the new test designs.

Following this initial trial, the TAG will make further recommendations on the test questions, rubrics, and design before the test is trialed among a broader population of test takers. All recommendations made by the TAG are subject to review and approval by USCIS.

About TESOL International Association

TESOL International Association is the trusted global community for knowledge and expertise in English language teaching. TESOL advances the professional expertise in English language teaching to speakers of other languages in multilingual contexts worldwide through professional learning, research, standards, and advocacy. In principle and in practice, TESOL values professionalism, respect, integrity, and lifelong learning and seeks diverse and inclusive participation within the field of English language teaching. TESOL promotes equitable representation, engagement, and broad access to professional opportunities for all and works to eliminate any kind of discrimination. TESOL is a professional community of more than 13,000 English language professionals representing more than 150 countries. For more information, please visit www.tesol.org.

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