

  
**NEW YORK INSTITUTE  
OF TECHNOLOGY**

**Procedure for Merit Review of ISRC & TLT Proposals  
Office of Academic Affairs  
New York Institute of Technology**

Rev. 04.11.24

**Please note that by agreeing to serve on the ISRC-TLT Review Committee, members consent to sign a confidentiality agreement (Exhibit A) under which they agree to keep:**

- **All proposals confidential**
- **All proposal reviews and deliberations/discussions confidential**
- **All proposal scores confidential**
- **All ideas and potential intellectual property contained in these proposals confidential**

Proposals received by NYIT's Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPAR) are checked by OSPAR staff for completeness and conformance with ISRC & TLT Program guidelines, and the budgets are checked for accuracy. All proposals deemed ready for review are then routed to members of the ISRC & TLT Review Committee for peer review. Committee recommendations are made to the Provost by the Chair, and the Provost makes final funding decisions.

#### **Funding Priorities**

Priority will be given to high quality proposals submitted by new investigators and/or investigators conducting highly innovative work that represents a significant change in research direction or tests new methods or techniques.

#### **Review Process**

Every effort is made to conduct an impartial, competitive, and transparent merit-review process. All ISRC & TLT proposals are evaluated through the use of specified merit review criteria. Each criterion includes suggested considerations that help to define it. While not all of these considerations will apply to any given proposal, reviewers are asked to address those considerations that are relevant to the proposal at hand and for which the reviewer is qualified to make judgments. Reviewers unqualified to review a particular proposal, due to a conflict of interest, are required to recuse themselves from deliberating, and scoring that proposal. Review Committee members are appointed by the Provost, both for their specialized knowledge of their respective fields, and for their general knowledge, including their familiarity with the different scholarly, creative, and pedagogical approaches that are practiced at NYIT, and knowledge of the grants arena. While committee selection is designed to ensure that all proposals receive conscientious review by experts who can make recommendations in accordance with specified review criteria, it is recognized that non-specialist reviewers can provide vital perspectives on proposals outside their particular fields.

Therefore, absent any conflict, Review Committee members are expected to evaluate, and vote on, most proposals.

Each Review Committee member is expected to review all proposals received in advance of the Review Committee meeting. Before the review meeting, Review Committee members will be

provided a PDF of all proposals received. The Reviewers are expected to (a) read all proposals; (b) score each proposal according to either the ISRC or TLT Request for Proposal Guidelines; (c) provide comments about the key elements; strengths or weakness, (d) A lead reviewer will kick off the discussion, and members will discuss each proposal at the Zoom meeting on February 9, 2024 and (e) e-mail your completed scores and comments to [egazzola@nyit.edu](mailto:egazzola@nyit.edu) **after the Review Meeting, but no later than Tuesday February 22, 2024.**

At the Review Committee meeting, which will be held on **Friday, February 9, 2024**, the Chair will invite comments about each proposal. Reviewers will no longer vote, but will send their individual comments along with their numerical scores, after the review meeting.

Committee members are expected to remain present at the review meeting until deliberations have been completed. If more time is required, additional review meetings will be convened.

Summary Statements will be prepared by OSPAR and the Chair, who will transmit these to the Provost with the Review Committee's recommendations and the final budgets prepared by OSPAR. The Provost will then make funding decisions; OSPAR will prepare award and declination letters to all applicants; and a decision letter, budget, and Summary Statement (with reviewers' names redacted) will be e-mailed to each PI and Co-PI.

### **Appeals of Initial Review**

Proposals are privileged communications that cannot be shown to or discussed with unauthorized individuals. Reviewers will respect the privacy of the investigators' ideas and intellectual property. Any PI who believes that the review of his/her proposal was procedurally flawed, and who wishes to contest his/her score and/or funding decision, may do so by writing a letter of appeal to the Provost within 30 days of the date of issuance of the summary statement. The appeal letter should

- (a) describe the flaws in the review process for the proposal in question,
- (b) explain the reasons for the appeal, and
- (c) present evidence for either
  - (i) bias on the part of one or more peer reviewers,
  - (ii) conflict of interest,
  - (iii) lack of appropriate expertise within the Review Committee, and
  - (iv) factual errors on the part of one or more reviewers, that could have altered the outcome of review.

