



TEDCO funds - Reviewers instructions

TEDCO Funds is an on-line proposal submission server for TEDCO funding programs. There are different levels of authorization in the system; you will be an external reviewer. This short tutorial will guide you step by step through the system, and if you have further questions regarding the TEDCO funds system please contact the MSCRF Director, Dr. Dan Gincel. ((410) 715-4172; dgincel@marylandtedco.org)

FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION:

Confidentiality Statement (CDA): If you have not yet done please read sign and date the Confidentiality Statement received in a previous email and fax (410-740-9422) it to TEDCO immediately.

Conflict of Interest Statement: If you have not yet done please read sign and date the Confidentiality Statement received in a previous email and fax (410-740-9422) it to TEDCO immediately.

1. Creating a new user account Go to TEDCO funds www.tedcofunds.org

i) Click on **Create a new user account**

ii) Complete all the information requested, under **Applicant** please type **MSCRF review team**, and under **Program(s) interested in** please choose either the **Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund Exploratory** or **Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund Investigator Initiated** (whichever program you will review for) and click on **Register**. Make sure to include all fields. If you are not sure of which program you will reviewing for, please call (301-984-2113) or send an email (bbmcllc@gmail.com) to Dr. Norman Braveman.

iii) You will be notified via e-mail twice: after your registration, and when your registration has been authenticated. After you have received a confirmation message, you may log into the system and view **all applications**. Please remember that according to the CDA and the conflict of interest documents that applications are not to be discussed with anyone.

iv) Please do not share your username and password with anyone.

2. Logging into the system

Once you have received the confirmation email you can log in the system. Go to TEDCO funds and type in your username and password.

3. Accessing application information

Once you are logged in, you can access the application to be reviewed on the left hand side, under Project Management Task List, within Applications under External Review. Click on the application with the correct assignment number (assignment number will be given to you by email from the program SRO), and this should take you to the main page of the application.

4. Viewing individual application

To begin viewing application information, click on Application Program Information under Application Forms on the right side. Note that each component of the Application Program Information can be accessed through the Application Menu at the top of the page. To move on to the next application form, either click %Next+or access the forms through the Application Menu at the top of the page. **All applications included on the website have been reviewed by TEDCO staff and are considered to be responsive to the respective RFAs.**

Please review all components of the application:

- Application Program Information
- Project Description-Technical
- Project Description . Non Technical
- Key Personnel
- Other Significant Contributors
- Translational Potential and Plan
- Research Plan
- Appendices
- Budget Overview

In some of the forms, the information will be presented in a link to the uploaded document or a PDF file, which you must click for viewing.

REVIEWERS' WRITTEN COMMENTS: Your comments are critical in documenting the recommendations and opinions of the review committee, as well as in verifying that the application or proposal received a thorough evaluation. We ask that you prepare your written comments from the perspective of your area of scientific expertise. Please base your evaluations on the review criteria and **only** on the written materials provided.

Written summaries of the reviews are provided to the investigators and to the MSCRF Commission, the second level of review, where funding issues as well as the fairness of the review process may be considered. The review summaries include reviewers' written comments, essentially unedited, without identifiers. Your comments need not be written in polished prose. A bulleted list of strengths and weaknesses, thoughtfully prepared and indicating which ones are the most critical in leading to your overall evaluation of the application will be very helpful to both applicants and the Commission. .

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING WRITTEN REVIEWS:

Please use the following outline as given in the template. You may want to prepare your critique and then cut and paste it into the template.

Do not include any descriptive information in the critique sections listed below. (The investigator's abstract will be used verbatim for the summary statement "Description").

Please provide bulleted statements of strength and weaknesses in addressing each of these criteria. They should be the ones used in determining your overall score, weighting them as you feel appropriate for each project.

MSRF proposal review template

Please delete all instructions before copying to the TEDCO funds website.

SIGNIFICANCE: Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field? Does the project approach present high risk but potentially high payoff?

APPROACH: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?

INNOVATION: Does this project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?

INVESTIGATOR: Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers (if any)?

ENVIRONMENT: Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support? **PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE description of available facilities or equipment unless important to the evaluation of merit.**

TRANSLATIONAL POTENTIAL/PLAN: Does the research have the potential to be translated into useful diagnostic tests, clinical therapies or research tools to advance human health? Do the applicants demonstrate knowledge of the requirements of translating research results into practical applications? Does the applicant institution have a track record of effective translational research?

