

Frequently Asked Questions for the Proposal Evaluation System (PES) for Panelists

1. What is the Proposal Evaluation System?

The Proposal Evaluation System (PES) is the replacement for the Interactive Panel System (IPS) module in FastLane. PES improves the user experience through modernized, intuitive, and easy to navigate interfaces and enhanced functionalities for the preparation and submission of reviews by panelists, to support panel meetings, and for real-time collaboration on panel summaries.

The NSF-wide rollout of PES is targeted for later in FY 2024. The IPS module in FastLane will be decommissioned after PES has been released for use NSF-wide.

2. How do I access PES?

To access PES:

- Open [Research.gov](https://www.research.gov) using one of the recommended browsers (Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or Safari) and select Sign In at the top of the page.
- Enter your NSF ID and password. You will be navigated to the Research.gov homepage.
- Click the **Proposal Evaluation System (Pilot)** link under Reviews & Meetings.
- You will access your panel.
- If you have any issues accessing PES after successfully signing into Research.gov, please first try clearing your browser cache and cookies and trying again. If you are still encountering access issues, please try using a different browser such as Microsoft Edge. If you are still experiencing access issues, please contact the IT Service Desk for assistance at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov.

3. How do I prepare my own panelist review?

To prepare your review as a panelist:

- From the Proposal List page, click the **Edit Review** icon in the Actions column (see Figure 1).

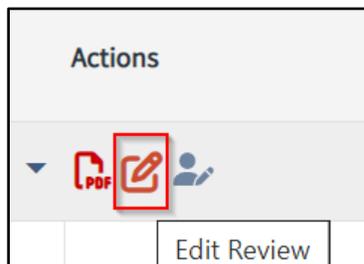


Figure 1: Actions on Proposal List Page

- You will be routed to the **Panelist Review** page where proposals for review are listed together with the review criteria for the specified panel. After you review each proposal, you will use PES to submit rating(s), strengths and weaknesses for the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts,

and if applicable solicitation specific criteria, and a summary statement prior to the panel meeting.

4. What are the features of the Panelist Review page?

The features identified by letters in the example **Panelist Review** page screenshot in Figure 2 are described below:

- A. The proposal banner at the top of the page lists the Proposal ID, Proposal Title, Principal Investigator (PI) Name, and Organization for each proposal.
- B. The Panel Stage and Panel Meeting Start - End Dates are listed under the proposal banner.
- C. The **Save Draft** button saves any review and/or ratings in your workspace without being visible to others. The **Save & Submit** button uploads reviews and/or ratings to the system and are visible to others. If you change any text and/or ratings, these will revert to drafts. You must click the **Save & Submit** button to re-upload them into the system again.
- D. The **Full Proposal PDF icon** option can be used to view and/or download the full proposal PDF. You can also access the proposal PDF from the Proposal List page when first accessing PES. Clicking the PDF icon opens the Proposal PDF in a new tab. Depending on your browser settings, you might see a one-time message in the browser to approve opening the document in a new tab.
- E. The **Quick Navigation** tool on the left side of the Panelist Review page will take you to the selected PES section without having to scroll up and down.
- F. The **My Rating** section is used to rate each proposal by selecting one or two ratings from the six options. The system will allow the selection of either one rating or a maximum of two ratings. The erit review criteria to be considered when evaluating the proposal is displayed in this section.
- G. The Proposal Synopsis box is provided for the reviewer to add an optional, brief synopsis of the proposal.
- H. The Intellectual Merit, Broader Impacts, and Additional Solicitation-specific Review Criteria sections include questions to consider for your review.
- I. The Strengths and Weaknesses text boxes are where you enter your proposal feedback for the Intellectual Merit, Broader Impacts, and Additional Solicitation-specific Review Criteria sections. There is no character limit in the Strengths and Weaknesses text boxes. Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts are required fields and must be completed to successfully submit the review.
- J. The Summary Statement text box is where you provide a synopsis of the overall strengths and weaknesses of the proposal and your suggested recommendations. There is no character limit in the Summary Statement text box. You must complete the Summary Statement text box to successfully submit the review.

