Innovation Strategy (IS)
Proposal Review -- Conflict of Interest Guidelines

It is the intent of the IS Review Committee to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest in reviewing proposals and making funding decisions.

Internal Review Committee

The Review Committee will be comprised of:

- Faculty and staff who are members of the Council for Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity (CRSCA)
- Associate Deans of the academic colleges
- Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
- Executive Dean for Regional Education
- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Senior Associate Vice President for IT and Administration
- Senior Vice Provost for Instructional Innovation
- Vice President for Research and Creative Activity

1. The Research Division will provide a list of proposal participants to each Review Committee member. Each Review Committee member shall advise the Office of Research Compliance, in writing, of any affiliation with proposal participants that may give rise to conflicts of interest.

A list of conflicts that are associated with various types of recusal is given below and will be made available to all Review Committee members prior to the distribution of proposals for review. Any Review Committee member who is aware of a potential conflict of interest not previously identified by others must inform the Office of Research Compliance of the potential conflict.

2. Prior to the distribution of the proposals for review, the Office of Research Compliance will review all potential conflicts of interest and determine which represent significant conflicts and which do not.

On the basis of the information disclosed by each Committee Member, the Office of Research Compliance will make a determination on how to manage potential conflicts. The Office of Research Compliance may contact a Committee Member directly if additional information is needed.

Not all potential conflicts of interest will result in disqualification from reviewing and/or ranking (scoring) a specific proposal. Depending on the nature of the conflict, a committee member could be:

1) recused from reviewing and ranking (scoring) the specific proposal; or
2) permitted to participate in the review discussion but not rank (score) the proposal; or
3) allowed to participate in both the review and ranking (scoring) of the proposal.

Examples of the types of potential conflicts of interest are provided below.

**Category 1. Disqualification from Reviewing a Specific Proposal**
These conflicts of interest require recusal of a Committee Member from reviewing a proposal:
    a. being a participant (PI, co-I or key personnel) on the proposed project
    b. being a direct beneficiary of the proposal, including the receipt of funding from the proposal
    c. having assisted with writing or developing the proposal
    d. being a domestic partner, spouse, significant other or relative of one of the proposal participants.

Committee Members who have a category 1 conflict of interest shall not communicate, directly or indirectly, with other Committee Members about the proposal in question.

**Category 2. Disqualification from Ranking a Specific Proposal**
These conflicts of interest allow the Committee Member to participate in the review but not rank (score) a proposal:
    a. having served within the past five years with a proposal participant as an investigator on a funded grant;
    b. having served within the past five years with a proposal participant as coauthor of a publication; or
    c. having any direct fiscal or programmatic responsibility for the proposal or one of the proposal participants.

**Category 3: Possible Disqualification from Ranking Specific Proposals**
A Committee Member, who is a (1) member of a program, school, department, center or institute of a participant and (2) who has significant interaction or collaboration in areas that are not directly related to the proposal, will need to disclose the nature of his/her relationship. The Office of Research Compliance will make a determination whether the Committee Member’s potential conflict falls into category 1 or 2 or does not represent a potential conflict of interest.

**Potential conflicts of interest will be reviewed on a proposal-by-proposal basis.**

**Point of Information**
Because Committee Members are appropriately positioned to educate potential participants about the general funding and application process, such advisory activity will not, by itself, result in their disqualification from reviewing proposals.
External Reviewers
External Reviewers must not:

- be a participant (PI, co-I or key personnel) on the proposed project
- be a direct beneficiary of the proposal, including the receipt of funding from the proposal
- have assisted with writing or development of the proposal
- have any direct fiscal or programmatic responsibility for the proposal or one of the proposal participants
- be a domestic partner, spouse, significant other or relative of one of the proposal participants
- be affiliated with a program, school, department, center or institute of a participant of the proposal
- have served with a proposal participant as an investigator on a funded grant or as coauthor of a publication within the past five years.