**Instructions to Reviewers**

Please make sure you have read, signed, and returned the *Conflicts-of-Interest and Confidentiality Statement for Proposal Reviewers for ORSP[[1]](#footnote-1)*. Then, read the NSF EPSCoR Track 4 solicitation[[2]](#footnote-2) and then the internal UM review criteria on this sheet. For each internal pre-proposal assigned, read, score, rank, and provide comments according the **specific criteria below**. You may find it helpful to complete this review worksheet for each proposal before entering any reviews in the portal. Once you have determined all of the specific criterion scores and any specific comments for each pre-proposal, assign an **Overall Competitiveness** score and provide **Overall Comments** for each. Then, enter all your scores and comments in the InfoReady Review portal and submit the reviews. ***The more detailed and more constructive the comments, the more helpful they will be***.

**Overall Rank and Comments**

**Rank:** Overall, on a scale of **1** (most competitive) to **n** (least competitive), where **n** = the number of proposals you reviewed, how competitive does the final proposal for this applicant have the likelihood to be at NSF? Each proposal you reviewed should have a unique rank.

*Rank (circle one*): ***<- MOST* (1 2 3 …. n ) *LEAST ->***

**Overall Comments to Applicant:** Please provide constructive comments on the overall quality of the pre-proposal and the potential competitiveness of the final proposal, in terms of perceived strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement. The more detailed and constructive feedback you can provide in these comments, as well as in the comment sections for the specific criteria below, the better your review will help the PI develop a competitive full proposal to NSF, or if not internally selected this year, put forward a more competitive internal pre-proposal next year.

**Comments to Administrator:** If you have any comments for the administrator of the limited submission process, but not for the applicant, please share them here.

**Specific Scores and Comments**

**Specific Criterion: Intellectual Merit**

*Rating Choices (circle one):* **(excellent; very good; good; fair; poor)**

*Please provide constructive comments or suggestions for improvement:*

*Questions to consider in reviewing this category:*

* Does the PI position this research within the specific NSF program(s) that would be most likely to fund regular research projects in this topic area?
* Are you convinced that the fellowship will—and ideally understand how it will—**create a** **new partnership**, **advance an existing partnership**, or enable the PI to shift their research towards a potentially transformative **new direction**?
* Does the fellowship idea strike you as exciting and vibrant?
* Does it seem clear to you *whether*, and ideally *how*, this fellowship has the potential to positively impact the trajectory of the PI’ career—or at least impact it in a meaningful way?
* Does it seem clear to you whether, and ideally how, the impacts of this fellowship will be sustained for years beyond the grant period?
* Does the PI make a clear case for how the research to be conducted during the fellowship period—especially during the time the PI is at the host site—has the potential to advance the PI’s research field (even if you do not feel qualified to evaluate the quality of the case made)?
* Is this a 2nd Track-4 attempt for this PI? If so, did they provide a copy of the reviews from the previous attempt? Is it clear how this attempt will attempt to address the substantial reviewer criticisms from the last attempt? Do you feel these changes are likely to improve their competitiveness enough to warrant their selection over other strong proposals from PIs who have not had gotten to submit one of these Track-4’s yet?
* Will a trainee be accompanying the PI on the fellowship? If so, does the cost of their participation seem justified by the benefits?

**Specific Criterion: Clarity of Writing**

*Rating Choices (circle one):* **(excellent; very good; good; fair; poor)**

*Please provide constructive comments or suggestions for improvement:*

*Questions to consider in reviewing this category:*

* Is the pre-proposal easy to read?
* How easy is it for you to find key information needed to complete this review?
* Does the pre-proposal ignite your enthusiasm as a reader?
* Are white space, images, charts, pictures, emphasis, punctuation, sentence breaks, paragraph breaks, or other methods used effectively to break of the monotony of the text and create an easy reading experience?
* Is the pre-proposal free of grammatical errors, misspellings, and other errors?
* Does the pre-proposal use internally consistent terminology w/o being repetitive?
* Does it make the most effective use of the space available?
* Was the pre-proposal a pleasure to read, a chore to read, or something in between?