- K. The **Save Draft** button at the top of the page is to store the text you have entered in the system so that it is available only to you before using the **Save & Submit** button to make the text visible to others.
- L. The **Save & Submit** button at the top of the page is to save and submit your review. After clicking the **Save & Submit** button, the reviews and/or ratings will update in the system and will be visible to others.
- M. If you change any text and/or ratings, these will revert to drafts. You must click the **Save & Submit** button to re-upload them into the system again and overwrite the previous versions. The review will be displayed in the Proposal List page and under the Panelist Review section when the corresponding proposal is expanded.
- N. If you would like to remove a review from a proposal, click on Edit review, remove all the review data added, uncheck the rating, and then click on **Save & Submit**. This will delete all the review data you submitted for a specific proposal. Panelist reviews and ratings can be updated until the Panel is closed.
- O. The review status is displayed under the **Save & Submit** button. When the review has been saved but you have not clicked the **Save & Submit** button, the status will be **“Not Submitted.”** Once you have completed all the required fields and clicked the **Save & Submit** button, the status will be updated to **“Submitted.”**
- P. PES auto-saves your changes every 10 seconds and displays **“Saving Changes”** while saving. Once saved, you will see the status updated to **“Changes saved.”**
- Q. Hover over the info tip icon to see brief informative text about submitting a review.



PES
Proposal Evaluation System

DJ Welcome, Dan Johnson

Peer Review

Panelist Review

PREV-101 - NSF PREV Proposal 101

Stage: Panel Meeting | Panel Meeting Start- End: 09/23/2013 - 09/30/2013

A

B

C, K, L, M, N, O, P

Return to Proposal List Page

Q, D

Full Proposal

E

Proposal Synopsis

My Rating

Intellectual Merit

Broader Impacts

Additional Solicitation-specific Review Criteria

Summary Statement

Proposal Synopsis: (One to two sentences that briefly describe the objective of the proposal)

Paragraph AI A2 A3 B I U X2 X4 Q E E2 E3 E4

G

My Rating

Excellent (5) Very Good (4) Good (3) Fair (2) Poor (1) No Rating (0)

F

Merit Review Criteria (See NSF Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide, Chapter III.A.2.)

All NSF proposals are evaluated through use of two National Science Board approved merit review criteria listed below. In some instances, however, NSF will employ additional criteria as required to highlight the specific objectives of certain programs and activities. Merit criteria are to be given full consideration in the review; each criterion is necessary but not by itself, is sufficient.

As a reviewer you are asked to consider what the proposer want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed, and what benefits could accrue if the project is successful. These issues apply both to the technical aspects of the proposal and the way in which the project may make broader contributions.

Please consider the following review elements in your review for the review criteria below:

- What is the potential for the proposed activity to:
 - Advance knowledge and understanding within its own field or across different fields (Intellectual Merit); and
 - Benefit society or advance societal outcomes (Broader Impacts)?
- In what way do the proposed activities suggest and explain creative, original, or potentially transformative concepts?
- Is the plan for carrying out the proposed activities well reasoned, well organized, and based on a sound rationale? Does the plan incorporate a mechanism to assess success?
- How well qualified is the individual, team, or organization to conduct the proposed activities?
- Are there adequate resources available to the PI (either at the home organization or through collaborations) to carry out the proposed activities?

Note: that if additional supplementary documents are contained in the proposal, they should be reviewed as part of the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts, as appropriate.

Intellectual Merit

This criterion encompasses the potential to advance knowledge.

H, I

***Strengths**

Paragraph AI A2 A3 B I U X2 X4 Q E E2 E3 E4

***Weaknesses**

Paragraph AI A2 A3 B I U X2 X4 Q E E2 E3 E4

Broader Impacts

This criterion encompasses the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes.

***Strengths**

Paragraph AI A2 A3 B I U X2 X4 Q E E2 E3 E4

***Weaknesses**

Paragraph AI A2 A3 B I U X2 X4 Q E E2 E3 E4

Additional Solicitation-specific Review Criteria

If Applicable

Strength & Weaknesses

Paragraph AI A2 A3 B I U X2 X4 Q E E2 E3 E4

Summary Statement

J

Paragraph AI A2 A3 B I U X2 X4 Q E E2 E3 E4

Figure 2: Panelist Review page

5. How does a panelist view the reviews of the other panelists?

To view the reviews of other panelists:

- Navigate to the **Proposal List** page. Based on the Meeting Rules established by the NSF Managing Program Officer(s), all of the proposals may be visible on the Proposal List page.
- Click the arrow to the left of a proposal to expand it (see Figure 3). The expanded row displays columns for Panelist Name, Panelist Organization, and Review Rating. The Review column on the right side allows you to select the review for each panelist, depending on how the managing NSF Program Officer(s) has set the panel rules. For example, if 'No Viewing Until Meeting Starts' is set in the Meeting Rules, then the rating and review will not be visible. For some panels, panelists are not permitted to see the reviews of other panelists. Please keep in mind that you may need to select a rating and submit a review for a specific proposal to see the review ratings of the other panelists for the proposal.

