GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL REVIEW
SEEDS GRADUATE COMPETITION

The review process for graduate proposals is completed in several phases. Please make sure you understand each phase and what your responsibilities are in each one.

Phase 1: Administrative Review
An administrative review is completed by the SEEDS Program Coordinator. Each proposal is reviewed to make sure that all requirements (page limit, word count, investigator eligibility, etc.) are met. Points will be deducted from the total score for each violation of the requirements. Panel members are NOT responsible for this portion of the review and these points have already been deducted.

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Phase 2: Panel Reviews
Each panel member will be assigned a number of proposals to read and evaluate as a primary, secondary or tertiary reviewer.

Panel members will be asked to rate each proposal in a variety of categories and provide a list of strengths and weaknesses. Reviews, with the reviewers’ names removed, will be sent to the applicant after the panel meeting, so be sure to use clear, descriptive language.

Guidance for Effective Peer Review:

- Your review should be constructive. Your objective is to provide a critique – to evaluate the quality and clarity of the submission and to help improve it
- Comment on the strengths of the work as well as the weaknesses
- Providing a critique and being critical or rude are not the same thing. Rude or deconstructive reviews are unlikely to be helpful or result in improvements. For example, when making a critique, do not attack the investigator: instead of saying “Joe should have known better than to say that – it’s false and absurd.” you might say, “Evidence from other studies (cite them) does not support Joe’s statements.”
- Examine organization, content and style – are ideas presented in a logical order with a clear structure? Is jargon avoided where unnecessary and defined where necessary?
- Be specific and suggest specific improvements. In other words, writing a comment that says, “this is a poorly written proposal,” is of limited help to the panel, is disrespectful and is of no help to the investigator who will be receiving your written comments.
- Where you note specific issues refer to the page and line number(s) so panel members and authors can locate the issue
- You do not need to comment on every typo, spelling and grammatical mistake but do note repeated or frequent errors that suggest an overall lack of care in the proposal’s preparation
- Disrespectful, inappropriate or unspecific reviews will be returned to the reviewer for improvement

If a proposal is outside of your area of expertise, you should still be able to understand the introduction, the objectives and the rationale. If the proposal is written clearly, you should also be able to determine if the objectives are addressed in the methods, even if you are not necessarily familiar with the details of the methods. At the start of the review you should explicitly describe any components of the proposal you felt were beyond the scope of your expertise to review.
Submitting a Review:

Proposals and reviews are accessed through the SEEDS website: http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/seeds/

To access your assigned proposals, click on the REVIEWERS tab and then “Login to Submit Review”

Login with your OSU email address and the password: HigherEd. Click on DOWNLOAD PROPOSAL to view the PDF.

Select SUBMIT REVIEW when you are ready to enter your comments. When you are finished, click SUBMIT at the bottom of the page.

All assigned reviews need to be submitted by Wednesday, March 21, 2018.

Phase 3: Panel Meeting

Once reviews have been submitted in Phase 2, the SEEDS Coordinator and Panel Co-Chairs will score the proposals, adding in deductions from Phase 1.

The top scored proposals will then be reassigned for a second round of review online, following the same process as Phase 2.

All assigned reviews need to be submitted by Wednesday, April 18, 2018.

These proposals will be discussed and ranked at the panel meeting on Tuesday, May 1, 2018.

Panel Meeting Structure:

During the panel meeting, the primary reviewer is responsible for leading the discussion of the proposal and for preparing the panel summary upon completion of panel discussion. Discussion of individual proposals usually proceeds as follows:

1. The primary reviewer summarizes the proposed project and presents the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

2. The secondary reviewer summarizes his/her critique of the proposal and summarizes any other student reviews.

3. The tertiary reviewer summarizes his/her critique of the proposal and contributes additional information if needed.

4. Other panel members can (and should) comment on the proposal or the discussion of the proposal as required.

5. The three reviewers of the proposal determine an initial ranking of the proposal that is ultimately agreed upon by all panel members.

6. Following the meeting, the primary reviewer prepares a written summary of the panel discussion to explain the final ranking and recommendations of the panel. This “panel summary” will include separate paragraphs of strengths, weaknesses and overall comments. It will be constructed as a supplement to written reviews to help the applicant understand the basis for the panel’s final actions and any discrepancies among written reviews. The panel summary is written as a consensus of the panel’s opinion of the proposal and should consider the comments provided by other panel members.
Confidentiality
The SEEDS program receives proposals in confidence and is responsible for protecting the confidentiality of their contents. For this reason, we ask that you refrain from distributing, quoting or otherwise using materials from the proposals. We make every effort to protect the confidentiality of your review. The identity of other panel members is also to be held in confidence.

If you feel you have a conflict of interest, please let Melissa Burant (SEEDS Program Coordinator) or Dr. Mary Rodriguez and Dr. Matt Davies (Panel Co-Chairs) know. If you do not feel that you can provide an objective review, do not review the proposal.

For questions, comments or more information, please contact our SEEDS Program Coordinator:

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