**Specific Criterion: Plan and Specificity**

*Rating Choices (circle one):* **(excellent; very good; good; fair; poor)**

*Please provide constructive comments or suggestions for improvement:*

*Questions to consider in reviewing this category:*

* Does the application clearly state the research goals of the fellowship?
* Does the application clearly state the activities that occur during the fellowship?
* Does the application clearly state the specific, quantitative (and therefore measurable) expected outcomes of the fellowship?
* Is there a proposed mechanism to measure success?
* Is a project timetable present, and if so, does it seem sufficient and easy to read/understand?
* Is it clear what specific opportunities will be made possible via the PI’s extended visit(s) to the host site? For instance, which facilities they will be accessing and to what degree?
* Is it clear whether there is either a specific trainee identified, or a plan to identify one, and what his/her role will be?

**Specific Criterion: Sufficiency of Letter from Administrative Supervisor**  
*Rating Choices (circle one):* **(excellent; very good; good; fair; poor)**

*Please provide constructive comments or suggestions for improvement:*

*Questions to consider in reviewing this category:*

* Does the letter from the PI’s administrative supervisor appear to be from an appropriate supervisor for the PI—e.g., a department chair or dean?
* Does the letter from the administrative supervisor explicitly confirm the nature of the faculty member’s term (pre-tenure, tenure-track appointment, or other long-term faculty appointment) consistent with the eligibility requirements stated in the solicitation?
* Is it clear that the supervisor believes the proposed fellowship would only help, and in no way hurt, the PI’s career progress (e.g., towards tenure for tenure-track faculty)?
* Is it clear that the supervisor understands when the faculty member expects to conduct the extended visit(s) and that, if any release time is required, it will be readily granted?
* Are there any suggestions for how the administrative supervisor’s letter could be improved between now and the time the full proposal is due to NSF, in order to be more responsive to the solicitation?
* Is it clear that the PI is eligible for this fellowship?

**Specific Criterion: Strength of the Proposed Partnership**

*Rating Choices (circle one):* **(excellent; very good; good; fair; poor)**

*Please provide constructive comments or suggestions for improvement:*

*Questions to consider in reviewing this category:*

* Does it seem clear to you *whether*—and ideally *how*—the host site is among the nation’s most prominent research facilities?
* To the extent practical within the limited pages available for the internal proposal, does the PI clearly establish the parameters for the partnership, including who at the host site will be working with the PI to ensure the goals of the fellowship are met?
* Does the letter(s) from the host-site collaborator(s) make it clear that they understand the nature of the proposed fellowship, what support they will need to provide, and demonstrate their willingness to provide that support? What improvements, if any, could be made to the letter(s) to strengthen this support between now and the time the full proposal would be submitted to NSF?
* Keeping in mind the various ways that people can collaborate from a distance, how convinced are you that, without this expensive relocation to the host site,

A. the PI would not be able to create or advance this collaboration, or

B. , or significantly redirect their research into this new direction, or

C. would not be able to do so as quickly, as well, and as impactfully?

* Does the PI convincingly explain why the proposed interactions could not occur without a temporary relocation?
* Is only a single host site identified, as required?
* Is the host site very clearly far enough away (over 4 hours driving distance, and ideally in another state or jurisdiction) to make commuting impractical?
* Will the fellowship involve advancing a partnership with a prior graduate or postdoctoral advisor (which is discouraged in the solicitation)? If so, is a very compelling case made for how this will be a new direction for this partnership?

**Specific Criterion: Broader Impacts**

*Rating Choices (circle one):* **(excellent; very good; good; fair; poor)**

*Please provide constructive comments or suggestions for improvement:*

*Questions to consider in reviewing this category:*

* Is it clear to you whether—and what—tangible benefits from this fellowship are likely accrue to the PI’s home department, the University of Mississippi more broadly, or the State of Mississippi—beyond just the benefits to the PI’s career?
* Does the PI propose proactive (yet reasonable) approaches that will directly lead to these benefits? “Reasonable” means that no grant funds can be spent on, or PI or trainee time charged to, local (UM) activities; thus, some creativity may be required.
* Beyond the required benefits of increasing capacity of the department, institution, or jurisdiction, are any other appropriate, convincing, and reasonably achievable broader impacts expected/articulated for this fellowship?
* Is it clear that the supervisor understands the benefits that might accrue to the department or institution as a result of this fellowship, and that his/her vision for those is the same as the PIs?

1. Confidentiality & COI: <http://research.olemiss.edu/sites/default/files/ORSP-Reviewers-COI-Statement.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Solicitation: <https://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=504901> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)