Panelist Name	Organization	Review Rating	Review
Dan Johnson	NSF	G	<input type="checkbox"/>
Panelist Primary	NSF	G	<input type="checkbox"/>
plead Lead	NSF	VG	<input type="checkbox"/>

Conflict of Interest
Panelist Name: [] Organization: []
No records found

Figure 3: View of other panelist's reviews

6. What do the Lead Panelist and Scribe do?

The Lead Panelist is typically the panelist who introduces the proposal to the panel. The Scribe is appointed by the managing NSF Program Officer(s) as the panelist who drafts, submits for comment, collaboratively edits, and accepts/declines changes to the panel summary from other panelists. You can view the Lead Panelist and Scribe assignments in the Lead and Scribe columns on the Proposal List page.

7. How does a Scribe submit the panel summary?

To prepare and submit a panel summary, the Scribe follows these steps:

- Select the **Prepare Panel Summary** icon from the Actions column on the Proposal List page (see Figure 4).

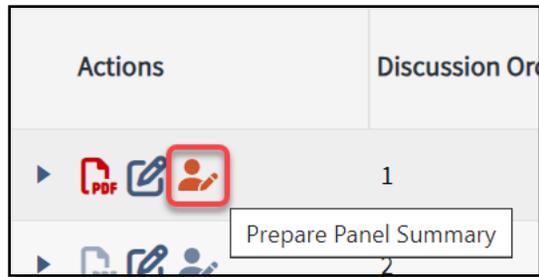


Figure 4: Action for Scribe on proposal list page

- On the panel summary screen, you will see the panel summary text box with the pre-populated panel summary template (see Figure 5). Note that only the Scribe will be able to edit the template subtitles as the panel summary is prepared. The Scribe can select a recommendation and enter and/or edit the panel summary.
- To save your changes without submitting, click the **Save Changes** button at the top of the page.
- To submit the panel summary to the system for comments, click the **Submit for Comments** button at the top of the page.
- Once you click the **Submit for Comments** button, the draft panel summary will become available for other panelists to collaboratively edit and provide comments. The stage of the proposal will also change from “Not Started” to “Ready for Panelist Comments”.
- The Scribe can submit the panel summary without selecting a recommendation. The recommendation is independent of the panel summary and can be submitted at any time.

Note: Once the panel summary has been saved, the Scribe can edit and submit it for comments multiple times until the panel is closed.