OVERALL EVALUATION: Using strengths and weaknesses identified in the foregoing criteria, briefly summarize the most important ones and recommend a score reflecting the overall impact of the project on the field. You may weigh the criteria as you feel appropriate, keeping in mind that an application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have a major impact and thus deserve a high merit rating. For example, you may rate an application as outstanding if you view the work essential to move a field or process forward even though you feel that by its nature it is not considered innovative.

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS: Human Subject comments will be based on the NIH guidelines for stem cell research as well as for protection from research risks. Comments and recommendations on these issues will be required from all reviewers for every application that involves human subjects. In addition reviewers with expertise in bioethics are assigned to evaluate whether human subjects are adequately protected from research risks and if the research is conducted within the National Academies guidelines for Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research. If the protection of human subjects from research risk is unacceptable, this should be reflected in the overall priority score for scientific and technical merit.

ANIMAL WELFARE: If an application proposes to use vertebrate animals, reviewers should assess whether the species and number of animals proposed is justified, and should comment on whether the procedures for ensuring discomfort, distress, pain, and injury will be limited to that which is unavoidable in the conduct of scientifically sound research.

HAZARDOUS RESEARCH: The principal investigator and sponsoring institution are responsible for protecting the environment and research personnel from hazardous conditions. Reviewers are expected to apply the collective standards of the professions represented within the review committee to identify potential hazards (i.e. radioactive material, infectious agents, hazardous chemical agents, etc.). If applications pose special hazards, these must be identified and the concerns highlighted in the written report.

BUDGET: Evaluate the direct costs only. For all years, determine whether all categories of the budget are appropriate and justified. Provide a rationale for each suggested modification in amount or duration of support.

OVERLAP: When possible, please identify any apparent scientific or budgetary overlap with active or pending support.

SCORING THE APPLICATION AND UPLOADING YOUR CRITIQUE:

Triage – In the interest of time management of the study section we will not discuss all applications at the review meeting. **Using assigned preliminary scores, MSCRF staff will develop a list of applications that will be discussed at the meeting. In order to facilitate the preparation of this list it is critical that you submit your reviews and scores by the date indicated in the email from Dr. Braveman.** The list will be presented to the review group at the start of the review meeting in order to allow for the addition of applications that members of the review group believe should be discussed by the entire study section.

Numerical Scoring - Please provide a **preliminary** numerical rating for each of your **assigned** applications between 1.0 and 5.0. The following descriptors can be used:

1 - 1.9 **Outstanding** (the very best science that will clearly advance stem cell research; research is innovative and paradigm shifting; will produce information that will have a major impact on future stem cell research or clinical practice; flaws, if any, are very few and minor that are easily corrected)

2 . 2.9 **Excellent** (research that would be outstanding except for correctable problems; impact of research is less innovative and minimally paradigm shifting nevertheless it will produce useful information that will have an an impact on future stem cell research or clinical practice)

3 . 3.9 **Average** (weaknesses in the proposal are such that the research will produce results that will add to the growing scientific literature about stem cells but it is not likely that they will have a significant impact on future stem cell research or clinical practice; research is neither innovative nor paradigm shifting)

4 - 4.9 **Below Average** (there are serious flaws in the proposal such that the research is not likely to produce findings that are publishable in a major journal and thus it will not have an impact on future stem cell research or clinical practice)

5 **Unacceptable** (the very worst research; under no circumstances should it be funded)

PLEASE ATTEMPT TO USE THE FULL RANGE OF 1.0 TO 5.0 FOR EVALUATING PROPOSALS THAT YOU JUDGE ACCEPTABLE FOR FUNDING. THERE IS NO ESTABLISHED "PAY LINE" SO ALL APPLICATIONS MAY BE CONSIDERED FOR SUPPORT AT THE SECOND LEVEL OF REVIEW.

Preliminary scores voted by the assigned reviewers will be used as a guideline when the application is discussed at the meeting. Once a consensus on the application's merit has been reached by the review committee, **a final score will be voted by each reviewer** at the meeting. All reviewers will be able to see the critiques, which will guide the focus of the discussion to the important issues during the study section.

Uploading Critiques - When you have completed the review of an application, please copy (Ctrl-C) and paste (Ctrl-V) the completed critiques from the template document to the correct box (primary, secondary, or discussant).

Contact information:

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