

Nature of the Proposal Review for Hatch and McIntire-Stennis Proposals

The Faculty Review Panel (FRP):

The Associate Dean for Research selects members of the FRP in consultation with the Research Advisory Committee (RAC). Two members of the FRP and ad hoc reviewers review each proposal. The two FRP members are designated as primary or secondary reviewer. The FRP members select two ad hoc reviewers. When possible, ad hoc members are CALS faculty. Ad hoc reviewers may not include CALS faculty who have a proposal under review. However, other reviewers, both on and off campus, may be appointed as needed. The selection criteria for FRP members and ad hoc reviewers are scientific excellence, appropriate disciplinary expertise, and overall balance. No member of the FRP may have a proposal being reviewed under this call. When submitting a proposal, applicants may request an individual(s) be excluded from selection as a reviewer. Conversely, applicants may also suggest individuals for consideration as reviewers.

For Reviewers:

Reviewers are asked to critique and evaluate proposals in a constructive manner, identifying both strengths and weaknesses of the proposal(s) under review. Reviews should be concise and include comments addressing each of the following:

- An evaluation of the scientific significance of the objectives and alignment of project goals and funding source (appropriateness of the research problem to the Congressional Acts and NIFA's Five National Priorities). The criterion of appropriateness is equally important to scientific merit and PI record of achievement.
- A judgment of the potential for solving Wisconsin problems is a key element of the formula funding guidelines.
- An evaluation of the research team's ability to accomplish the stated objectives, and the match between these objectives and available resources. For teams with multiple investigators, please include a plan of coordination across team members.
- Multistate and integrated activity priorities.

Review Process:

- Copies of the proposal are sent to two members of the Faculty Review Panel (FRP), and at least one ad hoc reviewer. Each will prepare a written review of the proposal assigned them, and rank it on a scale from excellent to unacceptable. The completed reviews are forwarded to the Research Division office and recorded anonymously upon receipt.
- Prior to a meeting of the FRP, the primary and secondary reviewer receive copies of all reviews to facilitate leading the discussion on proposals assigned them.
- At the meeting, the primary reviewer gives a brief description of the proposal, the principal investigator's background, and his or her assessment of the proposed research. The secondary reviewer will provide his/her evaluation and raise any points that may have been overlooked. In areas where the FRP has insufficient expertise in the proposed research, an ad hoc reviewer may be selected as a primary or secondary discussant. The primary reviewer provides remarks from ad hoc reviewers, and clarifies any confusing issues.
- After the FRP discusses each proposal, it is ranked for funding. This process provides for ranking reconsideration as other proposals are reviewed and ranked. Therefore, an inappropriately negative external review will *not* condemn a given proposal. After placement of all proposals, FRP members will review the compiled list to modify any inappropriate placements. The prioritized list is then submitted to the Associate Dean for Research. Approximately 50% of proposals are anticipated to receive funding approval.
- The primary reviewer on each proposal prepares a summary of all reviewer comments and FRP discussion. These materials, along with individual reviews and the summary, will be forwarded to applicants.