



How to Serve as a Panel Reviewer at Federal Agencies

Overview

This document provides a synopsis of the application process to become a panel reviewer for federal grant programs. Serving as a panel reviewer provides faculty, and even staff or administrators, with insight into the federal review process as well as exposure to innovative projects in his/her field or related fields. Encouraging faculty to serve on review panels can also further enhance the grant seeking culture on campus.

The process to become a peer reviewer at NEH, NSF, HRSA, NIH, DoED, DOJ, and SAMHSA is outlined below.

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) ([Website](#))

NEH program officers typically assign 15 to 40 applications to a panel and select 3-6 evaluators per panel. In assembling a panel, program officers select evaluators for their expertise in the relevant disciplines, topics, and areas, as well as their overall breadth of knowledge in the humanities. Other considerations may include the type of institution the prospective evaluator represents, their past panel experience, or other demographic characteristics. All NEH panels are formed anew at the start of a grant competition.

Process: Submit a panelist sign-up [form](#).

Information Required: Information within the form consists of name, location, occupation, humanities fields, a short biography, and a CV.

Who: Practitioners in the humanities—scholars, teachers, administrative staff, and members of the public with a background in the humanities.

National Science Foundation (NSF) ([Website](#))

NSF strives to increase both the size and diversity of the pool of reviewers to ensure that the NSF merit review process benefits by receiving broad input from a variety of different perspectives.

Process: Refer to the [list of NSF programs](#) to determine best fit for expertise, then send an email to the overseeing program officer(s) of the selected program(s).

Information Required: Provide an introduction, identify areas of expertise, and express interest in becoming a peer reviewer. It is most helpful to attach a 2-page CV with current contact information.

Who: NSF welcomes qualified reviewers from the academic, industrial, and government sectors.



Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) ([Website](#))

Reviewers are chosen for specific grant programs based on their knowledge, education and experience. Grant review panels are selected to reflect diversity of ethnicity, gender, experience and geography.

Process: Register in the [Reviewer Recruitment Module database \(RRM\)](#) to be considered for a reviewer position.

Information Required:

- Enter personal contact information
- Select general descriptions to indicate areas of expertise
- Cut and paste resume information into a searchable text box
- Attach and upload resume document

Who: All professionals working in or knowledgeable about Health Care Services. Areas of Interest include:

- [Health Professions Training](#)
- [HIV/AIDS](#)
- [Maternal and Child Health Service](#)
- [Organ Donation/Transplantation](#)
- [Primary Care for Underserved Populations](#)
- [Rural Health Care](#)

HRSA especially wants to identify qualified reviewers with expertise in social, cultural or healthcare issues of rural, migrant or Native American populations.

National Institutes of Health (NIH) ([Website](#))

The NIH peer review system is the foundation of the NIH extramural research enterprise, and its continued excellence depends on the ability to recruit and retain the most accomplished, broad-thinking and creative scientists and experts to serve as peer reviewers.

Process: Send an email to the Enhancing Peer Review mailbox (ReviewerVolunteer@mail.nih.gov).

Information Required: Include a brief description of areas of expertise in the body of the email (1-2 sentences) and a biosketch as an attachment.

Who: Persons with areas of expertise in the scientific fields supported by NIH. Principal Investigators (PIs) who receive research grant support from the NIH are an enriched source of such highly-qualified individuals.

Early Career Reviewer (ECR) program: Researchers who are beginning an independent research program should consider applying for the Early Career Reviewer Program, which is run by the NIH Center for Scientific Review to help jumpstart research careers and enhance the pool of future reviewers. More information can be found [here](#).

ECR Process: Those interested in the ECR program can submit an online application to the vetting system [here](#). Alternatively, instead of submitting an application, it is also acceptable to email a CV, areas of expertise, and study section selections to CSRearlyCareerReviewer@mail.nih.gov.

Department of Education (DoED) ([Website](#))

The Department of Education seeks a diverse group of people with expertise in a variety of relevant areas and ability to objectively assess the quality of grant applications. Reviewers are selected for competitions based on education and experience specific to a grant competition.

Process: The online field reader application form is available at <http://www.g5.gov/> where first-time users may register and previously registered users may log in as well as update their profile information.



Information Required: On the site listed above, potential readers provide OPE with information about their educational background and expertise, technology skills, grant reading history, and program experience history.

Who: Highly qualified individuals with an in-depth knowledge of the subject to be investigated. The Department is especially interested in individuals with the following qualifications:

- International Education
- Free Speech
- Economic Literacy and Financial Literacy
- Civic Literacy

Department of Justice (DOJ) ([Website](#))

It is the goal of the Office on Violence against Women (OVW) to have applications reviewed by individuals with up-to-date, and on-the-ground knowledge of violence against women issues. *Please note that employees of applicants for OVW grant funding will not be considered as potential reviewers for the program or programs to which their organization is applying.

Process: Send a copy of current resume or curriculum vitae and a completed [Peer Reviewer Recruitment Form](#) to ovw.peerreview@usdoj.gov.

Information Required: Current resume or curriculum vitae in addition to completing the personal information that the form requires.

Who: OVW Peer reviewers may include victim advocates, judges, prosecutors, police officers, legal professionals, and others with expertise on issues such as, tribal communities, colleges and universities, rural areas, urban areas, disabled and elderly populations, and service provisions to victims, including those provided by the faith community, as they relate to violence against women. While some peer reviewers are expert consultants on violence against women issues, the vast majority of peer reviewers are active practitioners or recent retirees from the professions mentioned above. Prior experience as a peer reviewer is not required.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) ([Website](#))

SAMHSA's three Centers are always looking for grant peer review professionals who can evaluate applications for discretionary grants. SAMHSA chooses peer reviewers based on their knowledge, education, and experience.

Process: Prospective peer reviewers should visit the main grants page to learn about current Requests for Applications (RFAs) and find out more about the topic areas. Those with specific, documented experience in these areas have an increased likelihood of being selected as a peer reviewer. After learning about the current RFAs, complete the peer reviewer [online application form](#).

Information Required: To supplement the personal information required in the application, one additional document may be included. This optional document should list and describe specific experiences and area(s) of expertise from the past 5-10 years that relate to current RFAs.

Who: SAMHSA peer reviewers are typically subject matter experts. SAMHSA peer reviewers must:

- Have related program experience and education
- Be able to analyze grant applications effectively against specific criteria
- Be able to clearly express their evaluations in writing
- Be interested in contributing to the advancement of knowledge

SAMHSA is interested in potential peer reviewers with knowledge and backgrounds in:

- Mental health services, with a knowledge of community-based systems of care and services for adults with serious mental illnesses and children with serious emotional disturbances.



- Substance abuse prevention, with expertise or experience working with activities that discourage substance abuse as well as behaviors that increase the risk of substance abuse.
- Substance abuse treatment, with expertise in evidence-based, effective substance abuse treatment services, programs, and activities.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)

The NEA relies on panels composed of individuals who represent a broad range of artistic and cultural viewpoints, as well as wide geographic and ethnic diversity, to provide advice about the artistic excellence and artistic merit of proposals in a variety of funding categories.

Process: Those interested in becoming a panelist for the NEA should fill out the [Volunteer to be a Panelist form](#).

Information Required: The form asks for personal information, prior arts experience, and work experience.

Who: NEA panels are composed of both arts professionals and knowledgeable laypersons. Most panelists are arts professionals who are qualified by their activities, training, skills, and/or experience in one or more art forms. Every panel also includes a layperson – someone knowledgeable about the arts but not engaged in the arts as a profession either full- or part-time.