The Provost will consult with the Review Committee Chair and with other parties as needed, and will make a final determination.

### **Scoring Methodology**

Prior to the Review Committee meeting, the Reviewers will prepare brief written comments of key elements strengths and weaknesses, and assign a score to each proposal.

Reviewers will consider points depending on the questions listed in the Request for Proposal dependent on which grant the PI is applying for, ISRC or TLT. A proposal need not be strong in all categories in order to be judged meritorious/fundable.

**ISRC or TLT GRANT PROPOSAL SCORING RUBRIC**

| Criterion                  | Exemplary  | Adequate  | Average  | Needs Improvement   | Insufficient Evidence   | Score | Strengths | Weaknesses |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|-------|-----------|------------|
| Budget & Justification (4) | Budget clear and detailed; appropriate to complete proposed activity; justification clear, thoroughly explaining each budget item; budget and justification are nicely correlated with objectives/aims of activity; proposal details other sources of budgetary support, if necessary for completion of activity. (8)      | Budget relatively clear and detailed; appropriate to complete proposed activity; justification generally clear sufficiently explaining most budget items; budget and justification correlated with objectives of activity; proposal details other sources of budgetary support, if appropriate. (6) | Budget is not fully reasonable and less clearly related to project activities. Some costs are justified in the budget narrative or notes. Some costs are relevant and essential to this project. (4) | Budget expenses are not reasonable and not clearly related directly related to project activities. Costs are partly justified in the budget narrative or notes. Some costs are partly relevant and essential to this project. (2) | Budget is unreasonable in all areas. Costs are not justified in the budget narrative or notes. Many costs are not relevant and essential to this project. Funding is oriented toward travel (and not supplies). (0)   |       |           |            |
| Project Description (68)   | Project represents the implementation of new insight or idea, with potential benefits of change made clear. Description is very clear and concise; easy to understand. Processes and procedures are well stated, manageable appropriate and comprehensive; project has ever reasonable expectation of being completed (72) | Project Description is clear and generally easy to understand. There is a logical and thoughtful plan for executing the project. (54)   | The description is average though the need for greater clarity is apparent. Processes and procedures for executing the project appear management, but there is some uncertainty. (36)                | Description of what is being proposed is not clear. Processes and procedures outlined are also unclear or do not follow from objectives. Likelihood of success is questionable. (18)  | No innovation described or specific potential improvement defined. It is unclear what is being proposed. Processes and procedures are either omitted, only vaguely stated, or do not relate to the project proposed. The project as designed has little chance of being successful. (0) |       |           |            |
| Implementation Plan (8)    | Project activities timeline congruent with project description and outcomes. Project is feasible within the timelines. (4)   | Deficiencies or overestimations exist in the timeline, within tolerable range, outcomes appear achievable within the timeline. (3)  | Project's timeline, expose weaknesses in plan design and feasibility. Outcomes unlikely to be achieved in project's implementation plan. (2)   | Insufficient information about project activities timeline, or feasibility to gauge feasibility. (1)  | Timeline and implementation plan are unreasonable the project is not feasible with the plan as outlined. (0)  |       |           |            |

