

UK RESEARCH AND INNOVATION INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PEER REVIEW COLLEGE – STANDARDS OF SERVICE

College members are expected to provide high quality, constructive, detailed and objective reviews within their areas of expertise. Reviews are requested and must be submitted through the Research Councils' Joint electronic Submission (Je-S) System.

By agreeing to become a member of the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) International Development Peer Review College, you accept these Standards of Service and agree to adhere to them as set out below:

As a member of the UKRI International Development Peer Review College, we expect you to:

1. agree to membership for a period of up to three years, continuation beyond this period or earlier withdrawals of membership are at UKRI's discretion; you may resign your College Membership at any time
2. undertake and complete training offered by UKRI in relation to becoming a member of the College and provide informed and objective reviews submitted by the specified due date when requested and in accordance with the reviewer guidance in the Je-S Help text
3. review up to four proposals during a 12 month period; in exceptional circumstances, you may be asked to review more proposals
4. in Je-S: keep your contact details and primary email address in your account up to date at all times and add and maintain details of your research expertise by selecting research classifications and entering free text keywords, to enable UKRI to match you with grant applications submitted via Je-S
5. notify UKRI when you are unable to accept a review request by declining via Je-S within five working days of the request, so that an alternative reviewer can be sought without delay
6. record in your Je-S account periods when you are unavailable to accept review requests; this will ensure that you won't be sent review requests while you are on leave, working as a panel member or busy with other commitments

In turn, we:

7. will make training available that explains your role within the UKRI peer review process
8. will publish your name and organisation on the UKRI website
9. will update you when necessary with developments which affect your role as a College member
10. will monitor the performance of College members
11. may invite you to serve on panels which make funding recommendations on grant proposals submitted to UKRI for which you will get paid a honorarium; and will reimburse your travel and subsistence expenses if you take part in a panel meeting, in accordance with our Non-Employee Travel and Subsistence Policy
12. may on occasion, forward your contact and subject expertise details to bodies with which UKRI has: (a) a formal funding agreement or collaborative arrangement; or (b) a formal agreement that has been drawn up as part of its international strategy, so that they may contact you to request a review

Reviewer Protocols:

UKRI have adopted a code of practice which embraces the 'Seven Principles of Public Life' drawn up by the Nolan Committee and endorsed by the UK Parliament. These Principles refer to selflessness,

integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. The impact of this code is described in more detail below.

Confidentiality

UKRI operate an open peer review process, while at the same time preserving reviewer anonymity. Reviewers are required to treat proposals in confidence and keep any personally retained documentation (paper or electronic) secure. Reviewers should review all proposals in accordance with instructions given in the Je-S Helptext and should refer any questions relating to reviewing the application to UKRI. They must not contact applicants. Applicants may be given the opportunity to respond to any completed reviews. The Councils expect all parties to respect the roles of all involved in the peer review process. If you feel unable to comment on any occasion, please let UKRI know as soon as possible so that alternative reviewers can be sought. (Your suggestions for possible alternatives would be welcomed.)

Conflicts of interest

An important aspect of this code is the avoidance of any conflicts between personal interests and the interests of UKRI. In the context of peer review of research proposals and final reports, a conflict of interest might arise as a result of direct, or indirect, personal, academic, financial or working relationships. The acid test is whether a member of the public, knowing the facts of the situation, might reasonably think the judgement could be influenced by the potential conflict of interest. The selection of academic reviewers is subject to certain constraints. We will not approach anyone with a current application under consideration in direct competition with the proposal under review, or from the same institution as any of the applicants. If you think that your involvement in assessing a particular research proposal or final report might be perceived as a conflict of interest, you should decline the invitation to act as a reviewer as soon as possible, or contact UKRI for further advice about this matter. On occasion, applicants ask that certain individuals are not asked to review their proposals or final reports. Given this and the constraints on reviewer selection outlined above please do not show the proposal to others or ask someone to review the proposal or final report in your place.

Equal opportunities

UKRI are committed to equal opportunities in all their activities. Reviewers should ensure that they avoid any bias in the assessment of proposals and final reports due to gender, disability, age, racial or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, or religious belief. Comments by the reviewers must not contravene this policy. Defamatory or otherwise actionable comments should also be avoided.

Protection of ideas

The integrity of peer review is dependent on the selflessness of reviewers. All papers relating to the consideration of proposals and final reports must be treated as strictly confidential and seen for the purpose of review only. After assessment any personally retained documentation relating to the review should be destroyed. Reviewers must not take advantage of any information obtained as a result of their role.

Research misconduct

Progress in research depends on honesty in the presentation of genuine results. UKRI take research misconduct, including misrepresentation in research proposals or final reports, very seriously and we would expect you to draw to our attention any instances which are observed as a matter of urgency.

UKRI reserves the right to discontinue the membership of individuals who fail to observe these Standards of Service and Reviewer Protocols.

We also reserve the right to make reasonable changes to these Standards of Service and Reviewer Protocols. Any changes will be effected by a general notice to members of the UKRI International Development Peer Review College.