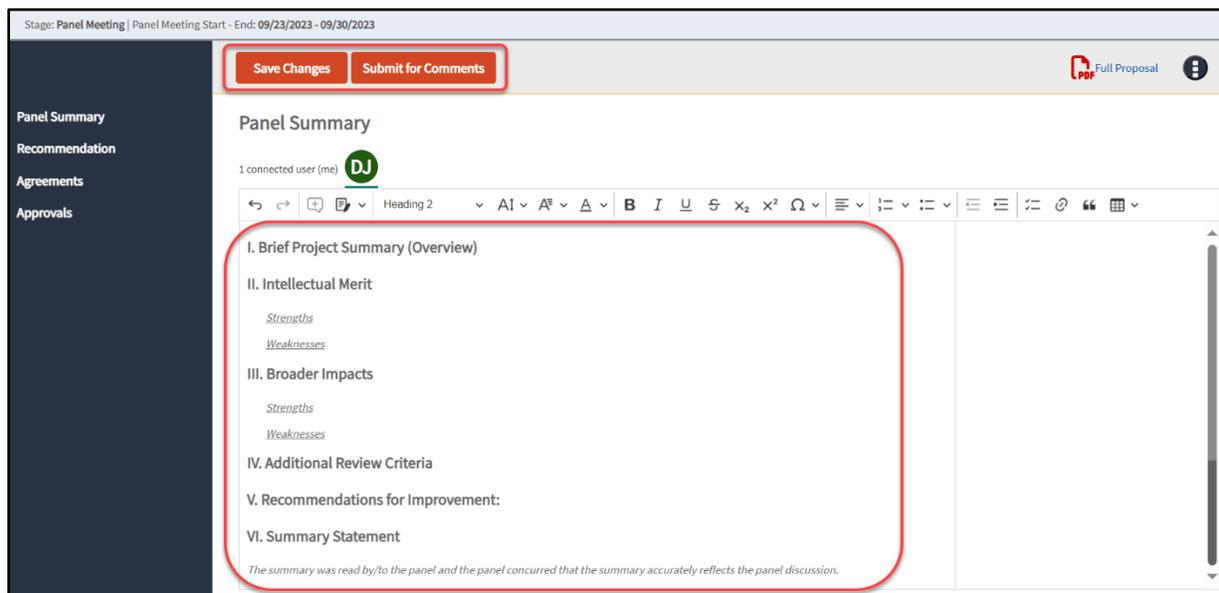


Figure 5: Panel Summary text editor

8. How does a panelist view the panel summary?

Panelists can view the panel summary by selecting the **Panel Summary** icon from the Actions column on the Proposal List page (see Figure 6).

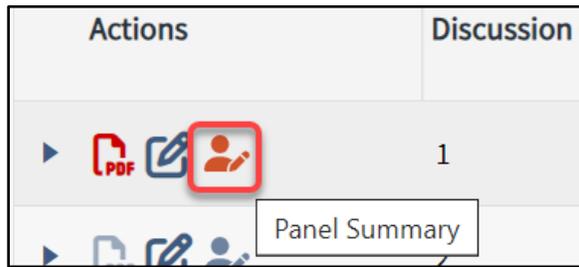


Figure 6: Access of Panel Summary for Panelists

9. **How does a panelist use the editing tool bar feature (CKEditor) to track changes and add comments on the panel summary?**

To use the CKEditor feature (see Figure 7):

- Use the tool bar at the top of the panel summary page to format the panel summary. (*"A" in the screenshot below*)
- Click the Comments icon to add a comment and click the Track Changes icon to enable/disable track changes in the panel summary. Note that only the Scribe can enable/disable track changes. (*"B" in the screenshot below*)
- Select text by highlighting it and then select the Comment option to provide comments on the panel summary. (*"C" in the screenshot below*)

Comments added and any changes made to the panel summary are shown in the panel summary text box on the right side of the panel summary page. Any participants in the panel who have access to the proposal can make suggested edits to the panel summary. Only the Scribe can accept or reject changes. Only accepted edits are incorporated into the panel summary submitted to NSF internal systems. Working comments are not part of the official record retained in NSF internal systems.

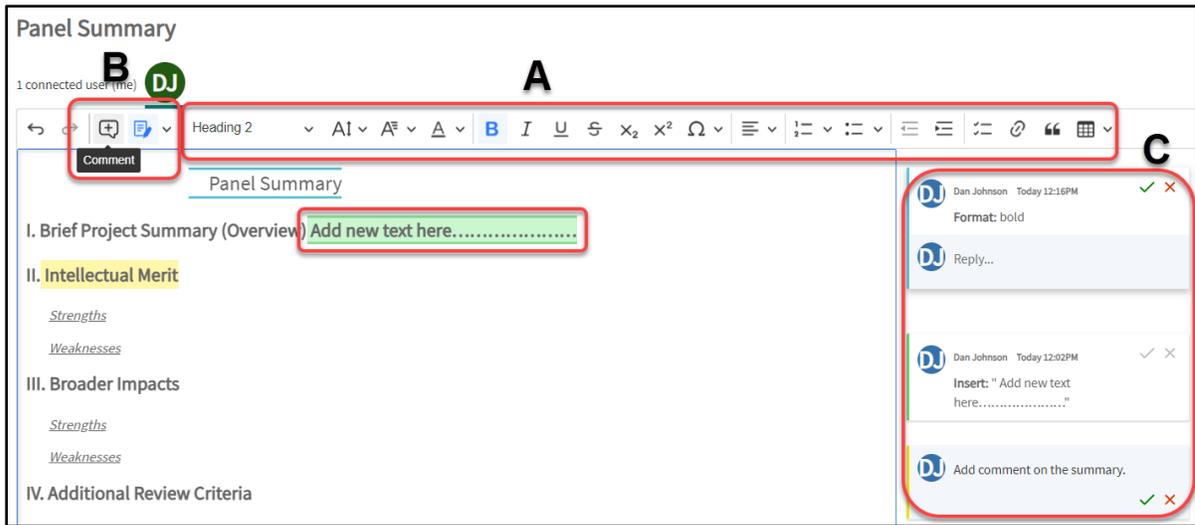


Figure 3: Access text editor tools, how to provide comments.

10. **How does a panelist agree with the content of the panel summary?**

Once the panel summary is ready for agreement by the assigned panelists, the **Agree with Panel Summary** button at the top of the panel summary page will be visible (see Figure 8).

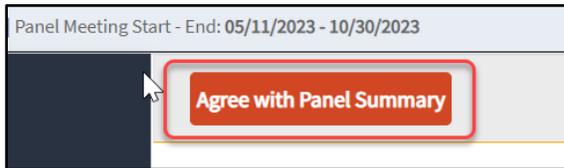


Figure 8: Agree button for assigned panelists.

- The assigned panelists required to agree with the panel summary are shown in the Pending column in the Agreements section of the page (see Figure 9).
- Once a panelist clicks the **Agree with Panel Summary** button, the panelist's name will be displayed under the Agreed By column.
- Assigned panelists can complete the agreement in any order, but everyone on the agreement list must agree on the panel summary. Assigned panelists with roles must approve the summary first and then NSF staff can approve the panel summary. The approval button will not appear for NSF staff until all the assigned panelists agree. If the agreement is not done by all panelists with a role in reviewing the proposal, then the panel summary will not be sent for approval by NSF staff.

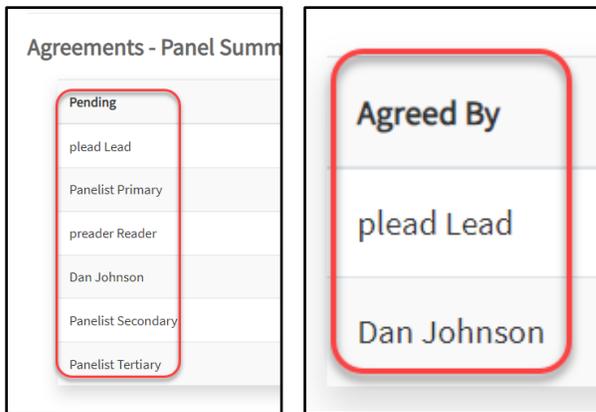


Figure 9: Lists all Panelist Primary, Panelist Secondary, etc. under pending and agreed panelist will move to agree by column.

11. How do I assign a recommendation to a proposal?

Generally, the **Panel Summary** page display includes the recommendation scale to choose from. The Scribe may click the **Recommendation** field to view/select a choice from the drop-down menu and then click the **Submit** button. The Submit button will update the recommendation but not the panel summary. The recommendation is independent of the panel summary and can be submitted at any time.

All panelists have read-only access to the Recommendation drop-down menu. Managing NSF Program Officer(s) may authorize another person other than the Scribe to provide recommendations for the panel. That person also will have access to the drop-down menu in the **Recommendation** field (see Figure 10).

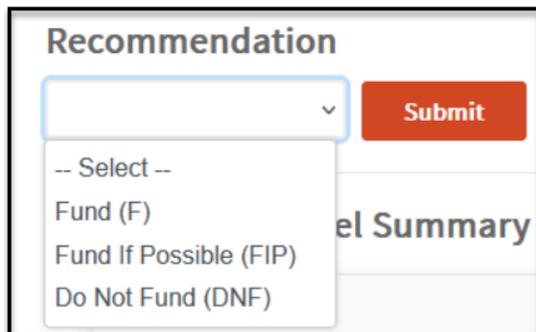


Figure 10: Recommendation scale

12. I am getting an error message that says "Resource – not found – the Proposal Evaluation System encountered an error". What should I do?

First, please clear your browser cache and cookies and try again. If that does not resolve the issue, please try using a different browser such as Microsoft Edge.

If you are still encountering an error message, please reset your password in Research.gov and try to access PES again. Then please contact the NSF IT Service Desk using the information below and

provide your temporary password verbally via phone so that the Service Desk can attempt to reproduce the issue.

13. Who do I contact for PES system-related questions or assistance?

For PES system-related questions or assistance, please contact the NSF IT Service Desk at 1-800-381-1532 (7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET; Monday - Friday except federal holidays) or via rgov@nsf.gov. Programmatic questions from panelists should be directed to the managing NSF Program Officer(s) for the panel.