**ISRC or TLT GRANT PROPOSAL SCORING RUBRIC**

|  |  |  |  |   |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|
| Statement of Objectives, Specific Aims (8)                     | Clearly stated outcomes, or specific aims. (4)   | Statement of Objectives, Specific Aims relatively clear and detailed; appropriate to complete proposed activity. (3)               | Statement of Objectives, Specific Aims is not fully reasonable and less clearly related to project activities. (2) | Statement of Objectives, Specific Aims are not reasonable and not clearly related directly related to project activities. (1) | Statement of Objectives, Specific Aims are unreasonable in all areas. Statement of Objectives, Specific Aims are not relevant and essential to this project. (0) |  |  |  |
| Key Personnel and Prior Experience and student involvement (4) | Role, involvement, prior experience and activities of faculty, personnel and students are carefully detailed, presented and explained. Roles are especially appropriate. (4)           | Role, involvement, and activities of faculty, personnel and students are clearly presented. Roles are appropriate. (3)             | Role, involvement, and activities of faculty, personnel and students are generally presented. (2)                  | Role, involvement, and activities of faculty, personnel and students are only vaguely presented. (1)                          | The role of faculty, personnel and students is only superficially presented. (0)   |  |  |  |
| Dissemination Plan (4)   | Outstanding statement on expected findings; dissemination plan goes beyond NYIT symposia /presentations and includes peer-reviewed or juried possibilities in high-profile venues. (4) | Clear statement of expected findings; dissemination plan goes beyond NYIT symposia /presentations. (3)                             | Dissemination plans relatively clear and detailed; appropriate with internal venues only. (2)                      | Vague or unclear statement on expected findings and/or dissemination plan; or plans not clearly linked to project. (1)        | No statement of expected findings; no dissemination plan. (0)  |  |  |  |
| Long Term Sustainability, & Future Goals (4)                   | Evidence presented that project or its impact can be sustained locally beyond grant period, if results warrant. (4)  | Project is temporary, designed to end when grant ends, or some effort to secure commitment beyond grant period is represented. (3) | Plans for future are stated as assumptions without supporting arguments or evidence. (2)                           | There are limited plans for long-term sustainability and/or future goals. (1)   | No meaningful plans for future beyond funding term appear in proposal. (0)   |  |  |  |

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**ISRC/TLT Grant Proposal Review**

*Proposal Reviewer Work and Confidentiality Agreement*

The undersigned reviewer agrees to adhere to the following scope of work, confidentiality, and conflict of interest requirements in connection with ISRC/TLT Grant Proposal Review managed by the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research (OSPAR) of the New York Institute of Technology.

**I. Scope of Work**

- a) Before reviewing or scoring any grant proposal, carefully read the evaluation criteria, the explanations thereof and the instructions for scoring, all of which will be provided along with a PDF copy of the proposal;
- b) Carefully review the whole of each grant proposal transmitted pursuant to this agreement;
- c) In accordance with the priorities, criteria, explanations and instructions, solely on the basis thereof and of the content of the grant proposal, score each grant proposal;
- d) Score each proposal according to the rubrics; provide substantive comments to support such scores; and return the scores and comments to the OSPAR Representative in a timely manner.

**II. Confidentiality**

OSPAR requires each reviewer to treat proposals with strict confidence before, during, and after the review process. Except for panel discussions, reviewers are not to discuss information contained in the proposals or learned during panel meetings with anyone not included in the immediate panel. Reviewers are allowed to reproduce grant materials for the purpose of the proposal review. I understand and agree the maintenance of confidentiality also includes the destruction of confidential review materials at the conclusion of the review session. This includes any printed copies of the proposals, notes from the proposal review and all other confidential information in my possession. I also acknowledge that OSPAR will not cover or provide reimbursement for printing and disposal expenses incurred by the Reviewer.

**III. Conflict of Interest**

Conflict of interest is defined as any action by a reviewer in the grants review or awarding process which would affect, or could appear to affect, the reviewer's financial interest; or would cause the reviewer's impartiality in the grants process to be questioned. Based on the information provided to me, I do not have a conflict of interest in any of the proposals. If during the review there is an appearance of or actual conflict of interest, I will recuse myself from the review of that proposal.

Panel Member:

Signature:

Date:

Please Print Name: